

# Farrowdale House

## INDEPENDENT PREPARATORY SCHOOL



### SAFE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

#### OVERVIEW

Many staff and pupils use various social media sites to communicate and share information with others. Proper use of social media can help people keep in touch and can be a force for good. Inappropriate use of social media can damage individuals and the reputation of the school. This policy sets out the standard that must be maintained by pupils, all members of staff, those contracted to work in the school, volunteers and the wider school community. This policy should be read in conjunction with the SAFE INTERNET USAGE AND E-SAFETY POLICY; ICT and the INTERNET POLICY, BULLYING POLICY, MOBILE PHONE POLICY; and TEACHERS' STANDARDS 2012

#### OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that the content published and shared on social media by pupils, members of staff, others contracted to work in the school, volunteers and the wider school community meets high professional standards and is not harmful or damaging to any other member of the school community.
2. To ensure that material and comment published on social media sites does not damage the reputation of the school and does not breach the profession standard expected of staff and others associated with this school.
3. To ensure that pupils, members of staff, those contracted to work in the school, volunteers and the wider school community do not publish things on social media sites that a third party can access and use to damage the reputation of the school or the professional reputation of the publisher.
4. To ensure that a proper professional distance is kept between those who work in the school and pupils attending the school including pupils under the age of 18 who have attended the school.
5. To ensure that all members of staff, others contracted to work in the school, volunteers and the wider school community understand that things published on the internet could be subjected to subsequent legal action for defamation and libel under the 2013 Defamation Act.
6. To stamp out any 'cyber bullying' of pupils or staff on social networking sites or from any other internet sites.

#### STRATEGIES

1. To ensure that pupils, members of staff, others contracted to work in the school, volunteers and the wider school community, uphold public trust in the school and maintain high standards of ethical and professional behaviour, within and outside school
2. To require and expect that pupils, members of staff, others contracted to work in the school, volunteers and the wider school community, not to publish any material or comment that is harmful or damaging to any other member of the school community.
3. To require and expect that pupils, members of staff, others contracted to work in the school and the wider school community do not to publish any material or comment which is harmful or damaging to reputation of the school or that breaches the teachers' standards set for professional conduct (National Teachers' Standards 2012).
4. Any cyber bullying of staff or pupils, in or out of school, must be reported and then investigated rigorously, in conjunction with any relevant authority including the police if appropriate.
5. Members of staff, others contracted to work in the school, volunteers must ensure that a proper professional distance is kept between them and pupils attending the school including those pupils under the age of 18 who have attended the school in the past, by taking appropriate action to block pupils and past pupils, and by preventing them from access to their social media websites. **Staff must NEVER add pupils as friends into their accounts (including past pupils under the age of 18) or allow pupils to follow their accounts.** Staff must not have any contact through any personal social medium with any pupil from Farrowdale House School or any other school unless they are family members. **Staff are strongly advised not to add parents as 'friends' or followers into their personal accounts or have any contact with parents through social media or messaging.**
6. To require Members of staff, others contracted to work in the school, volunteers to use the proper professional process if they wish to complain about others or the school and not make inappropriate use of social media to comment or complain.

7. Parents will be expected to work in partnership with the school by supporting and upholding this policy and by monitoring their children's use of social network sites and of the internet in general.
8. If a pupil, member of staff, volunteer is subjected to inappropriate contact or comment on social media s/he must report the incident to the Head teacher/ Proprietor who will offer guidance and support to ensure that the issue is dealt with professionally, efficiently and effectively.
9. The school will use all reasonable professional means to monitor and enforce this policy. Inappropriate use by staff should be reported to the Head teacher/ Proprietors in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

### **OUTCOMES**

Social media will be used in an appropriate manner by pupils, and in an appropriate and professional manner by members of staff, others contracted to work in the school, volunteers and the wider school community.

Signed: Z Campbell & S Hall

Date to be Reviewed: February 2021