

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**



Colossians 4:6 'Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.'

Colossians 3:16 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.'

RRSA - Article 3 All adults should always do what is best for you.

### **ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

#### **Social Media Policy**

#### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School understands the benefits of using social media; however, if misused, the school community can be negatively affected, this can include individual pupils, groups or classes of pupils or indeed the reputation of the school. This code of conduct sets out clear procedures for how we expect all members of our community to conduct themselves on social media and when using messenger apps, with regard to the school and its reputation. We ask that parents and staff read this document and ensure that they always act in accordance with the stipulations detailed below.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This document has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

This document operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection Policy

## **ONLINE SAFETY AND SOCIAL MEDIA CONDUCT**

Our school expects all stakeholders to behave in a civilised nature online and will not tolerate any of the following online behaviour:

- Posting defamatory content about parents, pupils, the school or its employees
- Complaining about the school's values and methods on social media
- Posting content containing confidential information regarding the school or any members of its community, e.g. a complaint outcome
- Parents contacting school employees through social media, including requesting to 'follow' or 'friend' them, or sending them private messages
- Staff contacting parents or pupils through social media, including requesting to 'follow' or 'friend' them, or sending them private messages. (unless there is a prior friendship)
- Creating or joining private groups or chats that victimise or harass a member of staff, a pupil or groups of pupils, a parent or group of parents or the school in general Social Media
- Posting images of any staff members, pupils or parents without their prior consent

All social media usage will be in accordance with the school's Social Media Policy.

The school retains the right to request that any damaging material is removed from social media websites.

If parents wish to raise a complaint, the school has a Complaints Procedures Policy in place. If a member of staff wishes to raise a complaint they should follow internal procedures.

Breaches of this code of conduct will be taken seriously by the school and, in the event of illegal, defamatory, or discriminatory content, breaches could lead to prosecution.

Parents and staff are asked not to post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this code of conduct.

## **ONLINE MESSAGING**

The school expects parents and staff to use messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, for purposes beneficial to themselves and the school, and will not accept any of the following behaviour:

- Sending abusive messages to others
- Sending abusive messages about members of staff, parents, pupils or the school
- Sharing confidential or sensitive information about members of staff, parents, pupils or the school
- Bringing the school or its staff into disrepute
- Communicating on behalf of the school

The school appreciates the simplicity and ease of instant messaging; keeping in contact outside of school can benefit the school community by keeping it closer. The school does not, however, condone parents or staff sending messages about school as though a voice of authority. Should

any problems arise from contact over messaging apps, the school will act quickly by contacting parents or staff directly, to stop any issues continuing. The school can request a meeting with parents or staff if any misconduct, such as sending abusive messages or posting defamatory content, occurs online. The executive principal and Head of School can, with the permission of the parent or member of staff, view messages sent to deal with problems quickly and effectively. The principal can request that 'group chats' are closed down should any problems continue.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGES**

Parents may be permitted to take photos of their children at certain school events, such as sports day or during a production; however, parents should only share photos of their own children on social media. Parents must not share photos of other children, staff members or volunteers, nor post them on social media without the consent of those within the images or, where applicable, their parents. During events outside of school, such as dropping children off at the school gate, or whilst visiting the school, parents must not take photos of any members of the school community, nor share these photos on social media.

Staff will only take photographs of pupils in school for the purposes of education or communication. These will only be taken and shared with the permission of parents. Only school owned devices will be used to take images of pupils and no personal devices are permitted to be used.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

Parents and staff are responsible for supporting the school by monitoring their own use of social media and online messaging. Parents and staff must adhere to this Code of Conduct at all times.

Parents are asked to be responsible for ensuring they support the school by monitoring their children's use of social media and online messaging outside of school. School has appropriate monitoring systems (Securus) in school to ensure that pupils behave in a reasonable manner when in school. They are also taught about the positive and negative impacts of social media during lessons.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The executive principal will review this code of conduct on a regular basis and will communicate any changes to all teachers and parents.