



Social Media - Guidance To Parents

Social media is a very effective option for parent communication. It allows us to show you what is happening in school and to provide you with general information. However with those advantages comes a down-side, because it is open to abuse. We have clear policies designed to keep your children safe but as an organisation we can also be impacted by inappropriate use of social media. Unfair criticism for example can cause real harm to our reputation and cause distress to members of staff.

This guidance note highlights activities which would be likely to cause harm and which should be avoided. For example, if you are unhappy with something which has occurred at school, it may be tempting to use social media to voice concerns. This is inappropriate, not only because your concerns may prove to be wrong, but also because there is no confidentiality when you use social media. The best way of dealing with your concerns is to raise them as soon as you can, by speaking to the appropriate staff member. If your concerns are not resolved you should access and use the Complaints Policy which is on the school website. By engaging with this process both parties are assured of the confidentiality they deserve as they work towards reaching a satisfactory resolution.

Below are examples of social media use which may cause reputational damage to the school and/or distress to individuals and therefore must be avoided:-

- Sending abusive messages to parents, teachers or the school.
- Sending abusive messages about parents, pupils, teachers or the school.
- Posting defamatory 'statuses' about other parents, pupils, teachers or the school.
- Using social media to complain or post any grievances about the school's values and methods.
- Posting statuses containing confidential information, e.g. regarding a complaint outcome.
- Contacting school employees through social media, including requesting to 'follow' them or sending them private messages.
- Creating or joining private groups or chats that victimise or harass a member of staff or the school in general.
- Using the school name, logo or any other identifier when communicating through any platform including social media