Social Media Policy

LAST REVIEW DATE	May 2020	REVIEW PERIOD	Yearly
NEXT REVIEW DATE	May 2021	OWNER	
TYPE OF POLICY		APPROVAL LEVEL	

Introduction to the Policy

The academy is aware and acknowledges that increasing numbers of adults and children are using social networking sites. Some with the widest used are Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.

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 staff and advise academy 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.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:
- That the academy is not exposed to legal risks
- That the reputation of the academy is not adversely affected
- That our users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of the academy.

Facebook is targeted at older teenagers and adults. They have a no under 13 registration policy and recommend parental guidance for 13 to 16-year olds.
The following are extracts from Facebook privacy policy:
"If you are under age 13, please do not attempt to register for Facebook or provide any personal information about yourself to us. If we learn that we have collected personal information from a child under age 13, we will delete that information as quickly as possible. If you believe that we might have any information from a child under age 13, please contact us"

Materials to help parents talk to their children about safe internet use can be found on this help page"

SCOPE

This policy covers the use of social networking applications by all academy stakeholders, including, employees, advisory board members and pupils. These groups are referred to collectively as 'academy representatives' for brevity.

The requirements of this policy apply to all uses of social networking applications which are used for any academy related purpose and regardless of whether the

Academy representatives are contributing in an official capacity to social networking applications provided by external organisations.

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to:
- Blogs, for example Blogger
- Online discussion forums, such as netmums.com
- Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook
- Media sharing services, for example YouTube
- 'Micro-blogging' applications, for example Twitter

All academy 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. They must also operate in line with the academies Equality and Diversity Policy.

Use of Social networking sites in worktime

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

Social Networking as part of Academy Service

All proposals for using social networking applications as part of an academy service (whether they are hosted by the academy or by a third party) must be approved by the Headteacher or a member of the SLT first.

Use of social networking applications which are not related to any academy services (for example, contributing to a wiki provided by a professional association) does not need to be approved by the Headteacher. However, academy representatives must still operate in line with the requirements set out within the policy.

Academy representatives must adhere to the following Terms of Use. The Terms of Use below apply to all uses of social networking applications by all academy representatives. This includes, but is not limited to, public facing applications such as open discussion forums and internally-facing uses such as project blogs regardless of whether they are hosted on academy network or not.
Where applications allow the posting of messages online, users must be mindful that the right to freedom of expression attaches only to lawful conduct. Sutton House Academy expects that users of social networking applications will always exercise the right of freedom of expression with due consideration for the rights of others and strictly in accordance with these Terms of Use.

Terms of Use

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 academy 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 academy representatives in breach of academy codes of conduct or policies relating to staff.
- Must not breach the academies misconduct, equal opportunities or bullying and harassment policies
- Must not be used to discuss or advise any matters relating to academy 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 academy
- References should not be made to any staff member, pupil, parent or academy activity / event unless prior permission has been obtained and agreed with the Headteacher
- Staff should be aware that if their out-of-work activity causes potential embarrassment for the employer or detrimentally effects 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 academy on social networking sites
- No member of staff should interact with any ex-pupil in the academy on social networking sites who is under the age of 18
- This means that no member of the academy 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.
- Where family and friends have pupils in academy and there are legitimate family links, please inform the Headteacher in writing. However, it would not be appropriate to network during the working day on academy equipment
- It is illegal for an adult to network, giving their age and status as a child
- If you have any evidence of pupils or adults using social networking sites in the working day, please contact the named Child Protection person in academy

Guidance/protection for Pupils on using social networking

- No pupil under 13 should be accessing social networking sites. This is the guidance from Facebook. There is a mechanism on Facebook where pupils can be reported via the Help screen; at the time of writing this policy the direct link for this is:
  http://www.facebook.com/help/contact.php?show_form=underage
- No pupil may access social networking sites during the academy working day

- All pupil mobile phones must be handed into the office at the beginning of the academy day as not to disturb lessons. Pupils are allowed their phones at lunchtime. They must return their phones at the end of lunchtime. Any breaches to Sutton House mobile phone policy and social media policy during lunch time will result in this privilege being removed for a duration of time or permanently.
- 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 Headteacher. Parents will be informed if this happens
- No academy computers are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of day unless for direct academy use (posting academy information of the academy Twitter page.)
- Any attempts to breach firewalls will result in a ban from using academy ICT equipment other than with close supervision
- Please report any improper contact or cyber bullying to the class teacher in confidence as soon as it happens.
- We have a zero tolerance to cyber bullying

Child protection guidance

If the Headteacher receives a disclosure that an adult employed by the academy is using a social networking site in an inappropriate manner as detailed above they should:
- Record the disclosure in line with their safeguarding/child protection policy
- Academies must refer the matter to the LADO
- If the disclosure has come from a parent, take normal steps to calm the parent and explain processes
- If disclosure comes from a member of staff, try to maintain confidentiality
- The LADO will advise whether the member of staff should be suspended pending investigation after contact with the police. It is not recommended that action is taken until advice has been given.
- If disclosure is from a child, follow your normal process in your child protection policy until the police investigation has been carried out

Cyber Bullying

By adopting the recommended no use of social networking sites on academy premises, Sutton House Academy protects themselves from accusations of complicity in any cyber bullying through the provision of access.

Parents should be clearly aware of the academies policy of access to social networking sites.

Where a disclosure of bullying is made, academies now have the duty to investigate and protect, even where the bullying originates outside the academy.

This can be a complex area, and these examples might help:
- A child is receiving taunts on Facebook and text from an ex pupil who moved three months ago: This is not a academy responsibility, though the academy might contact the new academy to broker a resolution.
- A child is receiving taunts from peers. It is all at weekends using Facebook or texts. The pupils are in the academy: The academy has a duty of care to investigate and work with the families, as they attend the academy.
- A child is receiving taunts from peers. It is all at weekends using Facebook. The pupils are in Y5: This is the tricky one. The academy has a duty of care to investigate and work with the families, as they attend the academy. However, they are also fully within their rights to warn all the parents (including the victim) that they are condoning the use of Facebook outside the terms and conditions of the site and that they are expected to ensure that use of the site stops. At any further referral to the academy, the academy could legitimately say that the victims and perpetrators had failed to follow the academies recommendation. They could then deal with residual bullying in the academy, but refuse to deal with the social networking issues.
- Once disclosure is made, investigation will have to involve the families. This should be dealt with under the academy's adopted anti bullying policy.
- If parent / carers refuse to engage and bullying continues, it can be referred to the police as harassment
- This guidance can also apply to text and mobile phone cyber bullying.
- If a parent/carer is making threats on-line against a member of academy staff – this is counted as bullying. The member of staff must inform the Headteacher immediately and the parent/carer spoken to. Should the situation not be resolved, the police and LA should be informed.