



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

REVIEW DATE: SUMMER 2018

NEXT REVIEW : SUMMER 2020

Introduction

As a school we recognise how social media has evolved and become a tool that people use to communicate, to share information and to make contributions online. Burton Manor Primary School has implemented this social media policy to help all employees understand and adhere to responsible social media practices. The standards set out in the policy are designed to protect employees and the reputation of the school and apply to all employees including the Headteacher and governors.

Definition of social media

For the purposes of this policy, social media is any type of online media that allows individuals to communicate instantly with each other or to share information including photographs, comments and opinions with others. This includes Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, Whatsapp and SnapChat. This list is not exhaustive and is intended to illustrate the types of social media covered by this policy. Employees should be aware that all types of social media are covered by this policy including those that are created in the future.

For the purposes of this policy, posts and communications refer to the creation of such content, commenting on it or forwarding it to a wider audience.

Standards of use of social media

As an employee of Burton Manor Primary School, you are an ambassador for the school and your behaviour in any situation, including online, should reflect positively on the school. Therefore, the following standards should be adhered to at all times when using social media either in a work capacity or in your personal life:

1. When posting or communicating on social media, you are doing so on your own behalf and not as a representative of Burton Manor Primary School, unless specifically requested to do so by the Headteacher for school business.
2. All posts or communications must be made under your own name.
3. You must not identify yourself as an employee of Burton Manor Primary School on social media.
4. If you include your occupation in your online profile, any posts or communications associated with your profession must include a disclaimer such as "the opinion expressed here is entirely my own and does not necessarily reflect the views of my employer."
5. You must not under any circumstances disclose confidential or personal information about Burton Manor Primary School, its business or any of its employees, governors or other professionals working with the school or discuss any individual at or associated with another school.
6. You must not under any circumstances disclose any confidential or personal information about any of the pupils at Burton Manor Primary School or their parents, carers or other professional working with them and their families.
7. All posts or communications must not constitute slander, discrimination, bullying or harassment towards any individual or group. This includes social media content that is of a sexual, violent or inappropriate nature (in the context of a school environment). The publication of this type of information will be taken very seriously by the school and be considered to constitute gross misconduct. Legal action may be brought against the individual response for the publication of such information.

Use of social media at work

Employees are not allowed to access social media websites from the school's computers or mobile devices at any time. The school has specifically blocked use of social media websites on its computers.

The school understands that employees may wish to use their own computers or mobile devices, to access social media websites while they are at work. Employees must limit their use of social media on their own equipment to [break or lunch time when they are not on duty and this must be done out of sight of any pupil and only in the staff room]

Excessive use of social media at work

Employees are not permitted to spend an excessive amount of time using social media while they are at work. This is likely to have a

detrimental impact on the employee's productivity and the outcomes for young people.

Monitoring use of social media

The school reserves the right to monitor employees' internet usage on school computers or mobile devices. Valid reasons for monitoring usage may include suspicions that the employee has:

- been using social media websites when he/she should be working; or
- acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy.

Social media in your personal life

Burton Manor Primary School accepts that its employees will use social media in their personal life. Employees must be aware that their posts and communications can damage the reputation of the school if they are recognised as being an employee. Employees should adhere to the standards set out in this policy at all times when using social media in their personal life.

The school reserves the right to monitor and review the use and content of personal social media, if it has been found that there has been proven misconduct in this regard or if it has been brought to the attention of the school that potential misconduct is taking place. If any posts or communications, whether initiated, responded to or distributed by the employee, are considered to be in breach of the standards set out in this policy, disciplinary action will be considered.

As a school we adhere to the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) May 2018 which outlines how we use your personal data and make sure sensitive or private information about yourselves stays safe.

Disciplinary action over social media use

All employees are required to adhere to this policy. Employees should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal. Serious breaches of this policy, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity causing serious damage to the organisation, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

An employee who makes a defamatory statement that is published on the internet may be legally liable for any damage to the reputation of the individual or organisation concerned.

Comments posted by parents/carers.

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking.

Methods of school communication include the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion. Parents are not expected to post pictures of pupils other than their own children on social networking sites.

Parents should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites.

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

Examples of social media misuse (this list is not exhaustive)

Any post or communication that employees make either in a work or personal capacity through social media must not:

- Bring the organisation into disrepute, for example by:
 - Criticising or arguing with colleagues, governors, parents or other professionals working within the school or in another school;
 - Making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or
 - Posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;
- Breach confidentiality, for example by:
 - Revealing information about the business of the school or its future plans or any information owned by the organisation;
 - Giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague, pupil, governor or anyone in the school community) or organisation (such as another school); or
 - Discussing the organisation's internal workings (such as current business or activities) or its future plans that have not been communicated to the public);
- Breach copyright, for example by:
 - Using someone else's images or written content without permission;
 - Failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something; or
- Do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:

- Making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
- Using social media to bully another individual (such as an employee of the organisation or anyone in the school community); or
- Posting images that are discriminatory or offensive (or links to such content).

Law relating to this document:

Equality Act 2010

Defamation Act 1996

Data Protection Act 1998

Human Rights Act 1998

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/2699)

Employment practices data protection code

Acas guidance on social media

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000 allow employers to investigate or detect the unauthorised use of their telecommunication system, including internet use.