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	Issued: 2 March 2022
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY	Review date: When necessary
	Supersedes: 21 November 2018
Approved by	FULL GOVERNING BODY/L & M COMMITTEE/HEADTEACHER

Purpose of policy

- To minimise the reputational, legal and governance risks to the school and its employees, arising from the use of social media by staff in both personal and professional capacities.
- To enable the safe use of social media for the purposes of communication and engagement.
- To ensure a consistent approach is applied across the school.

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) is a broad term of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other. However the school community must be aware that most online games have a huge social media element to them. For example Minecraft, Movie Star planet and World of Warcraft to name just a few.

The school recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. The School will use social media to communicate with parents/carers and the Community. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially round the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation. This policy aims to encourage the safe use of the school's social media by the school, its staff, parents and carers. The school's Code of Conduct goes into detail about standards expected by staff when using their personal social media.

For more information on setting up a safe Facebook or Twitter account visit:

www.childnet.com

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Legal Framework

South End Junior School is committed to ensuring that all members provide confidential services that meet the highest standards. All individuals working on behalf of the school are bound by a legal duty of confidence and other laws to protect the confidential information they have access to during the course of their work. Disclosure of confidential information on social media is likely to be a breach of a number of laws and professional codes of conduct, including:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Common law duty of confidentiality and
- The Data Protection Act 2018

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:-

- Person-identifiable information protected by the Data Protection Act 2018
- Information divulged in the expectation of confidentiality
- School or NNC business or corporate records containing organisationally or publicly sensitive information

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- Any commercially sensitive information such as information relating to commercial proposals or current negotiations
- Politically sensitive information.

Staff members should also be aware that other laws relating to libel, defamation, harassment and copyright may apply to information posted on social media, including:

- Libel Act 1843
- Defamation Acts 1952 and 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Malicious Communications Act 1998
- Communications Act 2003
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

South End Junior School and NNC could be held vicariously responsible for acts of their employees in the course of their employment.

Organisational Control

Roles and Responsibilities

SLT

- Facilitating training and guidance on Social Media use.
- Developing and implementing the Social Media Policy.
- Taking a lead role in investigating any reported incidents.
- Making an initial assessment when an incident is reported and involving appropriate staff and external agencies required.
- Approval of account creation.

Administrator/Moderator

- Create the account following SLT approval.
- Store account details including passwords securely.
- Be involved in monitoring and contributing to the account.
- Control the process for managing an account after a staff member who is aware of passwords to school's social media accounts has left the organisation.

Staff

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- Know the contents of, and ensure that any use of social media is carried out in line with, this and other relevant policies.
- Attend appropriate training if requested.
- Regularly monitoring, updating and managing content he/she has posted via school or organisations accounts.
- Follow school's Code of Conduct with regard to their personal social media accounts.

Pupils/Young people

- The school would not expect their social media accounts to be followed or accessed by its pupils, as all pupils at South End Junior School are under the age of 13.
- Pupils are all asked to sign an Acceptable Usage Policy in relation to their use of technology in school.

Parents/Carers

- Parents/Carers are asked to take this school policy into account when posting or commenting on any of the school's social media sites or thinking of setting up any social media sites linked to the school.
- The school will post this Social Media Policy on its website.

Managing the accounts

Before creating the account

The school community is encouraged to consider if a social media account will help them with their work, eg a "Friends of the school" Facebook page. Anyone wishing to create such an account must present a strong case to the Head which covers the following points:-

- The aim of the account,
- The intended audience,
- How the account will be promoted,
- Who will run the account (at least two members of staff should be named),
- Will the account be open or private/closed.

Following consideration from the Head an application should be approved or rejected. In all cases the Head must be satisfied that anyone running the social media account on behalf of the school has read and understood this policy, On-Line Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Policy and Data Protection Policy and is willing to undergo any appropriate training. This includes volunteers and parents.

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Creating an Account in School

- All accounts in school should only be created by the Admin Centre, after approval from the Head.
- Any Facebook pages set up by the school will have the private message function disabled.
- The "tagging" function will be turned off where possible.

Monitoring sites

- Regularly monitoring and intervention are paramount in case a situation arises where bullying or any other inappropriate behaviour arises on the school's social media accounts. The School's accounts must be monitored regularly and frequently (preferably 7 days a week including holidays). At South End Junior School monitoring of the school's accounts are carried out by The Admin Centre during the school day and by the Head at other times.
- Regular up-dates are posted to inform our social community that these accounts are for the school to share information and not for parents/carers to communicate back with the school as the accounts are not for this purpose.
- Staff and parents/carers are asked to bring to the attention of the Head any offensive public postings about the school that they become aware of elsewhere (ie not on the school's own social media sites)

Using the accounts

Behaviour on the sites

- The school requires that all users using social media adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this policy and other relevant policies (please see On-Line Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Data Protection Policy and Code of Conduct).
- Digital communications by staff on school sites must be professional and respectful at all times and in accordance with this policy. Staff must not use the school's social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make ill-considered comments or judgments about staff, nor use the sites for personal gain.
- If a journalist makes contact about posts made using social media, staff must refer this contact to the Head to deal with.

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- Unacceptable conduct (eg defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by the school and reported immediately to the relevant member of staff, and escalated where appropriate.
- The use of social media by staff while at work may be monitored, in line with other school policies. The school permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media accounts. However where excessive use is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken.
- Always make sure you log out of the school's social media accounts when using a shared computer or device.

Staff Posting on School's social media sites

- Always use a professional and appropriate tone.
- Be respectful.
- Staff should not post information regarding pupils that is detailed enough for someone with an alternative motive to build a picture of the pupil that could then be used to cause the pupil to regard them as trusted individual.
- If mentioning a pupil name, only use first name and **never** post any pupil name with an image that contains them.
- Avoid posting exact timings of events where parents/carers are already aware of these. For example - Parents already have details of school disco, reminder posted on Facebook - the reminder should be about the disco day only and should not repeat the times.
- Ensure you have permission to 'share' other people's materials and acknowledge the author.
- Think before responding to comments: when in doubt, get a second opinion.
- Seek advice and report any mistakes using the school's reporting process.
- Don't make comments, post content or links to materials that will bring the school or organisation into disrepute.

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- Don't publish confidential or commercially sensitive material.
- Don't breach copyright, data protection or other relevant legislation.
- Always consider the appropriateness of content for any audience of school accounts, and don't link to or embed potentially inappropriate content.
- Don't use social media to air grievances or negativity.

The school will take appropriate action in the event of breaches to the social media policy. Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, the school will deal with the matter internally. If conduct is considered to be illegal, the school will report the matter to Police or other relevant agencies, and may take action according to the disciplinary policy.

Use of images

Use of images can be assumed to be acceptable, providing the following guidelines are strictly followed:-

- Permission to use any photos or video recordings has been given by parent/carer (images of pupils) or staff member (images of staff members). The Admin Centre holds these records. If anyone wishes not to be filmed or videoed their wishes must be respected. **NB no pupil names must ever be posted with the image.**
- Under no circumstances should staff share or upload student pictures online other than via school or organisation owned social media accounts.
- Staff should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on the school's social media accounts. Students and staff should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on any school list of children whose images must not be published.
- If a member of staff accidentally takes a compromising picture which could be misconstrued or misused, they must delete it immediately.
- Staff should use only school equipment for taking images of pupils, unless they have specific permission from the Head. (Refer to Code of Conduct for further information on taking images of children).

Legal Considerations

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- Users of social media should consider the copyright of the content they are sharing and, where necessary, should seek permission from the copyright holder before sharing.
- Users must ensure that their use of social media does not infringe upon relevant data protection laws, or breach of confidentiality. (Please refer to the school's Data Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.)

Handling abuse

- Offensive comments our unacceptable comments should be brought to the attention of the Head, who will deal with them swiftly and sensitively.
 - The school will then block, report or delete other users or their comments/posts and inform the audience what action was taken, if appropriate.
- Should the school be made aware of negative/offensive public postings about them elsewhere (eg. Spotted Rushden) they will consider whether to respond to these if appropriate.