



# **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

**SEPTEMBER 2014**

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If you have any questions regarding this policy please contact Claire Hardisty (Head teacher), Fiona Banks (Deputy Head Teacher) or Benjamin Wallis (e-Safety Officer).

## **1 KEY PRINCIPLES**

All individuals at Thornbury Primary School including staff, pupils, parents governors, volunteers external services providers and friends should ensure they conduct themselves, at all times, in such a way that serves to protect the reputation of the school, and treat colleagues, pupils and others associated with the school with professionalism and respect.

It is important to protect all individuals at Thornbury Primary School from being the subject of inappropriate statements and comments placed on social networking sites. This could include statements referring to confidential issues, making false or vexatious allegations, derogatory, insulting or offensive remarks and threats or intimidating comments. The posting of such comments will be viewed as a potential breach of the school's policy and appropriate action taken. Where such actions are committed by employees of the school it may be viewed as misconduct or gross misconduct and steps may be taken in accordance with the school's agreed disciplinary policy.

Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members of staff and it is essential that all individuals at Thornbury Primary School considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites out of school. Anyone working in the school either as a paid employee or volunteer must not communicate with children via social networking sites.

This policy relates to the use of social networking outside working hours. It should also be noted that other than in exceptional circumstances and where the prior approval of the Headteacher has been given the accessing of social networking sites during working hours either on personal or school equipment is not permitted.

## **2 AIMS**

To set out the key principles and code of conduct expected of all individuals in the school including, staff, pupils, parents, governors, volunteers external service providers and friends at the school with respect to social networking.

To support the Governing Body's overriding commitment to safeguard and protect children, staff and other individuals at the school.

## **3 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The following are **not considered acceptable** at Thornbury Primary School:

The use of the school's name, logo, or any other published material without prior written or verbal permission from the Headteacher. This applies to any published material including both electronic and paper communications.

The posting of any communication or images which links the school to any form of illegal activity or any other action 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.

The unauthorised posting of any images of employees, children, governors or anyone directly connected with the school whilst engaged in school activities.

Making derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the school, or anyone at or connected with the school.

In addition to the above requirements, individuals are advised to use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither their personal/professional reputation, or the school's reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.

Individuals should also be aware of risks associated with on-line identity fraud and be cautious when giving out personal information about themselves which may compromise their personal safety and security.

#### **4 POTENTIAL AND ACTUAL BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

In instances where there has been a breach of the terms of this policy by an employee of the school, the following will apply:

Any breaches of this policy by an employee of the school will be fully investigated. Where it is found that there has been a breach of the policy this may result in action being taken under the Disciplinary Procedure. Depending on the circumstances a breach of this policy may be viewed as misconduct which could result in disciplinary action being taken or gross misconduct which may result in summary dismissal.

Any breach of this policy by an individual link to the school, who is not an employee of the school the Governing Body will take appropriate action in order to protect the school's reputation and that of its staff, parents, governors, children and anyone else directly linked to the school.