



Edward Feild Primary School Social Networking Policy for Parents and Carers

Introduction

Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are now widely used. This type of media has the potential to enhance the learning and achievement of pupils and enable parents to access information about the school and provide feedback efficiently and easily. However, at the same time, we must all be aware that involvement in social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter and posting material, images or comments on sites such as YouTube can have a negative effect on the reputation of the school.

At Edward Feild Primary School we are very fortunate to have supportive and friendly parents, carers and relatives who recognise the importance of a good working relationship with the school. We understand that the vast majority would never consciously publish anything on social media that could have a detrimental impact, but in order to minimise any risks of this happening, the Headteacher, staff and governors have agreed an approach to the use of social networking sites - which is detailed below.

Guidance

The purpose of this social networking policy is to invite parent and carers to work with us to ensure a safe and positive school environment and join us in setting a good example to the pupils of Edward Feild by:

1. Demonstrating courtesy and respect for staff, other parents and pupils when comments are placed on social networking sites.
2. Using appropriate language when discussing the school.
3. Addressing any issues or concerns regarding school directly with the class teacher, the Headteacher, or governors rather than posting them on social media.

We also invite parents and carers to help us further safeguard, protect and respect the pupils and staff of Edward Feild by:

1. Using social networking sites responsibly and ensuring that the school's reputation is not compromised by inappropriate postings.
2. Not posting images of staff, children, governors or anyone directly connected with the school whilst engaged in school activities.
3. Not posting pictures and images of other people's children without their permission e.g. pictures taken during school assemblies or on school trips, even within closed Facebook groups.
4. Not making derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening, or other inappropriate comments about the school, members of staff, or pupils and their families and carers.

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5. Not using social networking sites to make bullying or harassing posts, comments, emails, text messages, pictures, video clips or blogs.
6. Encouraging our children to be similarly respectful and to uphold the values stated within this document.

How does Edward Feild use Social Networking sites?

At Edward Feild we share exciting updates about special school events, interesting visitors, sporting achievements etc. on our Twitter account. If you are unable to follow us on Twitter @edwardfeildps it is worth noting that all tweets are also published on the school web site, main page. All published material complies with national and local guidance on safeguarding of pupils.

Twitter is the only social networking account that we use. We are aware there are several closed Facebook groups that were created, and are managed, by parents of the school or the Friends of Edward Feild. These should be closed groups with user access by invitation only. They should utilise tight privacy settings and all users are encouraged to observe the guidance set out in this document. These informal groups are useful as forums for sharing of general information, however, they are not an official line of communication from or with the school.

The school's main method of disseminating information to parents is through Parentmail, which can be downloaded as an app and/or the information can be sent to you by email. Parentmail is used for sending out the weekly newsletter (this is also published on the school web site), letters about school trips, and information about special events that are taking place at the school. Information can be fed back to the school via your child's class teacher, email to the school office, or through parent/teacher meetings.

Raising concerns

The school will always try and deal with concerns raised by parents and carers in a professional and appropriate manner and have proper processes in place to do this effectively and fairly. The school understands that parents may not always realise when they have used social networking sites inappropriately. If you see a post on social media that you think may breach one of the principals of this document (i.e. those listed in the "Guidance" section above), please make contact with the school.

Once a concern has been raised, in the first instance, the school will write to the individual involved in the posting to ask them to remove the content from the social networking site and to invite them into school to discuss their concerns with a member of staff or the Headteacher. If this does not resolve the issue a further investigation may be actioned by the Headteacher or governing body. The school will always keep the identity of the person raising the concern confidential.

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Other useful documents

Did you know that there are many school policies listed on the school website?

<https://www.efs.oxon.sch.uk/>

If you haven't looked up any policies before then from the main page, follow the headings for "About the School" then "Our School" followed by "Statutory Info and Policies".

Some of the policies that relate to this Social Networking policy are:

Safeguarding and child protection policy

- https://www.efs.oxon.sch.uk/uploads/5/2/2/6/52268793/safeguarding_and_childprotectionpolicy2017v2.pdf

Complaints policy and procedure

- https://www.efs.oxon.sch.uk/uploads/5/2/2/6/52268793/complaints_policy_approved_jan_18.doc.pdf

Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the governors in line with changing technology and at least every two years.

We would like to thank you for taking the time to read this policy, we trust that parents and carers will give it their full support.

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Initial letter (not to be included in the policy document)

Dear parents, carers and relatives,

Due to the rising popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, the governors and I have agreed that we will be setting a good example to the children in our school, when using these sites.

We would like to invite parents, relatives and carers of the children in our school to do the same.

I have attached a policy to this letter that tells you what we have agreed regarding the use of social networking sites. We hope that you will take us up on our invitation. I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that if you have any concerns, issues or comments about the school, the staff and I are available to speak to you. Thank you for your continued support.

Christiaan Monden

On behalf of the Governing Body

Letter for initial contact following a concern (Also not to be included in the main policy)

Dear Mr/Mrs

We have recently been made aware of a posting on Facebook / Twitter / other site that raises concerns about the safeguarding of pupils / reputation of the school / member of staff. We are writing to kindly ask you to remove this content as soon as possible so as to minimise the impact this could have / minimise disruption. We would also like to invite you to visit us for an informal discussion about this post / comment / picture / video, at a time that is convenient to both you and the school, so that we can better understand your concerns / views /. We very much encourage you to respond to this request.

Please contact us by email to Or telephone on 01865 to arrange a visit.

Kind regards / sincerely

Christiaan Monden
Chair of Governors