

Rugby High School Social Media Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's E Safety Policy and the Acceptable Use Policies for staff and students and *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018*.

Social media includes online social forums such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, Snapchat Instagram and websites such as YouTube and Flickr. Social media allows people to communicate instantly and share data in a public forum.

The governing body recognises that social media and online communications are important and can have a positive impact on all elements of the teaching and learning process. The creation and use of social networks allows teachers and other professionals to share ideas and resources. They allow young people to crowd source ideas and information as well as to seek and receive feedback on their work. Social networks can also enable parents to engage more fully with their children, teachers and the school and for the school to communicate with its extended community including alumna.

However, the use of social media carries some risks. Social media can also be used inappropriately by adults and children and by those seeking to groom or exploit young people. The consequences of misuse can be very serious indeed. Some young people have taken their lives either wholly or partly as a result of comments made on social networking sites, others have been lured to their deaths or into situations in which they have been sexually abused and exploited. Some adults have been prosecuted as a result of remarks made on social networks and been given very large fines. Others have lost their jobs as a result of posting inappropriate material on line.

Nothing that is published on line is private and it is impossible to delete something that has been posted. Online tools can change very quickly and content may be distributed much further than intended.

The aim of this policy is to enable the school community to enjoy the educational benefits of social networking whilst managing and reducing the attendant risks. The school has a duty of care to ensure the safety and well being of its students and staff.

Use in School

Staff need to be clear about the target audience for the tool they are selecting and what purpose it will serve. It is essential that the correct tool is selected for the purpose or aim of the project. For example, to communicate with parents and carers about school based decisions, it might be better to use a blog to enable a discussion rather than a Twitter page as this only allows for a limited amount of interaction. Wherever possible, staff should use tools e.g. the wall available through Frog as these provide a more controlled environment.

Before proposing the educational use of any social media site, members of staff need to understand how it functions and how to make it as safe as possible, before use. This might include making profiles "private" or using groups or pages or feeds to engage with the community instead of individual profiles. Staff may only use sites that are deemed to be age appropriate and suitable for educational purposes. Staff should carefully check the Terms &

Conditions of any websites used in the classroom and should be careful to not promote or advocate the underage use of any sites.

The following procedure should be used by teachers wishing to use social networks with their classes.

The teacher should submit a project request to the E Learning Leader giving details of the social network that they wish to use and the class or classes that they wish to use it with and indicating the educational reasons for their request. They should use the checklist included in the appendices of this policy to do this. They should complete an appropriate risk assessment (also located in the appendices) and attach it to their request. If the social network has not previously been used by staff, the permission of the headteacher must also be sought prior to the social network being used. Once the check list has been received and risk assessment has been agreed by the E Learning Leader and the Network Manager and any necessary permission gained, the member of staff is free to use the social network to which it applies. The risk assessment must be reviewed by the teacher at least once a year and immediately following any incident involving the inappropriate use of social networking by members of the teacher's class or any incident in which the safety and well being of students has been compromised by use of the social network.

Staff should evaluate websites prior to their use with students in the classroom. Whilst they are not required to write a written evaluation, members of staff must satisfy themselves that the website is suitable for use with students of the relevant age group. The filtering software used on the school network cannot be relied upon alone to keep students safe. Staff should explicitly teach students to critically evaluate the material that they encounter online.

Staff have a duty to report any inappropriate online behaviour that they encounter which places students at risk of harm.

Staff Use of Social Networking

Staff should use separate professional accounts, pages or profiles when communicating with students or the wider school community. Establishment approved email addresses and contact details should be used and staff should be very careful not share any personal contact details or information with students (past or present) or their parents/carers. The duty of care that staff owe students still applies when using online tools. Staff should only communicate with students using social media for professional purposes. It is never appropriate for a member of staff to send a student a personal or private message or to respond to a personal or private message. Members of staff should be aware that sending such messages may be construed as grooming and could result in dismissal for gross professional misconduct and criminal prosecution.

Any communications made in a professional capacity using social media must not knowingly or recklessly:

- place a child or young person at risk of harm
- bring the school into disrepute
- breach confidentiality
- breach copyright

- breach data protection legislation
- do anything that could be considered to be discriminatory against or bullying or harassment of any individual, for example by:
 - using social media to bully another individual
 - making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age
 - posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

It is really important that staff use the privacy settings on their personal social networking accounts so that these cannot be accessed by students or parents or carers. It is very easy for staff to confuse writing in their capacity as a member of staff with sharing their own individual opinion. Staff may say that they work for the school but their online profile e.g. the name of their blog or their Twitter name must not contain the school's name. If staff do discuss their work on social media (for example giving their opinions on their specialism or the sector in which the school operates) where appropriate they should include on their profile a statement which indicates that their views are theirs alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the school. Members of staff should be aware that even as an individual, his/her actions could be criticised and seen as bringing a school into disrepute, especially if other users are aware of their role and connection to the school. Staff have a contractual obligation not to bring the school into disrepute.

Staff should always remember that once content is shared online it is possible for it be circulated far wider than intended without consent or knowledge.

Staff are allowed to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media websites using their own equipment during their rest breaks. They should refrain from doing so when at work at other times.

E Safety Education

The school's focus is on educating its users to be responsible. The school expects its users to behave responsibly at all times and not just when they are in school or using school equipment. Students and staff are expected to comply with the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

Users who act irresponsibly will be asked to complete a short education project so that they can understand the issues associated with misuse and understand the behaviours that are expected of responsible users. Users who repeatedly act irresponsibly or whose actions pose a serious threat to the safety and well being of others will be denied access to the school's systems, either temporarily or permanently and may face disciplinary or other sanctions. Serious breaches of this policy by employees may constitute gross misconduct and may lead to summary dismissal.

What to do if you encounter inappropriate use

If staff or students encounter inappropriate online material or if inappropriate messages are found, sent or received they should notify the headteacher who acts as the school's E Safety Officer. Where appropriate, she will instruct the IT Service provider to adjust the filters so that inappropriate sites are screened out. Wherever possible material should be printed off or a screen shot saved so that

the school has evidence which it can use in discussions with students and parents. Where a site has a report abuse button, it should be used to report abuse.

A student or a member of staff who encounters inappropriate content online whilst in school should report this to the headteacher /E Safety Officer. The same procedure applies to a student or a member of staff who finds or receives an inappropriate online message.

Staff have a duty to report abuses of this policy in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing policy.

Appendices

Checklist for using Social Media Tools in Educational Settings

Before using any Social Media tool, staff should consider the following:

- What are the objectives/outcomes for this project?
- What do you want to communicate?
- Who is the intended audience (if using a communication tool)?
- Why do you need to use this technology over traditional methods of communication or learning?
- What is the most suitable medium/site to use for this purpose and why?
- Will the project be student, parent/carer or staff led?
- Have you risk assessed the site to identify any safety concerns? If so, what changes will or can you make to reduce these risks?
- Do the Terms and Conditions allow you to use the site in the classroom or for your required purpose?
- Is the site age appropriate?
- Do you have parental consent (if necessary)?
- Do you have appropriate permissions or consent for any images, documents etc. to be shared?
- Have you explored the sites privacy and control settings?
- Can you restrict access to only your intended audience for all or part of the site (essential if sharing information you wouldn't share publicly)?
- Does the tool offer moderation? If so, who will be responsible for moderation on a regular basis?
- Do you have the resources (people, time etc.) to support this activity?
- Are you preparing a pilot project first?
- How will you evaluate the success of the project?

Student Guidelines for Social Media Use (Designed by the School Council)

Set up a separate email account to register on a site, that way you can easily avoid notifications from an account if you want to close it down.

Always keep passwords private.

Choose a user name that is ambiguous

Avoid giving away unnecessary details about yourself

Make use of the privacy settings

Only accept someone as a friend if you know them. If you don't know someone, don't add them.

Do not post anything that could cause you or someone else embarrassment later and only post pictures that you would be happy for your teachers, parents and future employers to see. Be aware that pictures can be copied and edited.

Be aware that once something is posted or uploaded, it is irretrievable for ever. Once you have posted something it is there for the world to see.

Revised September 2018