



Striving for Excellence

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

*In the context of this policy “everyone” refers to members of staff, governors, 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 using social networking technologies such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram or Twitter 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, Ryefield 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

1. Everyone* at Ryefield 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.
2. It is important to protect everyone* at Ryefield from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.
3. Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members of staff and it is essential that everyone* at Ryefield 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 Ryefield students via social networking and must not accept or initiate Facebook friend requests from students enrolled at Ryefield.

Use of Social Media in practice

1. Personal use of social media
 - School staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with **parents or children** from the school community in any personal social media whilst in employment at Ryefield Primary School. Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated person for Child Protection (Deputy Headteacher).
 - If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above
 - Members of the school staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts. All email communication between staff and members of the school community on school business must be made from an official school email account.
 - Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with members of the school community on school business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Headteacher.
 - Staff are advised to avoid posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to the school and members of its community on any social media accounts

- Staff are also advised to consider the reputation of the school in any posts or comments related to the school on any social media accounts
- Staff should not accept any current pupil of any age or any ex-pupil of the school under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account

In addition to the above everyone* at Ryefield 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.
- Communication between pupils and adults should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries
- Should not share any personal information with a child or young person
- All communications are transparent and open to scrutiny
- Personal contact details including email, home or mobile numbers should not be given unless the need to do so is agreed by The School Leadership Team
- Not give their personal contact details to pupils, including their mobile telephone number
- Only use equipment e.g mobile phones provided by school to communicate with parents/children
- Recognize that only groupcall text messaging should only be used via the office staff
- Not use internal or web based communication channels to send personal messages to a child/young person

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 contrary to the school’s ethos and principles.

School Sanctioned use of Social Media in the Curriculum

Ryefield subscribes to DB Primary. Pupils should be taught to communicate via social networking through this safe means.

Review

Revision History

Date of this revision: March 2016

Date of next revision: March 2017

The policy should be reviewed annually (or sooner in the event of revised legislation or guidance)

Revision date	By	Summary of Changes Made
March 2016	Resources Committee	

Approval

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue	Version
<i>Pam Nash</i>	<i>P Nash</i>	<i>Chair of Governors</i>	<i>March 2016</i>	<i>1</i>