



CHALONER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Social Media Policy

Introduction

Chaloner Primary School acknowledges the increasing use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Skype. The widespread availability and use of social networking applications through PCs, mobile phones, tablets and games consoles bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with audiences in new ways but also lead to a number of issues of acceptable usage.

This policy is intended to advise school leadership and staff on how to deal with potential inappropriate use of social networking sites. The use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, and the policy requirements in this document aim to provide balance in supporting innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice.

Scope

This policy covers use of social networking applications by all school stakeholders, including employees, parents, volunteers, governors and pupils.

The requirements of this policy apply to all uses of social networking applications which are used for any school related or personal purpose.

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to:

- Blogs services
- Online discussion forums
- Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook
- Media sharing services, for example YouTube
- 'Micro-blogging' applications, for example Twitter

All stakeholders should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are in private spaces, is still subject to Copyright, Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the School's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Use of social networking sites in work time

Use of social networking sites in work time for personal use is not permitted on any device, unless permission has been given by the head teacher.

Terms of Use

School representatives must adhere to the following Terms of Use. The Terms of Use below apply to all uses of social networking by all school representatives. Where applications allow the posting of messaging online, users must be mindful that the right to freedom of expression attaches only to lawful conduct. Chaloner Primary School expects that users of social networking applications will exercise the right to freedom of expression with due consideration for the rights of others and strictly in accordance with these Terms of Use.

Social Networking applications:

- Must not be used to publish any content which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claim for damages. This includes but is not limited to material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the school into disrepute.

- Must not be used in an abusive manner towards school and /or members of staff.
- Must not be used for actions that would put school representatives in breach of school codes of conduct or policies relating to staff.
- Must not breach the school's misconduct, equal opportunities or bullying and harassment policies.
- No comment must be made with reference to Chaloner Primary School, its staff, governors, pupils, families or any person associated with it or any events.
- No staff member should have a pupil or former pupil under the age of 18 as a 'friend' to share information with.
- Employees should not identify themselves as a representative of the school.
- References should not be made to any staff member, pupil, parent or school activity/event unless prior permission has been obtained and agreed with the head teacher.
- Staff should be aware if their out of work activity causes potential embarrassment for the employer or detrimentally effects the employer's reputation then the employer may be entitled to take disciplinary action.
- Violation of this policy will be considered as gross misconduct and can result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee up to and including termination of employment.

Guidance/protection for staff using social networking

- No member of staff should interact with any pupils or parents in the school on social networking sites. The school advises if you have already established an online association with these persons prior to reading the code that you disassociate yourself from them.
- Where there are legitimate family links, please inform the head teacher in writing.
- No school computers or personal devices are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of day.
- It must be made clear that any comments (e.g. political views) are personal opinion.
- No information regarding activities at school, or the school in general will be added.

The DfE developed guidance on teacher's use of social networking sites. It advises:

'When publishing information, personal contact details, videos or images, ask yourself if you would feel comfortable about a current or prospective employer, colleague, pupil or parent, viewing your content.'
(DfE, 2009)

Guidance/protection for pupils/parents using social networking

- No pupil under 13 should be accessing social networking sites. This is the guidance from both Facebook and MSN. There is a mechanism on Facebook where pupils can be reported via the Help screen.
http://www.facebook.com/help/contact.php?show_form=underage
- No pupil should attempt to join a staff member's areas on networking sites. If pupils attempt this, the member of staff is to inform the head teacher. Parents will be informed.
- No school computers are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of day.
- Please report any improper conduct or cyber bullying to your class teacher in confidence as soon as it happens.
- The school will conduct a full investigation if the school is brought into disrepute or defamation of school staff is reported.

This policy will be reviewed in Spring 2016 or sooner in accordance with any changes in legislation.