

Reviewed Date:	June 2024
Review Date	June 2027



Agreed by: Learning and Achievement Committee    Date: January 2025

Name: Stephen Skeet    Signature: Signed electronically on Gov Hub

## Acceptable use of Social Media and mobile technologies statement – June 2024

### Highfield Facebook page: Highfield Nursery School – Ipswich

We know that the vast majority of parents, governors and staff use social media responsibly, however, it is important to have guidelines in place for all stakeholders of the centre.

#### Definitions and Scope

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: Blogs, Online discussion forums, Collaborative spaces, Media sharing services, ‘Microblogging’ applications, and online gaming environments. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, Tik Tok, YouTube, Xbox Live and comment streams on public websites such as newspaper sites and any other emerging social media.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds.

All parents, governors and staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation.

#### Rationale

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 as well as to ensure that all content published in relation to our school is appropriate and does not undermine the reputation of the Highfield centre without being suitably challenged.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff and parents at the school. The purpose of the policy is to:

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- Safeguard all children
- Protect the school from legal risks
- Ensure that the reputation of the school, its children, 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

### **It's My Opinion I Can Say What I Like...**

Firstly, we believe it is always safer to presume that on social media applications **nothing is private and that nothing can be deleted!**

It is in some ways only human nature to chat with friends, colleagues, family members and other people about things that happen in and around the life of a school. Similarly, it can feel beneficial to let off steam with friends and family about things that have got under your skin regarding your child's school, work mates, other children or their families. On occasions parents, for example, may feel that it is quicker or easier to raise concerns about the progress of their child, or the behaviour or another child etc. via a Facebook wall or message board. **This practice is actively discouraged by Highfield in the strongest possible terms** and all parents / carers are encouraged to use the channels best suited to professional and confidential discussion so that issues can be quickly and professionally dealt with. If you have any concerns regarding your child, please speak to your child's class teacher or Head Teacher, Ruth Coleman.

Please be aware that, if you act in this manner as a member of our community there is a real chance that you are behaving unacceptably and that it may be the duty of the school to challenge this.

It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard our children. If you have concerns about a child, including in relation to PREVENT, please speak to the Designated Safeguard Lead (Ruth Coleman) or alternates (Jannice Simpson, Jayde Scripps or Denise Lewis). You can also call Customer First directly, at any time on 0808 800 4005. Please see our Child Protection Policy for more information.

### **Personal use of social media**

- Highfield staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or children from the school community in any personal social media whilst in employment at Highfield Nursery School
- If any member of our community is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Head teacher)
- Members of Highfield staff and wider community are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts
- Highfield staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with members of the school community on school business, nor should any such contact be accepted.
- Highfield staff, governors and parents are advised to avoid posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to Highfield and members of its community on any social media accounts
- Highfield staff, governors and parents are also advised to consider the reputation of Highfield in any posts or comments they make related to the school on any social media accounts

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### **Mobile technologies**

- Highfield staff and governors should not have personal mobile technology (including but not exhaustive: mobile phones, smart phones, iPads, tablets or any other technology that can take photographs or record data on the children) in the classrooms. All personal mobile technology should be in a locked locker (in the back office or corridor) and should not be accessed whilst pupils are present. Phones can be used during breaks.
- Highfield staff, other than the trip leader, should not take personal mobile technologies out on school trips, local walks, to the meadow or on home visits. In line with the staff handbook, staff should inform their child's school to contact the office in case of emergency, illness etc, and the office will call the appropriate trip leaders phone.

Responsibility for this policy: Ruth Coleman

Review of this policy: This policy is reviewed annually

This policy forms part of our safeguarding policies and should be read alongside our Online Safety and Child Protection policy. These are available on our website and the main office.