



Hemingford Grey

SCHOOL

Electronic Communication Social Media Policy

*** Incorporating the Social Media Code of Conduct
(Appendix 1) and the Protocol for raising concerns regarding your
child at school (Appendix 2)**

DATE POLICY WAS LAST REVIEWED AND APPROVED: JULY 2017

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

This policy applies to all School staff regardless of their employment status. This policy does not form part of the terms and conditions of employee's employment with the School and is not intended to have contractual effect. It does however set out the School's current practices and required standards of conduct and all staff are required to comply with its contents. Breach of the provisions of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence which may result in disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

This Policy may be amended from time to time and staff will be notified of any changes no later than one month from the date those changes are intended to take effect.

Purpose of this Policy

The School recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics using a wide variety of social media, such as facebook, twitter, blogs and wikis. However, staff use of social media can pose risks to the school's confidential and proprietary information, its reputation and it can jeopardise our compliance with our legal obligations.

To minimise these risks, avoid loss of productivity and to ensure that our IT resources and communications systems are used only for appropriate work related purposes, all School staff are required to comply with the provisions in this policy.

Who is covered by this policy?

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades within the School, including senior managers, officers, governors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as **Staff** in this policy).

Third parties who have access to our electronic communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with this policy.

Scope and Purpose of this Policy

This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Wikipedia, all other social networking sites, and all other internet postings, including blogs.

It applies to the use of social media for both work and personal purposes, whether during work hours or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours and regardless of whether the School's equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

Staff may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

Personnel responsible for implementing the policy

The Board of Governors have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy, but have delegated day-to-day responsibility for its operation to the Head Teacher.

Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks also lies with the Head Teacher in liaison with the ICT Support Assistant.

All senior School Staff have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all staff understands the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below its requirements.

All School Staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Head Teacher in the first instance.

Compliance with related policies and agreements

Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies. If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, employees are prohibited from using social media to:

- a) breach our E-Safety Policy;
- b) breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;
- c) breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality;
- d) breach our Disciplinary Rules;
- e) defame or disparage the School, its Staff, its pupils or parents, its affiliates, partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders;
- f) harass or bully other Staff in any way or breach our Anti-harassment and bullying policy;
- g) unlawfully discriminate against other Staff or third parties or breach our Equal opportunities policy;
- h) breach our Data protection policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague online);
- i) breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).

Staff should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the School and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.

Staff who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Personal use of social media

Personal use of social media is never permitted during working time or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems.

Monitoring

The contents of our IT resources and communications systems are the School's property. Therefore, staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post conversation or

message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems.

The School reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your acknowledgement of this policy and your use of such resources and systems. This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, log-ins, recordings and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network monitoring technologies.

The School may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time after they are created, and may delete such copies from time to time without notice.

All Staff are advised not to use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that he or she wishes to be kept private or confidential from the School.

Educational or Extra Curricular Use of Social Media

If your duties require you to speak on behalf of the School in a social media environment, you must still seek express, written approval for such communication from the Head Teacher in advance who may require you to undergo training before you do so and impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to your activities.

Likewise, if you are contacted for comments about the School for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, you must direct the inquiry to the Head Teacher and must not respond without advanced written approval.

Recruitment

The School may use internet searches to perform pre employment checks on candidates in the course of recruitment. Where the School does this, it will act in accordance with its data protection and equal opportunities obligations.

Responsible use of social media

The following sections of the policy provide staff with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.

Protecting our business reputation:

Staff must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:

- i. the School;
- ii. current, past or prospective Staff as defined in this policy
- iii. current, past or prospective pupils
- iv. parents, carers or families of (iii)
- v. the School's suppliers and services providers; and
- vi. other affiliates and stakeholders.

Staff should also avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the School's reputation, even indirectly.

If Staff are using social media they should make it clear in any social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. Staff should write in the first person and use a personal rather than School e-mail address when communicating via social media.

Staff are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media. Staff should remember that what they publish might be available to be read by the masses (including the School itself, future employers and social acquaintances) for a long time. Staff should keep this in mind before they post content.

If Staff disclose whether directly or indirectly their affiliation to the School as a member of Staff whether past, current or prospective, they must also state that their views do not represent those of the School.

Staff must ensure that their profile and any content posted are consistent with the professional image they are required to present to colleagues, pupils and parents.

Staff must avoid posting comments about confidential or sensitive School related topics. Even if Staff make it clear that their views on such topics do not represent those of the School, such comments could still damage the School's reputation and incur potential liability.

If a member of Staff is uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, he or she should refrain from making the communication until he or she has discussed it with his Line Manager or Head of Department.

All staff are responsible for protecting the School's reputation. If a member of Staff sees content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the School, its Staff, pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders, he or she is required to report this in the first instance to the Head Teacher without unreasonable delay. If it pertains to the Headteacher and the member of staff is concerned about reporting it directly to the Headteacher then it should be reported to the Chair of Governors. It should not be discussed with other members of staff.

Respecting intellectual property and confidential information:

Staff should not do anything to jeopardise School confidential information and intellectual property through the use of social media.

In addition, Staff should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property of other Schools, organisations, companies and individuals, which can create liability for the School, as well as the individual author.

Staff must not use the School's logos, brand names, slogans or other trademarks, or post any of our confidential or proprietary information without express prior written permission from the Head Teacher.

To protect yourself and the School against liability for copyright infringement, where appropriate, reference sources of particular information you post or upload and cite them accurately. If you have any questions about whether a particular post or upload might violate anyone's copyright or trademark, ask the Head Teacher in the first instance before making the communication.

Respecting colleagues, pupils, parents, clients, service providers and stakeholders

Staff must not post anything that their colleagues, the School's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders may find offensive, including discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity.

Staff must not post anything related to colleagues, the School's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders without their advanced written permission.

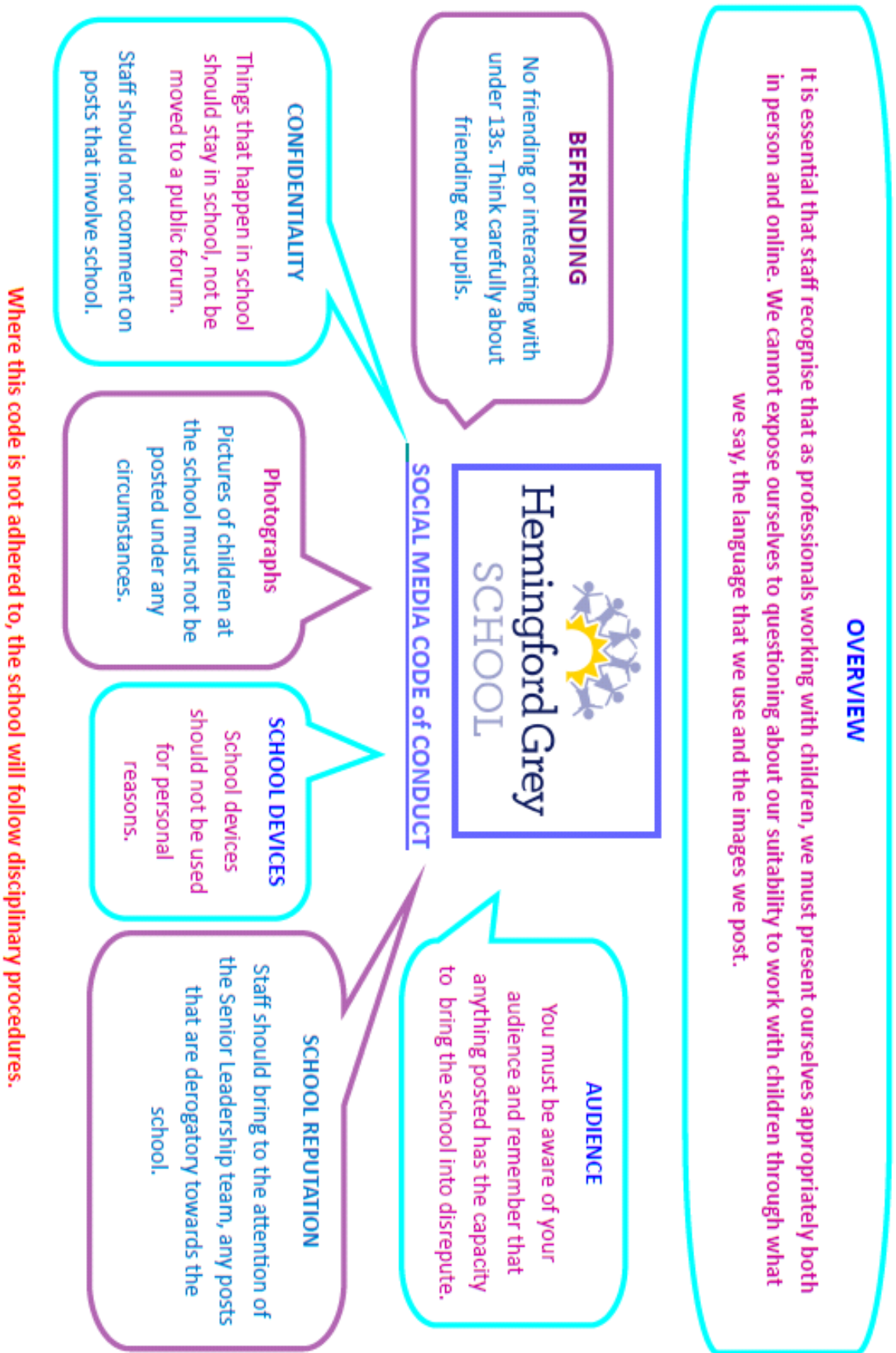
Monitoring and review of this policy

The Head Teacher and the Governors shall be responsible for reviewing this policy from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice. The Board of Governors has responsibility for approving any amendments prior to implementation.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for ensuring that any person who may be involved with administration or investigations carried out under this policy receives regular and appropriate training to assist them with these duties.

If Staff have any questions about this policy or suggestions for additions that they would like to be considered on review, they may do so by emailing office staff in the first instance.

Appendix 1



APPENDIX 2



Hemingford Grey Primary School **"Raising concerns regarding your child at school - protocol"**

All the staff at Hemingford Grey Primary School work hard to maintain good working relationships with parents and treat everyone with courtesy and respect.

There are, however, occasions when a parent may have concerns about their child's education or about something that has happened in school. It is important that any concerns are raised in an appropriate manner treating the school staff with the same courtesy and respect that they will give to you.

How to raise a concern with the school

1. Ask to speak to your child's teacher and raise the issue with them.
2. If this does not resolve the issue, make an appointment to speak to the Phase Leader: Mrs Askew for FS, Mrs Robertson for years 1 & 2, Mr Clarke for years 3 & 4 or Miss Honey for years 5 & 6.
3. If you still do not feel the issue has been resolved then arrange to see the Head Teacher, Mrs Fox or the Deputy Headteacher, Mr Clarke.
4. If you feel that attempts to resolve an issue informally have failed then you can make a formal complaint by putting your complaint in writing addressed to the Headteacher and making it clear that you are raising a formal complaint. The procedure and suggested proforma for a complaint can be found on the school website.

What we expect from you

1. To raise concerns in the appropriate way (as above) and not use public forums, such as social media, to complain about the school or its staff. Please see point below regarding the inappropriate use of social media.
2. To treat all the school staff with courtesy and respect.
3. To respect the needs of pupils and staff.
4. To avoid the use of violence, threats of violence, abuse and aggression towards people or property.
5. To recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the school a reasonable time to respond to any concerns you raise.
6. To recognise that resolving a specific problem can sometimes take some time.

Inappropriate behaviour including the use of social media

The school works hard to encourage staff and parents to work together as role models for the children and we consider the use of social media for the purpose of making complaints, derogatory remarks about the school or members of staff to be completely unacceptable. We find equally unacceptable any behaviour which is meant to intimidate or harass staff personally. In all cases, the

school will take steps to counter any such behaviour and remove any post which it considers inappropriate and will take the following action as a result of any derogatory, offensive or inaccurate comments or actions being brought to our attention:

- If the comments/post relate to school procedures and practice, a meeting will be requested by the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher to discuss the comments, the reasons for them and what prior action the parent/carer has taken in line with the protocol outlined above.
- Where the comments/post contains personal, derogatory comments about a member of staff, the person making the post will be instructed to take the post down immediately. A meeting with the Head or Deputy Head teacher and the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors will be requested to clarify subsequent actions the school will take if the comments/posts continue and are not removed. These actions may include the following:
 - Banning the parent/carer from the site
 - The school publically defending itself and the staff and this may include naming the person who has made the comments/post
 - Legal action against the person making the comments/post
 - Any actions or comments which threaten physical harm will immediately be referred to the police.

The occasions on which this protocol has been called upon, are extremely rare. We attribute this to strong working and professional relationships between the staff, governors and parent body. We trust that all parents recognise the need to model appropriate behaviours to the children in our care and raise concerns and issues in an appropriate manner so that we can continue to work together to provide the best possible learning experiences for our children.