

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND NETWORKING POLICY



*Our Best Preparation for Tomorrow  
Is Doing Our Best Today*

**Westbrook Old Hall**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

## SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

We believe that the best preparation for tomorrow's future is striving to do our best today.

**We believe** that because **our children matter**, they have the right to be safe and healthy, happy and confident, recognised for the individuals they are and for those they might become.

**We believe** that because **our children's achievement matters**, they have the right to an excellent learning environment that promotes high expectations, ensures inclusion, recognises diversity and promotes progress and attainment.

**We believe** that because **our children's future matters**, they have the right to lead, the right to follow, the right to take best advantage of present and future technology and the right to a global life free from threat

### Aims (Outcomes)

Our school aims that all children:

- Are tolerant and responsible
- Are happy and confident
- Are safe and healthy
- Are skilled and willing
- Are eco aware
- Are techno 'cute'
- Are leaders and partners
- Are flexible
- Are given every opportunity to attain and progress
- Are mindful of the joy of diversity
- Are focused on being excellent in all they do
- Are expected always to do their best

## SCHOOL AIMS

Our **children** matter, as does their **achievement** and so too does their **future**.

### **Because our children matter, we will work to:**

- Ensure they are safe and ensure that they can keep themselves and others safe too
- Make sure that school life is happy, enjoyable and rewarding - taking each and every opportunity to build confident, positive citizens of the future
- Develop individuals with a sense of responsibility to themselves and to their community, able to respond positively to different views and beliefs

### **Because our children's achievement matters, we will work to:**

- Release and develop the excellence latent in all our children
- Ensure high expectations in all we do, developing a culture that remains positive about the steps to success and able to celebrate success accordingly
- Provide an inclusive learning framework where individual needs are recognised and catered for, where diversity is celebrated for what it offers our school community
- Ensure that all children make good progress leading to attainment appropriate to potential
- Develop learners with a love of learning and a commitment to future learning in life

### **Because our children's futures matter, we will work to:**

- Develop their ability to release the opportunities provided by technologies present and future
- Develop their awareness of their footprint upon this 'one' world and how they can contribute to its sustainability
- Develop a skills base and a solution-focused attitude that can be applied to effect in a variety of circumstances now and in the future
- Develop an ability to lead others and to be led by others in productive working partnerships

## **EQUALITY STATEMENT**

Equal Opportunities is the responsibility of the whole school community and must be reflected throughout the organisation of the school and be addressed in the taught and hidden curriculum.

All staff, governors, parents/guardians and pupils will be involved in developing, implementing and monitoring the equal opportunities policy and practice.

All staff, governors, parents/guardians and pupils regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity and socio-economic background, are welcome and will be encouraged to participate in the life of the school.

The school recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination and to promote good race relations.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

## **BRITISH VALUES**

The government set out its definition of British Values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy. At Westbrook Old Hall we reinforce regularly the following values through an agreed programme: Democracy, The Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs.

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. This policy gives clarity to the way in which social media are to be used by pupils, governors, visitors, parent helpers and school staff at Westbrook Old Hall Primary School. It will also provide guidance for parents.

There are four key areas:

- A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school**
- B. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity**
- C. Comments posted by parents/carers**
- D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying**

**A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school**

The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the rules for using IT in school and these rules therefore apply to use of social networking sites. Such sites should not be used/accessed in school unless under the direction of a teacher and for a purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience.

In terms of private use of social networking sites by a child it is generally understood that children under the age of 13 are not permitted to be registered; Facebook and Instagram to name two.

**B. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity**

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

Guidelines are issued to staff:

- Staff must **never** add pupils as 'friends' into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 16).
- Staff are **strongly advised** not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts.
- Staff **must not** post comments about the school, pupils, parents, colleagues, policy and members of the Governing Body.
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).
- Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teachers' Standards.

- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'.
- Staff **must not** give out a mobile number to a child.
- Staff **must not** arrange to meet children in any chat rooms online
- Inappropriate use by staff will be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

### **C. Comments posted by parents/carers**

Parents and carers can also put themselves at risk when posting online about incidents that may have taken place at school. Cases of defamation, inaccuracies and misrepresentation are now commonly reported in the media. Comments made online are not safe and secure and should never be considered as such. We need to set the best example for our children, so we would urge you to think before you type/post.

If you, as parents and carers, have any concerns about matters taking place at school, please address them through the appropriate channels, i.e. a discussion with the class teacher or head teacher, rather than expressing your concerns online. In this way, your school can work with you to address any concerns that you may have.

Methods of school communication include the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion. School policies and documents provide further information regarding appropriate channels of communication and means of resolving differences of opinion. Effective communication following principles of mutual respect is the best means of ensuring the best learning experiences for the child.

Parents must not post pictures of pupils on social networking sites where these photographs have been taken at a school event. We allow parents to use pictures of their own children but only for personal use.

If parents do not follow these guide-lines, the school will not allow any pictures to be taken at school events.

Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

#### **D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying/inappropriate use of social networking sites**

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy sets out the processes and sanctions regarding any type of bullying by a child on the school roll.

In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, the Governing Body will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels such as the Complaints Policy and will send a letter.

The Governing Body understands that, "There are circumstances in which police involvement is appropriate. These include where postings have a racist element or where violence is threatened or encouraged." Furthermore, "Laws of defamation and privacy still apply to the web and it is unlawful for statements to be written, which:

- expose (*an individual*) to hatred, ridicule or contempt
- cause (*an individual*) to be shunned or avoided
- lower (*an individual's*) standing in the estimation of right-thinking members of society or
- disparage (*an individual in their*) business, trade, office or profession." (National Association of Headteachers)

If you have any concerns about your child's use of social networking sites or would like support in knowing how to keep your child safe online please contact your school for advice, support and signposting. Alternatively you can access information via [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)