

The Queenswell Federation

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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Context

To ensure clarity of use and guidance for staff, parents, pupils and all users regarding the use of social media and networking applications. This policy is designed to protect individual members of staff, pupils and all users. This policy only applies to the use of social media for business purposes, whether during School/working hours or otherwise. This policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using school facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff or any other internet enabled equipment. In addition, The Queenswell Federation has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work. This policy has been written to set out the key principles and code of conduct that we expect of all members of staff with respect to their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites.

Anyone sharing posts online that is directly connected to The Queenswell Federation (using the name of The Queenswell Federation, The Queenswell Federation School logo, or clearly attached to The Queenswell Federation in some way) must follow all the guidelines in this policy. All staff must read and understand the Online Safety and Computing Policy and sign/accept the 'Staff, Governors & Volunteers Online Safety Acceptable Use Agreement'.

Rationale

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new, relevant and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services appropriately, effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with duties to the School, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation. The School use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children. 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.

Equalities

At The Queenswell Federation, we believe it is the right of all pupils, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, physical ability or linguistic, cultural or home background to have access to high quality learning experiences in a stimulating and supportive environment. We will always welcome and celebrate diversity and challenge any form of stereotype or prejudice. We believe that it is the right of parents, carers and children to be included in all aspects of school life, have access to school information and participate in all activities. We recognise that children who are at the early stages of acquiring English need specific support to access the curriculum and achieve the highest standards of achievement.

Aims

- Safeguard all pupils and promote wellbeing;
- Ensure users are not exposed to risk as a result of their actions;
- Use social media in a responsible, respectful, positive and productive way which respects all parties involved;
- Ensure that the reputation of The Queenswell Federation, its staff and governors is protected
- Protect the School from legal risks;
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the School.

Objectives

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum, to support student learning and to share news with parents/carers and the wider Queenswell Federation community. For example, sharing children's learning experiences, promoting upcoming events and using social media to enhance and develop pupils' learning and to keep the Queenswell Federation Community in touch with the School.

Roles & Responsibilities

STAFF

When using school social media accounts and/or social media accounts using the name of The Queenswell Federation, The Queenswell Federation School logo, or clearly attached to The Queenswell Federation in some way, the following practices must be observed:

- A distinct and dedicated social media site or account must be set up - this should be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held and should be linked to an official school email account.
- Social media accounts must have official Queenswell Federation branding and link to the school's official website.
- If a social media account is identified (that uses the name of The Queenswell Federation, The Queenswell Federation School logo, or clearly attached to The Queenswell Federation in some way) that is not an official Queenswell Federation approved site, this should be reported to the Executive Headteacher immediately.
- The social media account must be approved by the appropriate coordinator or Executive Headteacher and updates to passwords must be shared between them.
- The content of any School-sanctioned social media site and/or social media accounts using the name of The Queenswell Federation, The Queenswell Federation School logo, or clearly attached to The Queenswell Federation in some way, should be entirely professional and should reflect well on the School.
- Staff must only publish photographs of children whose parents/carers have signed/accepted the 'Social Media Consent Form'. Staff must be aware of the children in their class whose parents/carers have not authorised their child's photograph to be posted online. Staff should be aware of where they can locate the document with this information.
- Standard practice is to publish only the child's first name and year group.
- School sanctioned social media sites must use images of children in suitable clothing.
- Staff must take into account the Safeguarding (Child Protection and Staff Behaviour) Policy when making any posts on school social media accounts.
- Any links to external sites from the accounts must be appropriate and safe; if they are shared these must be verified as reputable sites. Only appropriate hashtags should ever be used.
- Any inappropriate comments on, or abuse of, school-sanctioned social media and/or social media accounts using the name of The Queenswell Federation, The Queenswell Federation School logo, or clearly attached to The Queenswell Federation in some way, should immediately be removed and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the coordinator (if appropriate). It is the responsibility of everyone using the site and social media in general to report abuse immediately.
- Staff must not have 1:1 communication, including direct messaging (DM), with pupils through any social media.
- Any communication received from current pupils must be reported immediately to the DSL.

PARENTS

- Positive contributions to the School Social Media, such as Instagram, are welcomed.
- Any concerns or issues about the School, its pupils or staff should be expressed directly to the School and not be voiced on social media.
- Parents/carers must obtain permission before posting pictures that contain other parents or their children, unless sharing or liking a post from the School's official social media account.

- If parents/carers become aware of the inappropriate use of social media by other parents or school staff, they should inform the School so that steps can be taken to remedy the situation.
- Parents/carers should sign/accept the 'Parents/Carers Online Safety Acceptable Use Agreement'.

Three Common Approach

This school asks its whole community to promote the 3 common approach to online behaviour:

- Common courtesy
- Common decency
- Common sense

How do we show common courtesy online?

- We ask someone's permission before uploading photographs, videos or any other information about them online.
- We do not write or upload 'off-hand', hurtful, rude or derogatory comments and materials. To do so is disrespectful and may upset, distress, bully or harass.

How do we show common decency online?

- We do not post comments that can be considered as being intimidating, racist, sexist, homophobic or defamatory. This is cyber-bullying and may be harassment or libel.
- When such comments exist online, we do not forward such emails, tweets, videos, etc. By creating or forwarding such materials we are all liable under the law.

How do we show common sense online?

- We think before we click.
- We think before we upload comments, photographs and videos.
- We think before we download or forward any materials.
- We think carefully about what information we share with others online, and we check where it is saved and check our privacy settings.
- We make sure we understand changes in use of any websites we use.
- We block harassing communications and report any abuse.

Any actions online that impact on the school and can potentially lower the school's (or someone in the school) reputation in some way or are deemed as being inappropriate will be responded to.

- In the event that any member of staff, student or parent/carer is found to be posting libellous or inflammatory comments on social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site.
- (All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this.)
- In serious cases we will also consider legal options to deal with any such misuse.

Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and documents;

- Computing Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Keeping Children Safe In Education