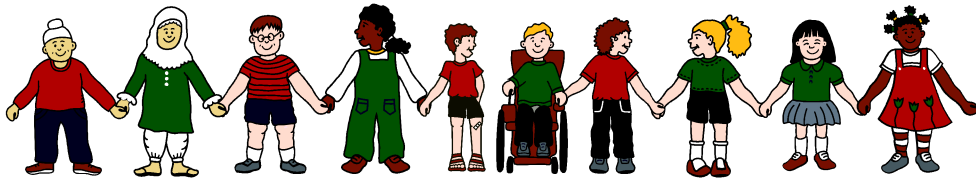


# **THE GILES NURSERY AND INFANTS' SCHOOL**



## **Social Media Policy**

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**(adapted from HfL model policy)**

**Ratified by the Governing Body: May 2022**

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## **Social Media Policy**

### **Introduction**

The aims of this policy are to:

- Enable appropriate use of social networking sites in a safe and secure manner.
- Safeguard employees in their use of social networking sites and ensure they do not make themselves vulnerable
- Minimise the risks to the school through the use of social media.

For the purposes of this policy, social media is any online platform or app that allows parties to communicate with each other to share data in a public forum. This includes social forums such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs, image-sharing and video websites such as YouTube.

Employees should be aware there are many more examples of social media than can be listed here and this is a constantly changing area. Employees should follow these guidelines in relation to any social media that they use.

This policy applies to the use of social media for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect the school in any way. It covers all employees, consultants, volunteers and agency workers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time. The school may also vary this policy as appropriate in any case.

### **Personal use of social media**

Occasional use of social media during working hours is permitted so long as it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content, does not interfere with employment responsibilities or productivity and complies with this policy.

Our PTA uses Facebook to communicate with parents and carers about its up and coming Events. The PTA Chair is responsible for all postings on these technologies and monitors responses from others.

Employees, governors, parents and carers are regularly provided with information on how to use social media responsibly and what to do if they are aware of inappropriate use by others.

Employees, governors, parents and carers are aware that the information, comments, images and video they post online can be viewed by others, copied and stay online forever.

## **Prohibited use**

Employees must not abuse their position of trust with pupils including, but not limited to:

- Accepting any current pupils, or former pupil under the age of 18, as friends, or requesting such friendships\*
- Communicating personally with pupils
- Posting photographs of pupils on sites not owned by the school
- Commenting about or naming pupils.

\*Should there be a conflict here in respect of family members, or close family friends, this is to be declared to the Headteacher.

Employees must avoid making any social media communications that could damage the schools interests or reputation, even indirectly.

Employees must not use social media to:

- Defame or disparage the school, its employees or any third party
- Harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties
- Make false or misleading statements
- Impersonate colleagues or third parties

The employee must not express opinions on the schools behalf via social media, unless expressly authorised to do so and through the appropriate approved social media channels.

The employee must not post comments about sensitive school-related topics, such as the schools performance, internal disputes involving pupils, parents or employees or do anything to jeopardise the schools confidential information particularly with regards to pupils and other employees. The employee must not include the school's logo or other trademarks in any social media posting, unless expressly authorised to do so.

Employees should never provide professional references on behalf of the school for other individuals without the express authority of the Head teacher including on social or professional networking sites. Such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the school and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the school.

Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any other School policies. If an internet post would breach any policy/procedure in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum.

Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Headteacher.

Employees, governors, parents and carers are aware that their online behaviour should at all times be compatible with UK law

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### **Business use of social media**

If an employee is contacted for comments about the school for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, the enquiry should be directed to the Head teacher and the employee should not respond without written approval.

### **Guidelines for responsible use of social media**

The employee should make it clear in social media postings, that the employee is speaking on the employee's own behalf.

Employees should be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that the employee is personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see. Employees should ensure that they use privacy and access settings whilst being aware that they cannot control the use of their postings by others.

The employee should also ensure that their profile and any content they post are consistent with the professional image the employee presents to colleagues, pupils and parents.

If the employee is uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, they are advised to refrain from posting it until they have discussed it with their manager.

If the employee becomes aware of social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on the school, the employee should contact the Head teacher.

### **Monitoring**

The school reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, employee activities using school IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that school rules are being complied with and for legitimate school purposes.

For further information, please refer to the eSafety and data security policy.

### **Breach of this policy**

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The employee may be required to remove any social media content that the school consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

The school considers that valid reasons for checking an internet usage include suspicions that the employee has:

- Been using social media when they should be working
- Acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy