



March 2022

Social Networking Policy

Our vision, **“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you”** motivates us to use our values in all aspects of our life. This policy has been written, reviewed, and applied with our values of courage, perseverance, and respect at its heart.

**Approved by: N Field &
R Conway**

Date: March 2022

Last reviewed on: March 2022

Next review due by: March 2023

Introduction

Social networking activities conducted online outside of the normal work environment, such as blogging (writing personal journals to publicly accessible internet pages), involvement in social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and posting material, images or comments on sites such as YouTube, can have a negative effect on an organisation's reputation or image. In addition, St Michael's CofE Primary School has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work (see separate School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy). This policy has been written to set out the key principles and code of conduct that we expect of everyone with respect to their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites.

Key Principles

Teaching staff, support staff, administrative staff, lunchtime supervisors, governors, parent helpers and volunteers (referred to as "everyone" throughout this policy) at St Michael's CofE Primary School have a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the school, and to treat colleagues and members of the school with professionalism and respect.

It is important to protect everyone at St Michael's CofE Primary School from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.

Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members of staff and it is essential that everyone at St Michael's CofE Primary School considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites out of school. People connected to St Michael's CofE School, either as paid employees or volunteers, must not communicate with children via social networking unless such communication has been previously agreed by the Headteacher.

Aims

- To set out the key principles and code of conduct expected of all members of staff, governors, Friends and volunteers at St Michael's CofE Primary School with respect to social networking.
- To further safeguard and protect children and staff.

Personal Responsibility

- Everyone is personally responsible for the content they publish online.
- Online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that is used face-to-face.
- When publishing to social networking sites the information is representative of the individual's views and opinions and not the views of St Michael's CofE Primary School

- By posting comments or by having online conversations etc. on social media sites, everyone must be aware that they are broadcasting to the world, and that even with the strictest privacy settings it is not always possible to know the security level of the social networking sites of any contacts.
- What is posted online should be within the bounds of professional discretion.

Code of Conduct for Everyone at St Michael's CofE Primary School– Social Networking

The following are **not considered acceptable** at St Michael's CofE Primary School:

- The use of the school's name, logo, or any other published material without written prior permission from the Headteacher. This applies to any published material including the Internet or written documentation.
- The posting of any communication or images which links the school to any form of illegal conduct or which may damage the reputation of the school. This includes defamatory comments.
- The disclosure of confidential or business-sensitive information; or the disclosure of information or images that could compromise the security of the school or the safety and security of those connected to it.
- The posting of any images of employees, children, governors or anyone directly connected with the school whilst engaged with the school, and in connection with school activities.

In addition to the above everyone at St Michael's CofE Primary School must ensure that they:

Do not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the school, or anyone at or connected with the school.

- Use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that their personal/professional reputation, or the school's reputation is, not compromised by inappropriate postings.
- Are aware of the potential of on-line identity fraud and to be cautious when giving out personal information about them which may compromise their personal safety and security.

Potential and Actual Breaches of this Policy

The Governing Body **will** take appropriate lawful action in order to protect the school's reputation and the reputation and safety of its staff, parents, governors, children and anyone else directly linked to the school should any potential or actual break of this policy come to light.

In instances where there has been a breach of the above Code of Conduct, the following will apply:

- Any breaches of this policy will be fully investigated under the school's published disciplinary procedure.
- Where it is found that there has been a breach of the policy this may result in action being taken and the Governing Body shall decide on appropriate further action.

