ANTRIM PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Social Media Policy

Next Review Date: January 2027

Mission Statement

As a school, we wish to uphold a positive image with all stakeholders, pupils, staff, parents, governors and community members. We strive to create an environment where there is mutual respect, where each person is valued as an individual and pastoral care is an integral part of education. Each pupil will be encouraged to fulfil his or her moral, intellectual, spiritual, physical, social, aesthetic, and emotional potential.

Use of ICT allows pupils to gain confidence and ability in an ever-changing society and prepares them for the challenges of a rapidly developing and evolving technological world. Using ICT aims: -

- Extend and enhance learning across all areas of the curriculum.
- Encourage pupils to select and use UICT appropriate to the task.
- To develop practical skills in the use of UICT and the ability to apply these skills to the solving of relevant and worthwhile problems.
- Give children access to a variety of sources of information.
- Encourage children to work individually and collaboratively.
- Instil in children a sense of confidence, achievement, and enjoyment.
- Encourage teachers to regard UICT tools as a support to and not a replacement for traditional teaching and learning.
- Enable teachers to gain confidence in the daily use of UICT and be able to select the hardware and software suitable for their classroom, having considered the ages and abilities of pupils and previous experience of UICT.

Social Networking

Social networking is everywhere. It is common to find parents, children, co-workers, and others on such sites. With social networks people across the world have access to tools and options that were previously non-existent. Whilst this allows many new opportunities to connect there are also potential dangers. It is a platform where almost anybody can see what we are doing. Whilst tagging photos of friends or posting comments, it can be easily overlooked that someone else who has been invited onto a social networking site can also view them. Often there is a minimal amount of control over who ultimately gets to see items posted.

Once something appears on the internet, it is almost impossible to remove. As these sites continue to grow in popularity, so too does the value of the information on them to parties other that those directly involved. Social networking users need to reflect what they are posting onto the internet.

Whilst recognising the benefits of social networks for new and exciting forms of communication, this policy sets out the principles that pupils, staff, and parents / guardians are expected to follow when using social media.

This policy applies to personal web space such as social networking sites on, for example, Facebook, Myspace, Instagram, Snapchat, Blogs, Twitter, chatrooms, forums, podcasts,

social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us and content sharing sites such as Flickr and YouTube.

The internet is a fast-moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or be aware of all the latest forums of emerging media and platforms. This policy covers the use of existing and any future social networking platforms.

Guidelines for Pupils

- Pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame other pupils or any member of staff.
- Pupils must not use social media in a way that brings disrespect to our school.
- Photographs, videos or any image of pupils, staff or any member of our school community must not be published on a personal or public web space without prior permission from the school.
- Pupils and the wider school community should not post images or videos from school trips on any social media site.
- Social network sites should never be accessed within school.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, suspension, and possible exclusion from Antrim Primary School.

Guidelines for Antrim Primary School Staff

It is possible that many staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner:

- Staff must never add pupils as friends into their personal accounts.
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times.
- Staff need to use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current GTCNI standards.
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Posting derogatory comments about pupils, parents or colleagues is never acceptable. Staff are required to uphold the reputation of the school, to maintain reasonable standards in their own behaviours, and to uphold public trust in their profession.

Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Principal.

Guidelines for Parents / Guardians / Carers

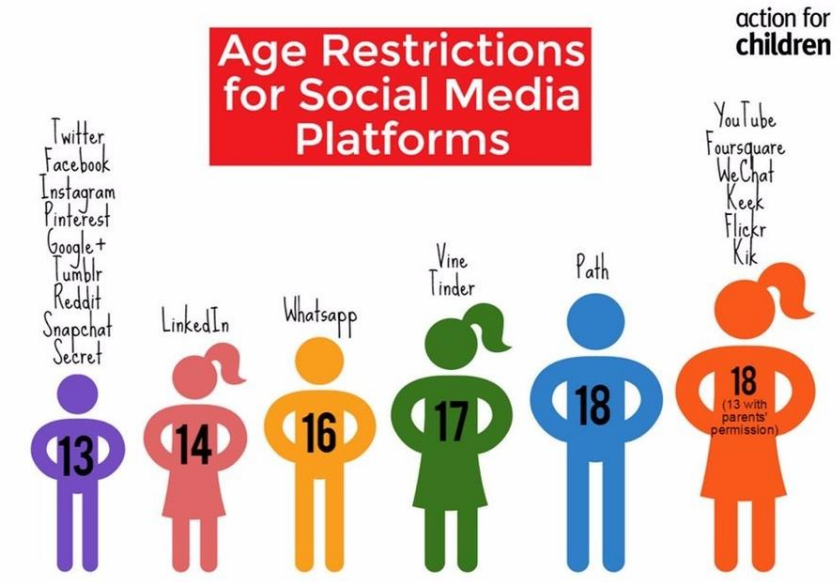
Parents / Guardians / Carers should be aware of their responsibilities regarding the use of social networking:

- Parents / Guardians / Carers should not post pictures of pupils other than their own children on social networking sites.

- Parents / Guardians / Carers should make complaints through the official school channels rather that posting them on social networking sites which can be detrimental and possibly damaging to the school community and, as such, are not beneficial to the children.
- Parents / Guardians / Carers should not post inaccurate, malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community or any school policy, process or procedure.
- Malicious or inappropriate comments will be reported and may result in accounts being removed. Fictitious and defamatory comments may also result in legal action.
- Action will also be taken if any inappropriate comments are made in which a member of the school community can be identified from the content of the comment.
- The Board of Governors of Antrim Primary School will take appropriate action in order to protect the school's reputation and that of its staff, pupils and parents / guardians / carers, governors, and anyone else directly linked to Antrim Primary School. Where appropriate, comments will be reported to the PSNI.

To support the pupils of Antrim Primary School and using guidance from the Department of Education, the Education Authority and outside agencies, members of staff will give clarity to pupils and parents / guardians / carers about the acceptable use of the internet and mobile devices by children whilst in Antrim Primary School. Parents / Guardians / Carers have full responsibility for their child's use of the internet, mobile devices and social networks outside of school.

Guidance / protection for pupils on using social networking



No pupils under 13 years of age should be accessing social networking sites.

School Facebook Page

Antrim Primary School recognises that social media is another platform by which it can communicate with the parent body. All members of the school community will be encouraged to engage in social media in a positive, safe, and responsible manner at all times.

The school's social media accounts can be used to communicate the following:

- Pictures and details of particular events including, but not limited to, trips, sporting events, class lessons or whole school days.
- Celebrating the achievements of a class, group, or individual children in relation to the life of the school.
- Advertising an upcoming event at the school such as a school performance, or Open Night.
- The sharing of key information in relation to the school, such as a school closure.
- The sharing of external events or activities that will contribute to the continued education of the pupils in attendance at Antrim Primary.
- Give urgent news updates to parents e.g., extreme weather/school closures.
- Provide links to other websites or Facebook sites, if deemed appropriate by the school.
- Increasing parental engagement.
- Marketing the school.

It will be taken into account that communications posted on this page will not reach all parents so important information will still be shared with parents using the existing approaches (namely ParentMail, text messaging and the school website).

In order to minimise risks of any images of pupils on the Facebook page being used inappropriately the following steps are taken:

- Group photos are used where possible, with general labels/captions.
- Where images or video clips of children are posted on the school Facebook page, the full names of the children will not be provided.
- The Facebook page does not include home addresses, telephone numbers, personal emails or any other personal information about pupils or staff.

Safeguarding

In line with the school's data protection and child protection policies, the school has taken the following steps to protect its pupils, staff and parent body when using social media:

- Written permission has been obtained from parents with regards to posting pictures of their children. Where permission has not been obtained, staff must take steps to ensure that pictures of that particular child are not uploaded to social media.

- Parents/carers are asked not to post images (photos and videos) of pupils other than their own on social media sites unless they have the permission of parents of the other children pictured.
- At public events, parents will be reminded that they should not post images on social media sites of pupils other than their own.
- Where a photo of a child has been uploaded to social media without parental permission, the school must ensure it is removed as soon as possible.
- A list of children for whom parental permission has not been given is given to teaching staff to make them aware of which children cannot be included in photos on the school's social media sites. This is updated yearly.
- If and when a child joins the school after the beginning of the academic year, permissions for social media use will be sought as part of the child's enrolment at the school.

Antrim Primary School

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Code of Conduct Regarding the Use of Social Media

This Code of Conduct applies to everyone within our school community.

Safeguarding and Child Protection is a key responsibility for everyone within our school community. An increasingly important aspect of Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns our use of social media. Below is a 'Code of Conduct Regarding the Use of Social Media' that we expect all members of the school community (children, parents, staff, governors, and all regular visitors) to adhere to.

All online communications regarding the school are to be transparent and open to scrutiny. The Board of Governors will take appropriate action to ensure the safety and security of those within the school community and to protect the school's reputation. Any breaches of this 'Code of Conduct' will be fully investigated.

1. When using social media everyone has a responsibility to treat others within the school community with respect. Individuals must not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about anyone connected to the school.
2. There must not be any postings on social media that links the school to any form of illegal conduct or which might damage the reputation of the school.
3. Confidential information regarding anyone within the school community must not be posted online. In relation to specific school activities, personal contact details including email addresses, home or mobile telephone numbers must not be made available online unless this has been agreed with the Principal.
4. Photographs or video clips of children completing activities in school must not be posted on social media by parents or children without the permission of the Principal.
5. The school's name, logo or documents must not be posted online without the permission of the Principal.
6. Messages that compromise the security of the school premises must not be posted online.
7. Where images or video clips of children are posted on the school Facebook page, the full names of the children will not be provided.
8. Parents are responsible for their children's use of social media outside of school. They should be aware of the age restrictions regarding particular forms of social media, for example, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp state clearly that their registered users should be at least 13 years of age.
9. Staff or volunteers working in the school must not use social media to communicate directly with children who attend the school.
10. Staff must not use school ICT equipment to use social media without the permission of the Principal.
11. Please note that this 'Code of Conduct' is part of the school's wider 'Acceptable Use of the Internet' Policy.