Social Networking Policy

St. Joseph's Primary School

*In the context of this policy "everyone" refers to all members of staff, governors and anyone working in a voluntary capacity at the school

Social Networking Policy for all staff, governors and
volunteers at St. Joseph's Primary School

* The policy will be reviewed in line with changing technology and the needs of the school, by the Principal, Vice Principal, Board of Governors and staff of St. Joseph's.

Social networking activities conducted online outside work, such as blogging involvement in social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. 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. Joseph's Primary School has a firm commitment to safeguarding individuals 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. Joseph's Primary School 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. Joseph's 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. Joseph's 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 (as part of our contract with C2K and Northgate, sites such as Facebook are blocked automatically). Blogging and accessing social networking sites at work using school equipment is not permitted.

- No communications, irrespective of their anonymity should be shared that relate to any specific event, pupil or person at St. Joseph's Primary School.

- To set out the key principles and code of conduct expected of all members of staff, governors, friends and volunteers at St. Joseph's Primary School with respect to social networking.

- School staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or children from the school community to any personal social networking sites while in employment at St. Joseph's Primary School.

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- Any communication received from children to must be reported to the Principal or designated Child Protection officer and procedures for safeguarding followed.

Code of Conduct

The following are **not considered acceptable** at St. Joseph's Primary School:

- The use of the school's name, logo, or any other published material without written prior permission from the Principal or Vice Principal. 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. Joseph's 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 or 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. 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 Board of Governors 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.

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