

Quinton Primary School

Social Media Policy

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) is a broad term for any kind of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other. However, some games, for example Minecraft or World of Warcraft and video sharing platforms such as You Tube have social media elements to them.

Quinton Primary School recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. Staff, parents/carers and pupils are actively encouraged to find creative ways to use social media. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation. This policy aims to encourage the safe use of social media by Quinton Primary School, its staff, parents, carers and children.

Scope

This policy is subject to the school's/academy's codes of conduct and acceptable use agreements.

This policy:

- Applies to all staff and to all online communications which directly or indirectly, represent the school/academy.
- Applies to such online communications posted at any time and from anywhere.
- Encourages the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education
- Defines the monitoring of public social media activity pertaining to Quinton Primary School

Quinton Primary School respects privacy and understands that staff and pupils may use social media forums in their private lives. However, personal communications likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or the school's reputation are within the scope of this policy.

Professional communications are those made through official channels, posted on a school account or using the school/academy name. All professional communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications are those made via a personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with, or impacts on, Quinton Primary School, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the school with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the Quinton Primary School are outside the scope of this policy.

Digital communications with pupils/students are also considered.

Organisational control

Roles & 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 as required.
 - Receive completed applications for Social Media accounts
 - Approve 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 the lead staff member has left the organisation (closing or transferring)
- Staff
 - Know the contents of and ensure that any use of social media is carried out in line with this and other relevant policies
 - Attending appropriate training
 - Regularly monitoring, updating and managing content he/she has posted via school/academy accounts
 - Adding an appropriate disclaimer to personal accounts when naming the school/academy

Process for creating new accounts

Quinton Primary School's community is encouraged to consider if a social media account will help them in their work, e.g. a "Friends of the school" Facebook page. Anyone wishing to create such an account must present a business case to the Senior Leadership Team 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 staff members should be named)
- Will the account be open or private/closed

Following consideration by the SLT an application will be approved or rejected. In all cases, the SLT must be satisfied that anyone running a social media account on behalf of Quinton Primary School has read and understood this policy and received appropriate training. This also applies to anyone who is not directly employed by the school/academy, including volunteers or parents.

Monitoring

School accounts must be monitored regularly and frequently (preferably 7 days a week, including during holidays). Any comments, queries or complaints made through those accounts must be responded to within 24 hours (or on the next working day if received at a weekend) even if the response is only to acknowledge receipt. Regular monitoring and intervention is essential in case a situation arises where bullying or any other inappropriate behaviour arises on a school/academy social media account.

Behaviour

- Quinton Primary School requires that all users using social media adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this policy and other relevant policies.
- Digital communications by staff must be professional and respectful at all times and in accordance with this policy. Staff will not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make ill-considered comments or judgments about staff. Quinton Primary School's social media accounts must not be used for personal gain. Staff must ensure that confidentiality is maintained on social media even after they leave the employment of the school/academy.
- Users must declare who they are in social media posts or accounts. Anonymous posts are discouraged in relation to school activity.
- If a journalist makes contact about posts made using social media staff must follow Quinton Primary School's media policy before responding.
- Unacceptable conduct, (e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by the Quinton Primary School and will be reported as soon as possible to a relevant senior member of staff, and escalated where appropriate.

- The use of social media by staff while at work may be monitored, in line with Quinton Primary School's policies. Quinton Primary School *permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites. However, where excessive use is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken*
- The school/academy will take appropriate action in the event of breaches of the social media policy. Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, the school/academy will deal with the matter internally. Where conduct is considered illegal, the school/academy will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies, and may take action according to the disciplinary policy.

Legal considerations

- 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 confidentiality.

Handling abuse

- When acting on behalf of Quinton Primary School, handle offensive comments swiftly and with sensitivity.
- If a conversation turns and becomes offensive or unacceptable, Quinton Primary School users should block, report or delete other users or their comments/posts and should inform the audience exactly why the action was taken
- If you feel that you or someone else is subject to abuse by colleagues through use of a social networking site, then this action must be reported using the agreed Quinton Primary School protocols.

Tone

The tone of content published on social media should be appropriate to the audience, whilst retaining appropriate levels of professional standards. Key words to consider when composing messages are:

- Engaging
- Conversational
- Informative
- Friendly (on certain platforms, e.g. Facebook)

Use of images

Quinton Primary School's use of images can be assumed to be acceptable, providing the following guidelines are strictly adhered to.

- Permission to use any photos or video recordings should be sought in line with the Quinton Primary School's digital and video images policy. If anyone, for any reason, asks not to be filmed or photographed then their wishes should be respected.
- Under no circumstances should staff share or upload pupil pictures online other than via Quinton Primary School's owned social media accounts
- Staff should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on Quinton Primary School's social media accounts. Students/pupils should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on any Quinton Primary School list of children whose images must not be published.
- If a member of staff inadvertently takes a compromising picture which could be misconstrued or misused, they must delete it immediately.

Personal use

- Staff
 - Personal communications are those made via a personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with the school or impacts on the school, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the Quinton Primary School with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.
 - Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon Quinton Primary School are outside the scope of this policy.
 - Where excessive personal use of social media in Quinton Primary School is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken
 - Quinton Primary School *permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites.*
- Pupils
 - Staff are not permitted to follow or engage with current or prior pupils of Quinton Primary School on any personal social media network account.
 - The school's education programme should enable the pupils to be safe and responsible users of social media.
 - Pupils are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about the Quinton Primary School. Any offensive or inappropriate comments will be resolved by the use of the school's behaviour policy
- Parents/Carers
 - If parents/carers have access to a school learning platform where posting or commenting is enabled, parents/carers will be informed about acceptable use.
 - Parents/Carers are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about Quinton Primary School. In the event of any offensive or inappropriate comments being made, the school will ask the parent/carer to remove the post and invite them to discuss the issues in person. If necessary, refer parents to Quinton Primary School's complaints procedures.

Monitoring posts about the school

- As part of active social media engagement, it is considered good practice to pro-actively monitor the Internet for public postings about the school.
- Quinton Primary School should effectively respond to social media comments made by others according to a defined policy or process.