

# Ings Farm Primary School

## Social Media Policy 2018

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. This gives clarity to the way in which social media/mobile phones are to be used by pupils, governors, visitors, parent helpers and school staff at Ings Farm Primary School. It will also provide guidance for parents.

Ings Farm has a FaceBook (FB) account on which we upload items of news, celebrations, information, events and photographs. As part of a current review (December 2018), the new procedure in relation to FB for all staff will be:

- Only 2 staff per year group will be administrators
- Each will check each other's posts prior to uploading
- All posts will be uploaded during the school day before 3.30pm which will allow parents time to contact school whilst it is open in the event of an issue
- A minimum number of photographs, to give a 'flavour' of school activities or events will be uploaded during / after the event
- Pupils for whom there is no parental consent, their photograph will NOT be uploaded in line with GDPR regulations and parental request

There are four key areas:

- A. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity**
- B. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school**
- C. Comments posted by parents/carers**
- D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying**

### **A. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity**

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

Guidelines are issued to staff:

- Staff must **never** add pupils as 'friends' into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 18).
- Staff are **strongly advised** not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts.
- Staff **must not** post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including members of the Governing Body.
- Staff **must not** use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).
- Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.

- Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Head Teacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

### **B. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school**

The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the rules for using IT in school and these rules therefore apply to use of social networking sites. Such sites should not be used/accessed in school unless under the direction of a teacher and for a purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience. If social media sites are used then staff should carry out a risk assessment to determine which tools are appropriate. Social Media sites to be used in school include blogging sites and the official school twitter account. Parents will give permission for images of their child to be included on the site. (See AUP form)

In terms of private use of social networking sites by a child it is generally understood that children under the age of 13 are not permitted to be registered, including Facebook and Instagram to name two.

### **C. 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 Parentmail, Face Book, schools website, and occasionally newsletters. School policies and documents provide further information regarding appropriate channels of communication and means of resolving differences of opinion. Effective communication following principles of mutual respect is the best means of ensuring the best learning experiences for the child.

- Parents must not post pictures of pupils, other than their own children, on social networking sites where these photographs have been taken at a school event.
- 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.

### **D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying/inappropriate use of social networking sites**

There are four UK statutes that cover the use of Internet technology in relation to bullying. All cases of online bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-bullying policy. The school can take action with reference to any incident that takes place outside school hours if it:

- Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school.
- Poses a threat to a member of the school community.
- Could adversely affect the reputation of the school, or its employees/governors.

Where appropriate, legal action will be taken by the school's Governors and/or Academy Trust

To be reviewed yearly, next review - during December 2019