

HURST GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL



Social Media Policy

Policy for the attention of			
Audience	Key Audience	Optional Audience	Additional/Notes
Senior Leadership Team	√		
Teachers	√		
Teaching Assistants	√		
Administrative Staff	√		
Curriculum support	√		
Lunchtime Supervisors	√		
Site Manager	√		
Cleaners	√		
Governors	√		
Parents	√		
Website	√		
Local Authority		√	

Responsibility of	School Improvement Committee
Review frequency	Annually
Policy created	5 February 2018
Previous versions	4 February 2019; 3 February 2020; 22 February 2021; 7 February 2022; 6 February 2023
This version agreed	19 February 2024
Next review date	Spring term 2025

Introduction to the Policy

The school is aware and acknowledges that increasing numbers of adults and children are using social networking sites. The five with the widest use are Whatsapp, Snap Chat, TikTok, Twitter and Instagram (children and parents have been made aware of the age for the use social media).

The widespread availability and use of social networking application bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with audiences in new ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our reputation.

This policy and associated guidance is to protect children and staff and advise school leadership on how to deal with potential inappropriate use of social networking sites.

For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- That the school is not exposed to legal risks
- That the reputation of the staff and school is not adversely affected
- That our users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of the school.

SM references is targeted at adults. They have a no under 13 registration policy and recommend parental guidance for 13 to 16 year olds.

SCOPE

This policy covers the use of social networking applications by all school stakeholders, including, employees, Governors and pupils. The requirements of this policy apply to all uses of social networking applications which are used for any school related purpose and regardless of whether the School representatives are contributing in an official capacity to social networking applications provided by external organisations.

All school representatives should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation.

Use of Social networking sites in work time:

Use of social networking applications in work time for personal use only is not permitted, unless permission has been given by the Head teacher.

Social Networking as part of School Service

All proposals for using social networking applications as part of a school service (whether they are hosted by the school or by a third party) must be approved by a member of the E-safety committee.

Social Networking applications

- Must not be used to publish any content which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claim for damages. This includes but is not limited to material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Must not be used for the promotion of personal financial interests, commercial ventures or personal campaigns.
- Must not be used in an abusive or hateful manner.
- Must not be used for actions that would put school representatives in breach of school codes of conduct or policies relating to staff.
- Must not breach the school's misconduct, equal opportunities or bullying and harassment policies.
- Must not be used to discuss or advise any matters relating to school matters, staff, pupils or parents.
- No staff member should have a pupil or former pupil under the age of 18 as a 'friend' to share information with.
- Employees should not identify themselves as a representative of the school.
- References should not be made to any staff member, pupil, parent or school activity / event unless prior permission has been obtained and agreed with the Head Teacher.
- Staff should be aware that if their out-of-work activity causes potential embarrassment for the employer or detrimentally affects the employer's reputation then the employer is entitled to take disciplinary action (violation of this policy will be considered as gross misconduct and can result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee up to and including termination of employment).

Guidance/protection for staff on using social networking

- No member of staff should interact with any pupil in the school on social networking sites
- No member of staff should interact with any ex-pupil in the school on social networking sites who is under the age of 18.
- This means that no member of the school staff should request access to a pupil's area on the social networking site. Neither should they permit the pupil access to the staff members' area e.g. by accepting them as a friend.

Guidance/protection for Pupils on using social networking

- No pupil under 13 should be accessing social networking sites. This is the guidance from both Facebook and Childnet.
- All mobile phones must be handed into the office or class teacher at the beginning of the school day, the Internet capability must be switched off. Failure to follow this guidance will result in a ban for the student using a mobile phone.
- No pupil should attempt to join a staff member's areas on networking sites. If pupils attempt to do this, the member of staff is to inform the Head teacher. Parents will be informed if this happens.
- No school computers are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of day.
- Please report any improper contact or cyber bullying to you tutor / class teacher in confidence as soon as it happens.
- We have a zero tolerance to cyber bullying.

Unsuitable or inappropriate activities

If a child has been found to be using social media inappropriately, and it is reported to the school, the school has a right to take disciplinary action with reference to the school's behaviour policy. This can include a fixed term exclusion.

This policy works in conjunction with other policies including the behaviour policy, the social media policy, the social network policy and the policy for use of Teams.