Days Lane Primary School

Social Media Policy

Introduction

At Days Lane Primary School, the governors and staff fully recognise the contribution the school makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that the safety and protection of all students is of paramount importance and that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm.

We believe that the school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes all students' social, physical, emotional and moral development. Days Lane Primary School understands that social media is a growing part of life outside of school and acknowledge that increasing numbers of adults and children are using social networking sites; the three most commonly used are *Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp*. We have a responsibility to safeguard our students against potential dangers when accessing the internet at school, and to educate our students about how to protect themselves online when outside of school.

Additionally, the widespread availability and use of social networking applications bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with audiences in new ways. It is important that members of the Days Lane community are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that they balance this with upholding the good reputation of the school.

We are committed to:

• Encouraging the responsible use of social media in support of the Days Lane Primary School values and objectives.

• Protecting our students from the dangers of social media.

• Preventing and avoiding damage to the reputation of the school through irresponsible use of social media.

• Protecting our staff from cyber bullying and potentially career damaging behaviour. Ultimately, effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children, in line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.**

Training of Staff

> • At Days Lane Primary School, we recognise that early intervention can protect students who may be at risk of cyber bullying or negative social media behaviour. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at risk students.

- Teachers and support staff will receive training on the Social Media Policy as part of their new starter induction.
- Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Definitions for this policy

Days Lane Primary School defines "social media" as any online platform that offers realtime interaction between the user and other individuals or groups including but not limited to:

• Blogs

• Online discussion forums, such as netmums.com

• Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook

• Media sharing services

• 'Micro-blogging' applications, such as Twitter

• Snapchat

• Kik Messenger

• Mobile TV applications such as Sky Sports

For the purpose of this document, Days Lane Primary School defines "cyber bullying" as any use of social media or communication technology to bully an individual or group.

Days Lane Primary School defines "members of the school community" as any teacher, member of support staff, student, parent / carer of student, governor or ex-student.

Social Media sites such as 'Twitter' and 'Facebook' state that children should be 13 years of age to use them (this was initially developed from American law). Therefore, no primary age children should be using or accessing these types of social media sites in a primary school.

The following are extracts from Facebook's privacy policy:

"If you are under age 13, please do not attempt to register for Facebook or provide any personal information about yourself to us. If we learn that we have collected personal information from a child under age 13, we will delete that information as

quickly as possible. If you believe that we might have any information from a child under age 13, please contact us."

Purpose of this policy

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to interact with one another, for example: from rediscovering friends on social networking sites such as Facebook to keeping up with other people's lives on Twitter and maintaining pages on internet encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia.

Whilst recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that members of the Days Lane school community and contractors are expected to follow when using social media.

This policy applies to personal webspace such as social networking sites (for example Facebook, MySpace), blogs, microblogs such as Twitter, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us and content sharing sites such as Flickr, Instagram and YouTube. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media - the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium.

The policy is based around 5 key areas

1. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school.

2. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity.

3. Creation of network accounts by staff for use in education.

4. Comments posted by parents/carers.

5. Dealing with incidents of online bullying.

A. The use of social media sites by pupils whilst at school

The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the rules for using IT/Computing in school and these rules therefore apply to the use of social media sites. Such sites should only be used/accessed in school:

- With the permission from the Head teacher
- Under the direction of a teacher or suitable adult
- When there is a purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience.

If social media sites have been agreed by the Head teacher are used, e.g. the school's Facebook account, blogging sites (Primary Blogger), then staff should carry out a risk assessment to determine which tools are appropriate.

B. Use of social media sites by employees in a personal capacity

At Days Lane we recognise that staff can be vulnerable to online risks. Social media can blur the definitions of personal and working lives; it is important that all members of staff at Days Lane take precautions to protect themselves both professionally and personally online, ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

<u>Staff will be advised as follows:</u>

That they familiarise themselves with social network sites' privacy settings in order to ensure that information is not automatically shared with a wider audience than intended. It is recommended that, as a minimum, all privacy settings are set to 'friends only', irrespective of use/purpose

That they do not conduct or portray themselves, or allow friends to portray them, in a manner which may:

- Bring the school into disrepute or undermine professional confidence in their abilities;
- Lead to valid parental complaints;
- Be deemed as derogatory towards the school and/or its employees;
- Be deemed as derogatory towards pupils, parents/carers or governors
- Bring into question their appropriateness to work with children   Contravene current National Teacher Standards

At the present time, the Head teacher strongly discourages any member of staff to participate in the following online activities:

- They should not form online friendships or enter into online communication with pupils as this could lead to professional relationships being compromised, and/or safeguarding allegations being raised.
- Not<u> to add parents as 'friends'</u> into their personal accounts.
- They should not post pictures or negative comments about school events
They should not post negative comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including Governors
- They should never disclose sensitive, private or confidential information across private messaging

- They consider others' privacy and avoid discussing topics that may be inflammatory e.g. politics and religion, which could result in their professional reputation being compromised.
- They consider what they 'like, 'share' or 'follow' on social media sites e.g. politics and religion, which could result in their professional reputation being compromised.
- That they consider the pictures/videos they upload or post on a social media site and how this may portray them in their professional role working with children
- That if their use of social media/networking sites contravenes this policy, they may be subject to disciplinary action

Inappropriate use by employees should be referred to the Head teacher in the first instance.

If you have any questions regarding online conduct expected by staff, please speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and / or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The following documents are also available in school, to help staff consider how to protect themselves online:

- *Cyberbullying: Supporting School Staff*
- *Cyberbullying: advice for Head teachers and school staff*
- *Safer professional practise with technology*

They can also be downloaded directly from:

- www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals/for-you-as-a-professional
  - www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- www.saferinternet.org.uk
- www.kscb.org.uk/guidance/online-safety

C. Creation of social media accounts by school staff for use in education

All social media services must be approved by the Head teacher in advance of any educational work being undertaken.

*Please refer to **appendix 1**, which outlines expectations for staff running or contributing to official school social media accounts.

D. Comments posted by parents/carers on social media sites

Parents/carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social media via this policy (in particular when their child joins the school), the school website, letters and school newsletters (via Parent Mail).

Parents/carers are asked not to post images (photos and videos) of pupils, other than their own children, on social media sites unless they have the permission of parents of other children pictured.

Parents/carers are asked to raise any queries, concerns or complaints directly with the school rather than posting them on social media.

Parents/carers should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social media sites about any member of the school community.

Parents should not form online friendships or enter into online communication with employees, as this could lead to professional relationships being compromised.

Effective communication following principles of mutual respect is the best means of ensuring the best learning experiences for children.

Procedure the School will follow if inappropriate use continues

The school will always try to deal with concerns raised by parents in a professional and appropriate manner and understands that parents may not always realise when they have used social networking sites inappropriately. Therefore, as a first step, the school will usually discuss the matter with the parent to try and resolve the matter and to ask that the relevant information be removed from the social networking site in question. If the parent refuses to do this and continues to use social networking sites in a manner the school considers inappropriate, the school will consider taking the following action:

• Take legal advice and/or legal action where the information posted is defamatory in any way or if the circumstances warrant this;

• Set out the school's concerns in writing, giving the parent/carer a warning and requesting that the material in question is removed;

• Contact the police where the school feels it appropriate – for example, if it considers a crime (such as harassment) has been committed; or in cases where the posting has a racial element, is considered to be grossly obscene or is threatening violence;

• If the inappropriate comments have been made on a school website or online forum, the school may take action to block or restrict that individual's access to that website or forum;

• Contact the host/provider of the Social Networking site to complain about the content of the site and ask for removal of the information;

• Take other legal action against the individual.

E. Dealing with incidents of online (cyber) bullying
The schools Esafety and/or Positive Behaviour Policy makes procedures and sanctions regarding cyber bullying and the using new technologies very clear.
Page 5 of DfE's 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools' indicates that the school can take action against incidents that happen outside of school if it:

1. Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school or

2. Poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public or

3. Could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

Use of social networking sites to harass, bully or intimidate would be covered by this irrespective of when/where the post was made. At Days Lane, we understand that there are circumstances in which police involvement is appropriate. These include where postings have a racist element or where violence is threatened or encouraged. Furthermore, *"Laws of defamation and privacy still apply to the web and it is unlawful for statements to be written that:*
  • *Expose an individual to hatred, ridicule or contempt*
  • *Cause an individual to be shunned or avoided*
  • *Lower an individual's standing in the estimation of right-thinking members of society*
  • *Disparage an individual business, trade, office or profession"*
(National Association of Head Teachers)

Be SMART Online

At Days Lane Primary School we encourage students to take a **SMART** approach to social media behaviour:

  • **S**afe – Do not give out personal information, or post photos of yourself to people you talk to online. Follow age restriction rules.

  • **M**eeting – Do not meet somebody you have only met online. We encourage parents / carers to speak regularly to their children about who they are talking to online.

  • **A**ccepting – We advise that students only accept emails and other forms of communication from people they already know.

  • **R**eliable – We teach students about the dangers of believing everything they see online.

- **T**ell – We encourage students to tell a teacher, parent or carer if they see anything online that makes them feel uncomfortable.

When using communication tools online, such as email and blogs, children are also encouraged to **T.H.I.N.K** before they share (*see Acceptable Use Agreement KS2)*:

- **T** = is it true?
- **H** = is it helpful?
- **I** = is it inspiring?
- **N** = is it necessary
- **K** = is it kind?

Safeguarding of Children

Use of Mobile Phones and Digital Photography Policy

Children have their photographs taken for display purposes and to provide evidence of their learning and achievements for their development records. Staff, visitors, volunteers and students are not permitted to use their own mobile phones to take or record any images of school children for their own records during the school day.

APPENDIX 1:

Expectations for staff running or contributing to official school social media accounts

1. As part of the school's drive to encourage safe and appropriate behaviour in the use of today's technology, I will support the school's approach to online safety. I am aware that social media is a public and global communication tool and that any content posted may reflect on the school, its reputation and services.

2. I will not use social media to express any personal opinions or create, transmit, display, publish or forward any material that is likely to harass, cause offence, inconvenience or needless anxiety to any other person, or anything which could bring the school into disrepute.

3. I will not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of the school without authorisation from the school Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Trusty). The Head teacher retains the right to remove or approve content posted on behalf of the school.

4. I will ensure that any content posted abides by copyright and intellectual property rights, child protection legislation, privacy and data protection law and other relevant civil and criminal legislation.

5. I will follow the school's policy regarding confidentiality and data protection/use of images.
   o This means I will ensure that the school has permission from parents/carers before using images or videos which include any members of the school community.
   o Any images of pupils will be taken on school equipment, by the school and in accordance with the school image policy. Images which include pupils will only be uploaded by the school via school owned devices. Images taken for the sole purpose of inclusion on social media will not be forwarded to any other person or organisation.

6. I will promote online safety in the use of all social media and will help to develop a responsible attitude to safety online and to the content that is accessed or

created. I will ensure that the communication has been appropriately risk assessed and approved by the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Head teacher prior to use.

7. I will set up a specific account/profile using a school provided email address to administrate the account/site/page and I will use a strong password to secure the account. Personal social networking accounts or email addresses will not be used.
    o The school Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Head teacher will have full admin rights to the Facebook account.

8. Where it believes unauthorised and/or inappropriate use of any social media accounts or unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour may be taking place, the school will exercise the right to ask for the content to be deleted or deactivated.

9. I will ensure that the content and channel is suitable for the audience and will be sensitive in the tone of language used and will ensure content is written in accessible plain English.

10. I will report any accidental access or receipt of inappropriate materials or inappropriate comments to the Head teacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead urgently.

11. I will ensure that the/my social media site/page is moderated on a regular basis as agreed with the school Designated Safeguarding Lead.

12. I have read and understood the Esafety policy, which covers the requirements for safe IT use, including using appropriate devices and the use of social media. I have ensured that the site has been suitably risk assessed and this use has been agreed by the Head teacher.

13. If I have any queries or questions regarding safe and acceptable practise online I will raise them with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Head teacher.

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