

Use of Social Media Policy for



All Hallows Catholic School

Document Control

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Our School Vision

Our vision at All Hallows is to form happy, successful students who reach their full potential and leave the School with integrity and moral purpose. We want a whole School experience that everyone would wish for their own children. We put our students at the heart of everything we do, guided by the truth and love of Christ.

1. Introduction

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly.

However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our School, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation. For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. The purpose of the Policy is to:

- safeguard all children;
- protect the School from legal risks;
- ensure that the reputation of the School, its staff and Governors is protected;
- ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the School.

2. Definition & Scope

Social networking platforms include, but are not limited to: blogs, online discussion forums, collaborative spaces, media sharing services, 'microblogging' applications, and online gaming environments. Examples include but are not limited to X, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Vimeo, Mumsnet, , YouTube, Flickr, Xbox Live, Blogger, SnapChat, WhatsApp, Tumblr, Discord, Roblox and comment streams on public websites such as newspaper sites.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds. Users need to bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright,

The Data Protection Act 2018 and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation.

3. Guidelines Relating to Staff & Student Communication

- Staff should not give their social media details to students, nor should they communicate with them by any form of social media;
- Staff should not become 'friends' with, 'follow' or make direct connections on any social media sites with current students. This also applies to ex-students until they are 18 and have finished secondary education. Where a social media link exists between School staff and students before they become employed/volunteer at the School, for example if they act as a sports coach to a pupil, we would expect staff to cease any of these social media links when they join the School;
- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the Head of Year, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead being copied in

4. Guidelines for Governors & Other Volunteers

- Views expressed/information posted must support the School's ethos and fundamental British values;
- Users must keep their personal and professional/School lives separate. They should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between the School and their personal interests;
- Users must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring All Hallows Catholic School into disrepute;
- Users must never represent their personal views as those of All Hallows Catholic School on any social media;
- Users must not discuss personal information relating to students, All Hallows Catholic School or the wider community on any social media;



- Users must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, former students, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations or All Hallows Catholic School.

5. Guidelines for Parents & Students

All Hallows Catholic School expects parents and students to behave in a civilised nature online and will not tolerate any of the following behaviour:

- Posting defamatory 'statuses' about fellow parents, students, former students, the School or its employees;
- Complaining about the School's values, processes, teaching and other methods on social media - the School has a clearly defined Complaints Procedures in place and requests that this is followed where is it felt necessary;
- Parents and students should not attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' any member of staff on social media except by prior agreement with the Headteacher;
- All Hallows Catholic School retains the right to request any damaging material to be removed from social media websites;
- Breaches of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously by the School and, in the event of illegal, defamatory, or discriminatory content, breaches may be reported to the police and other agencies, and could lead to prosecution.

6. Online Messaging

The School appreciates the simplicity and ease of instant messaging online; keeping in contact outside of School can benefit the School community by keeping the School community closer. All Hallows Catholic School expects parents to use messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, for purposes beneficial to themselves and the School, and will not accept any of the following behaviour:

- Sending abusive messages to fellow parents;
- Sending abusive messages to or about members of staff, students, former students, governors, parents or the School;

Should any problems arise from contact over messaging apps, the School will act quickly by contacting parents or students directly, to stop any issues continuing. All Hallows Catholic School can request a meeting with parents or students if any misconduct, such as sending abusive messages or posting defamatory statuses, occurs online.

The Headteacher can, with the permission of the person involved, view messages sent between members of the parental body or students in order to deal with problems quickly and effectively.

The Headteacher can request that 'group chats' are closed down should any problems continue between parents or parental bodies or students.

7. Guidelines for Students

When using social media or messaging services such as WhatsApp, Students should ensure that they follow these guidelines, taken from the All Hallows Catholic School Acceptable Use Policy for Students:

- I will not use social network sites or apps until I am legally old enough to do so. When I do so I will ensure that I follow all the rules set out in the School's Acceptable Use Policy for Students;
- I will always be polite and responsible when I communicate online. I will not use inappropriate, strong or aggressive language and I will appreciate that others may have different opinions;
- I will not use any electronic means to embarrass, distress or bully others or that would bring the School into disrepute;



- I will not take or distribute photos or videos of anyone without their permission, or store photos or videos of any activities in School without the permission of a member of staff;
- I will not take any images or video footage (films) of teachers or lessons, without the express permission of the teacher;
- I will not take, distribute or show inappropriate photos, videos or any other material that would cause harm or bring the School into disrepute;
- I will not upload any photos or videos of school-based activities to social media, chat groups or any other online forum without permission from the School

Students should be aware that behaviour contrary to the School Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Policy for Students and Behaviour Policy could result in sanctions being given, including, in serious cases, exclusion from School. In the most serious of cases the School reserves the right to involve the police and safeguarding authorities.

