

'A very caring and nurturing school in which the well-being of every child is paramount.'
'The quality of education continues to be good.'
Ofsted, June 2016

Social Media Policy

Status: **Non - Statutory**

Created/Reviewed **Autumn 2014, 2015, 2016**

Next Review: **Autumn 2017**

Approved by GB

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The widespread use of social media, particularly social networking sites, necessitates New Hartley First School has a policy in place to ensure that appropriate control mechanisms exist to minimise the risks to our and communication systems and to protect our reputation.
- 1.2 The term 'Social Media' is used in a number of different ways but for the purposes of New Hartley First School's Social Media Policy the term is regarded as anything on the internet where content is created and adapted, by people who use the site, to facilitate two-way conversations.
- 1.3 Social media applies to traditional names like Facebook, Myspace, Bebo, LinkedIn, Yammer and Twitter but also includes other platforms which facilitate user conversations eg: You Tube, Flickr, blogs, wikis, instant messaging, vod and podcasting.
- 1.4 New Hartley First School recognises the value of social media for engaging with residents, service users, customers and partners. However it is essential that where an employee, using a social media platform, can be clearly identified as an employee New Hartley he/she acts responsibly and professionally to ensure New Hartley's reputation and integrity is maintained at all times.
- 1.5 It is not the intention of the Social Media Policy to restrict the use of social media websites but to maintain the integrity and reputation of the New Hartley and its employees.
- 1.6 Appropriate training will be provided to ensure all employees are aware of their responsibilities under the Social Media Policy.

2. Objectives of the Social Media Policy

- 2.1 The objectives of the policy are to:
 - Ensure New Hartley First School's reputation for objectivity, fairness and impartiality is maintained at all times;
 - Ensure employees are aware of their responsibilities when using social media networks;
 - Ensure the New Hartley First School's information systems are used only for legitimate business purposes;
 - Encourage good practice in the use of social media;
 - Promote effective and innovative use of social media as a means of business communication;
 - To promote New Hartley First School and the services we provide;

- To enable New Hartley First School to circulate and obtain information in direct support of our activities and to support our work related functions.

Links to other Organisation HR Policies and Procedures

3.1 The Social Media Policy must be applied in conjunction with other relevant HR Policies and Procedures, namely:

- The Employee Code of Conduct;
- The Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Guidelines for the Use of the Internet and E-Mail;

4. Scope of the Social Media Policy

4.1 The Social Media Policy is binding on all employees and must be adhered to at all times.

4.2 Employees will be issued with a copy of the Policy and any subsequent amendments, together with a copy of the 'Employee Declaration Form, attached at Appendix 1, which must be completed and returned to **Mrs. V. Frost, School Manager.**

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 For New Hartley First School's Social Media Policy to be effectively implemented there are a number of key stakeholders:

Managers will:

- Support the implementation of the Social Media Policy;
- Ensure that the Social Media Policy is adhered to within their area(s) of responsibility;
- Issue members of their team with a copy of the Social Media Policy and ensure the 'Employee Declaration Form' attached at Appendix 1 to the Policy, is completed by all team members.

Employees will:

- Abide by the requirements of the Social Media Policy;
- Complete the 'Employee Declaration Form' attached at Appendix 1 to the Policy;
- If in doubt, seek advice, from the 'Leadership and Management Team', prior to posting information on any social media platform;
- Participate in appropriate training and development activities in relation to IT and social media networks;
- Inform their Leadership and Management Team immediately if they become aware of a posting on a social media site which may contravene the Organisation's Social Media Policy.

6. Guidelines for using Social Media

6.1 New Hartley First School respects an employee's right to a private life and the Social Media Policy does not wish to discourage, nor unduly limit, an employee's personal expression or online activities. However, employees must be aware that social networking sites are a public forum and should not assume that entries on a website will remain private. If an employee chooses to access social networking sites and/or other online forums, blogs etc, either inside or outside of work, he/she must do so in a responsible and appropriate manner and exercise judgement at all times. **An employee will be personally responsible for the content of information posted, in a personal capacity, on any form of social media platform.**

6.2 As information posted on social media networks can be quickly and widely disseminated control over posted information can be rapidly lost which makes it difficult to retrieve an inaccurate message once it has been sent. Employees need to bear in mind the types of information they post and check the content before it is posted both for accuracy and to ensure it meets the requirements of the Organisation's Social Media Policy. To this end employees must:

- Refrain from “speaking on behalf of New Hartley First School” unless authorised to do so in writing. If an employee chooses to comment on any aspect of our business, or policy, he/she should clearly identify him/herself as a New Hartley employee in the posting or blog

site(s) and include a disclaimer that the views expressed are his/her own and not those of New Hartley First School. If in doubt, an employee should seek advice first from the Leadership and Management Team. **An employee will be personally liable for what he/she publishes online;**

- Not make any comment, or post any material, which may otherwise cause damage to New Hartley First School’s reputation or bring New Hartley First School’s into disrepute;
- Not post information which could constitute contempt of court, a breach of copyright, a breach of the Data Protection Act, the Human Rights Act, the Freedom of Information Act or the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act;
- Not post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory derogatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, racist, sexist or is otherwise unlawful;
- Not use social media sites for political purposes or the promotion of personal interests;
- Not use or disclose any confidential, personal, secure or protected information obtained in their capacity as an employee of New Hartley First School;
- Ensure information posted is politically neutral, factual, accurate and true;
- Not interact on websites which could impact on working relationships with colleagues, partners, customers or service users.

6.3 Failure to abide by the requirements of the Social Media Policy could result in disciplinary action being taken against an employee in accordance with New Hartley First School’s Disciplinary Procedure.

7. Monitoring

7.1 In order to protect its legitimate business interests the New Hartley First School reserves the right, without notice, to monitor e-mails and access an employee’s mailbox on the same basis as any other written documentation in line with the Data Protection Act, the Human Rights Act, the Freedom of Information Act and/ or the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.

8. Posting Inappropriate Material

8.1 If an employee is found to have posted inappropriate material in any format on the internet he/she will be required to assist in ensuring such material is removed without delay. Failure to assist could lead to disciplinary action being taken in accordance with New Hartley First School’s Disciplinary Procedure.

9. Protecting against Identity Theft

9.1 Employees are reminded of the need to be security conscious and take steps to protect themselves from identity theft eg: by restricting the amount of personal information posted online, by keeping passwords secure etc...

9.2 Employees who have access to laptops or other mobile information equipment are responsible for the safety and security of equipment when it is in their possession.

10. Harassment and Bullying

10.1 All employees of New Hartley First School are expected to treat colleagues with dignity and respect.

10.2 An employee subject to workplace harassment and/or bullying via the internet or a social media network often referred to as cyber-bullying, will have recourse to the New Hartley First School’s Disciplinary Procedure.

11. Monitoring and Review

11.1 The Head Teacher is responsible for the effective implementation of the Social Media Policy and for ensuring it is regularly reviewed.

11.2 Recognising the social media environment is a fast changing area the Leadership and Management Team will monitor and review the use of social media networks and may modify the Social Media Policy should the status of particular social media sites change eg: introduction of charges, changes to the content of a site(s) or changes to terms of use etc...

NEW HARTLEY FIRST SCHOOL

Employee Declaration Form

I confirm that I have received a copy of New Hartley First School's Social Media Policy.

I have read and understood the Policy and am aware that should I contravene the requirements contained within the Policy disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with New Hartley First School's Disciplinary Procedure.

Name:

Job Title:

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Signed:

Date:

Head Teacher's Name: **Mr. A. Wright**

Head Teacher's Signature:

Date:

Please forward your completed Employee Declaration form to Mrs. V. Frost.

