



# Balby Central Primary School

## Policy for

# Social Networking

**Date of Policy: October 2014**  
**Approved by the Governing Body:**  
**Review Date: December 2016**

### **Introduction**

New technologies are an integral part of our lives and are powerful tools which open up teaching and learning opportunities in many ways. The school is aware and acknowledges that

increasing numbers of adults and children are using social networking sites and understands the need for guidance.

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to blogs, online discussion forums, collaborative spaces, Gaming communications, Virtual worlds, text messaging, media sharing services, Twitter, Facebook, MSN and You Tube.

Our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children and support staff and governors. The policy requirements in this document aim to provide a balance to support new technologies, whilst providing a framework for good practice. They apply to all members, (children, staff, governors, partners or third parties involved in the school), defined as school representatives.

#### **The aims of this policy are as follows:**

- Assist staff when teaching children how to work safely and responsibly with the internet and other communications technologies. As well as additionally helping staff monitor their own standards of practice.
- Set clear expectations of behaviour and or codes of practice relevant to social networking for educational, personal or recreational use.
- Support safer working practice.
- Ensure the reputation of the school is not adversely affected

#### **Use of Social Networking sites in work time**

Use of social networking in work time, via mobile devices or other devices is not permitted. The school's network must not be used to access personal social networking spaces/ sites.

#### **Guidance/protection for staff on using social networking**

Members of staff should not interact with pupils in the school on social networking sites.

No member of staff should interact with any ex-pupil in the school on social networking sites who is under the age of 18. This means that no member of the school staff should request access to a pupil's area on the social networking site. Neither should they permit the pupil access to the staff members' area e.g. by accepting them as a friend.

Any communication received from pupils to staff, governors or anyone else associated with the school must be reported immediately to the head teacher when the procedures for safeguarding will be followed.

School representatives must not use social networking applications to discuss pupils, staff, other partners or issues within school. They must also ensure that confidentiality and the reputation of the school are protected. Personal activities must not undermine the school's reputation, their own or other staffs professional reputation, or create perceptions of impropriety in the school, or bring the school into disrepute.

Staff should be selective and mindful with whom they allow access to their social networking areas. They should also bear in mind the type of information that is being shared and think about how it reflects them professionally.

#### **Guidance/protection for Pupils on using social networking**

Our E-Safety Policy and acceptable use agreement must be abided by at all times when children access the internet in school. Social media sites cannot be accessed at school however children will be taught about how to use social networking safely. Guidance will also be given to parents, advising and informing them about how to make sure their children stay safe online.

Pupils under 13 should not be accessing Facebook. However if they are, they can be reported via the Facebook site. Other social networking sites should be checked for suitability before children access it because they do not all impose age limits and the content may not be appropriate.

No pupil should attempt to join a staff member's areas on networking sites. If pupils attempt to do this, the member of staff is to inform the head teacher. Parents will be informed if this happens.

No school internet enabled devices are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of day.

Any attempts to breach firewalls could result in a ban from using school ICT equipment.

Staff and pupils must report any improper contact or cyber bullying to the class teacher or ICT Co-ordinator as soon as it happens.

### **Cyber Bullying**

Parents should be clearly aware of the school's policy of access to social networking sites. Where a disclosure of bullying is made, schools now have the duty to investigate and protect, even where the bullying originates outside the school. Balby Central has a zero tolerance to cyber bullying and any incidents will be taken seriously.