

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School



**In Jesus' footsteps we learn, love
and grow together to be the best
that we can be!**

Social Networking Policy

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School – Social Networking Policy

***In the context of this policy “everyone” refers to members of staff, governors, parents/ carers friends and anyone working in a voluntary capacity at the school.**

Introduction

Social networking activities conducted online outside work, such as blogging (writing personal journals to publicly accessible internet pages), involvement in social networking sites and posting material, images or comments on sites such as ‘You Tube’ can have a negative effect on an organisation’s reputation or image. In addition, St. Mary’s Catholic Primary has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work.

This policy has been written to set out the key principles and code of conduct that we expect of all members of staff with respect to their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites.

Key Principles

- Everyone* at St. Mary’s Catholic Primary has a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the school, and to treat colleagues and members of the school with professionalism and respect.
- It is important to protect everyone* at St. Mary’s Catholic Primary from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.
- Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members of staff and it is essential that everyone* at St. Mary’s Catholic Primary considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites out of school. Anyone working in the school either as a paid employee or volunteer must not communicate with children via social networking.
- This policy relates to social networking outside work. Blogging and accessing social networking sites at work using school equipment is not permitted.

Aims

- To set out the key principles and code of conduct expected of all members of staff, governors, friends and volunteers at St. Mary’s Catholic Primary with respect to social networking.
- To further safeguard and protect children and staff.

Code of Conduct for Everyone* at St. Mary's Catholic Primary - Social Networking

The following are not considered acceptable at St. Mary's Catholic Primary:

- The use of the school's name, logo, or any other published material without written prior permission from the Headteacher. This applies to any published material including the internet or written documentation.
- The posting of any communication or images which links the school to any form of illegal conduct or which may damage the reputation of the school. This includes defamatory comments.
- The disclosure of confidential or business-sensitive information; or the disclosure of information or images that could compromise the security of the school.
- The posting of any images of employees, children, governors or anyone directly connected with the school whilst engaged in school activities.

In addition to the above everyone* at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School must ensure that they:

- Do not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the school, or anyone at or connected with the school.
- Use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither their personal /professional reputation, or the school's reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.
- Are aware of the potential of on-line identity fraud and to be cautious when giving out personal information about themselves which may compromise their personal safety and security.

Potential and Actual Breaches of the Code of Conduct

In instances where there has been a breach of the above Code of Conduct, the following will apply:

- Any breaches of this policy will be fully investigated. Where it is found that there has been a breach of the policy this may result in action being taken under the Disciplinary Procedure. A breach of this policy will be considered to be a serious disciplinary offence which is also contrary to the school's ethos and principles.
- The Governing Body will take appropriate action in order to protect the school's reputation and that of its staff, parents, governors, children and anyone else directly linked to the school.

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School – Social Networking Policy

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and practice at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School.

- **It was reviewed in January 2022**
- **The Governing Body FIRST APPROVED the policy in May 2018.**