



St. Mary's Catholic  
Primary School  
Ysgol Catholig  
Santes Fair

Social Media  
Policy.

# Our Mission Statement



As a Catholic family,  
we will do our best to live and  
learn as Christ taught us.

Our aims are designed to allow us to live out the Mission Statement.

## School Aims

- a. To create a community where love, peace and joy are present and to be true to the values of the Gospel and to make our Catholic faith alive by building such a community.
- b. To develop a dynamic interaction between home, school and parish and provide a formation for each child to realise their full potential in all aspects of spiritual and moral development.
- c. To develop a zest for life and an enjoyment of learning.
- d. To allow children to respect all forms of life.
- e. To achieve high standards in academic learning.
- f. To develop creativity and a love of art, music and drama.
- g. To encourage children to learn physical skills and a knowledge and control over their own bodies to compete against themselves and others in order to raise their performance.
- h. To have experience of the Welsh Language and be introduced to Welsh culture and others from around the world to reflect the cosmopolitan nature of our school.
- i. To make sense of the world around them scientifically and by understanding other people, their history and their environment.
- j. To foster good attitudes and appropriate behaviour, manners and dress.

# Social Media Policy

## Context

This policy aims to give clear guidance to all staff in relation to the use of social media. The school recognises that social media provides many excellent opportunities to enhance the manner in which we are able to communicate with parents and the wider world. These opportunities bring some risks with them and therefore, it is essential that all staff are aware of those practices which are acceptable and those that are not.

## Who is Covered by this Policy?

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades within the school, including senior managers, officers, governors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as Staff in this policy). Third parties who have access to our electronic communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with this policy.

## Scope and Purpose of this Policy.

This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media including Facebook, Twitter, Schoop, all other social networking sites, and all other internet postings, including blogs.

It applies to the use of social media for both work and personal purposes, whether during work hours or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.

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

## Positive Use of Social Media.

We will use social media to:

- Keep members of the community informed about the life and work of the school. **Whole school information** will be shared via Facebook and Twitter (and any other sanctioned platforms). This may include updates on:
  - Parental Consultation Meetings.
  - Key dates.
  - INSET Days.
  - Productions.
  - Governors' Reports to Parents.
  - Assemblies.
  - Sporting events.

- Fund raising activities.
- The work of the Friends of St. Mary's (PTA).
- Extra-curricular activities and
- Examples of everyday school life and learning.
- Inform parents about **individual class issues** via Class Dojo. This may include updates on:
  - Home learning.
  - Changes to routines and
  - Class trips

Social Media must not be used to:

- a) Breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies.
- b) Breach any obligations relating to confidentiality.
- c) Breach our Disciplinary Rules.
- d) 'Friend' a pupil or parent (unless the parent is in the staff member's immediate family).
- e) Defame or disparage the school, its governors, its staff, its pupils or parents, its affiliates, partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders.
- f) Harass or bully other Staff in any way or breach our Anti-harassment and Anti-bullying Policies.
- g) Unlawfully discriminate against other Staff or third parties or breach our Equal Opportunities Policy;
- h) Breach our Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague, pupil or parent online).
- i) Breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).
- j) Provide references for other individuals on social media or professional networking sites, as such references, positive or negative, can be attributed to the school and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and for the organisation.

## Personal use of Social Media

Personal use of social media is never permitted during working time or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems.

Staff should not use a work email address to sign up to any social media and any personal social media page should not make reference to their employment with the school. Staff must not take photographs or posts from social media that belongs to the school for their own personal use.

## Monitoring

The contents of our IT resources and communications systems are the School's property. Therefore, staff should have no expectation of privacy in relation to any message, files, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post, conversation or message, or any other kind of information or

communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems.

The School reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your acknowledgement of this policy and your use of such resources and systems.

All Staff are advised not to use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that he or she wishes to be kept private or confidential from the School.

## Responsible Use of Social Media

The following sections of the policy provide staff with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.

### Photographs for use of Social Media

Any photographs for social media posts may only be taken using school cameras/devices or devices that have been approved in advance by the Headteacher (or the Deputy in his absence). When any device is used that does not belong to the school all photographs must be deleted immediately from the device, once the photographs have been uploaded to a device belonging to the School.

### Staff Protocol for use of Social Media

When any post is going to be made on the school's own social media platforms the following steps must be taken:

1. Ensure that permission from the child's parent has been sought before information is used on social media (via Parent / Carer Social Media Agreement signed on admission).
2. Ensure that there is no identifying information relating to a child/children in the post - for example any certificates in photographs are blank/without names or the child's name cannot be seen on the piece of work.
3. The post must be positive in nature and relevant; relating to the children, the good work of staff, the school or any achievements.
4. Social media can also be used to issue updates or reminders to parents/carers.

### Protecting our business reputation

Staff must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:

- i. The School.
- ii. Current, past or prospective Staff.
- iii. Current, past or prospective pupils.
- iv. Parents, carers or families of (iii)

- v. The school's suppliers and services providers; and
- vi. Other affiliates and stakeholders.

Staff should avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the school's reputation, even indirectly.

If Staff are using social media they should make it clear in any postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. Staff should write in the first person and use a personal rather than a school e-mail address when communicating on social media.

Staff are personally responsible for what they post on social media. Staff should remember that what they publish might be available to be read globally (including within the school itself, by future employers and by social acquaintances) for a long time. Staff should keep this in mind before they post content. If Staff disclose whether directly or indirectly their affiliation to the School as a member of Staff whether past, current or prospective, they must also state that their views do not represent those of the school.

Staff must ensure that their profile and any content posted are consistent with the professional image they are required to present to colleagues, pupils and parents. Working within a Catholic school such as St. Mary's brings additional responsibilities with it and all staff need to keep this in mind when posting on-line in order to ensure that the school is not brought into disrepute.

Staff must avoid posting comments about confidential or sensitive school related topics. Even if staff make it clear that their views on such topics do not represent those of the school, such comments could still damage the school's reputation and incur potential liability.

If a member of staff is uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, he or she should refrain from making the communication until he or she has discussed it with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. If a member of staff sees content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the school, its staff, pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders, he or she is required to report this in the first instance to the Head teacher. All staff are responsible for protecting and promoting the school's reputation.

# Appendix:

## Advice and Guidance for Parents/Carers.

### What you ought to know about social media and networking for children.

The more you know about the kind of social networking sites your children belong to and what information they like to share, the more likely you'll be able to keep them safe:

- The age limit to join most social networking sites is 13 (difficult to enforce!)
- The most popular social networks include Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Tumblr, Tiktok, Ask.fm and Snapchat; sites aimed at younger children also have a social networking element.
- Many sites include an instant message function that allows private conversations between site members.
  - You can create 'privacy settings' on most social networking sites, so only close friends can search for your children, tag them in a photograph or share what they post.
- Most social networking sites have an app, which means your children will have access to the social network from their (or your) smartphone or tablet.
- Facebook, for example, has a setting that allows your children to approve or dismiss tags that people add to their posts.
- Information shared between friends can be easily copied and may spread widely.
- It isn't easy to take back information once it's online, and it can be impossible to recover after someone has shared it.
- Not everyone your child meets online will be who they say they are.

Chat rooms and forums are one of the places that online groomers visit to connect with children; they can also be places where people use a lot of sexual language and engage in online flirting. What are the risks that children may need to deal with? Unless used appropriately, children are at real risk of exposure to the following:

- Violent, sexual and pornographic content.
- Inaccurate or false information, and extreme views.
- Harmful behaviours, including self-harm, anorexia and suicide.
- Oversharing of personal information.
- Bullying, intimidating or frightening behaviour, including actively or unintentionally getting involved in this conduct.

Fake profiles that people use for mischief-making, sexual grooming, stalking, blackmail, extortion, identity theft or hacking. How such exposure could affect children will be affected in many ways, but here are the most common:

- Fearing they will miss out, which may lead to excessive use.
- Getting upset by things they have seen and being uncertain what to do about it.
- Engaging, or being pressurised into engaging, in more risky behaviour.
- Developing unrealistic ideals of body image and gender.
- Being subjected to peer pressure that is difficult to handle.

Creating an online reputation, which may create problems in the future. Keeping your children safe on social networks There is no guarantee to keeping children entirely safe, but there are some golden tips:

- Educate yourself on what the various social networks and apps do
- Ask your children to show you which social media sites they use and what they like about them
- Agree with your children when they can join a social networking site and create their profile with them
- Help them to set privacy, location and tagging settings
- Show them how to report people and inappropriate conversations using the 'help' or 'report' tab, and keep a copy of the conversation as evidence
- Teach your children how to block or ignore people (or learn how to do this together), and create a sentence with your children that they can use if they wish to exit an online conversation that makes them uncomfortable
- Set boundaries about which sites they can use and for how long
- Teach your children not to share any personal details (eg passwords, their real names and their schools)
- Use the site yourself – you can be your children's friend on Facebook or follower on Twitter
- Explain that friends should be people they know and meeting people they know only online can be dangerous
- Report directly to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) if someone is trying to meet up with your child, or if you think your child is in immediate or imminent danger
- Set rules about what they should and shouldn't post
- Visit the social media sites and familiarise yourself with each site's online safety guidelines; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat all have safety and reporting facilities
- Encourage your children to talk to you if they see anything that upsets them.



## The Role of Schools.

An effective approach to online safety can empower a school to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology. You can use social media as a force for good, such as fundraising and raising awareness for school events. In equal measure, it can be used for bullying by pupils, complaints by parents and conflict between colleagues.

Governing bodies should be doing all they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to identified risks by ensuring the appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place. For more information you can find out more about how children use social media, the apps they use, the risks they face, how to use privacy settings and tips on how to talk to your children on the following websites:

[www.childnet.com/sns](http://www.childnet.com/sns)

[www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)

[www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety)

[www.parentzone.org.uk](http://www.parentzone.org.uk)

[www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/parents](http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/parents)

[www.askaboutgames.com](http://www.askaboutgames.com)

If you're concerned about online grooming or sexual behaviour online, report it to the CEOP at:

[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk).

If you stumble across criminal, sexual or obscene content on the internet, you should report it to the Internet Watch Foundation at:

[www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)