Dormers Wells Junior School
Social Networking Policy

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits. This policy gives clarity to the way in which social media/mobile phones are to be used by staff, visitors, volunteers, student teachers and governors.

There are three key areas:

• Use of social networking by staff, student teachers, governors and volunteers in a personal capacity
• Comments posted by parents/carers
• Dealing with incidents of online bullying

The online safety of pupils is addressed in the school’s e-safety policy. Children under 13 are not permitted to use social networking sites such as Instagram and Facebook.

Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity:

It is possible that a high proportion of 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.

Guidelines for staff:

• Staff must never add pupils as ‘friends’ into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 16)
• Staff are strongly advised not to add parents as ‘friends’ into their personal accounts
• Staff must not post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including members of the Governing Body
• Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use)
• Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher’s Standards
• Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality
• Staff should read and comply with ‘Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People’
• Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Head teacher in the first instance and may lead to

Article 2: non-discrimination Article 3: the best interests of the child Article 12: respect for the views of the child Article 28: right to education Article 31: right to leisure, play and culture
Disciplinary action
• Staff should not use mobile phones in lesson time

Comments posted by parents/carers:

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding the use of social networking. Methods of school communication include the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion. School policies and documents provide further information regarding appropriate channels of communication and means of resolving differences of opinion. Effective communication following principles of mutual respect.

Parents must not post pictures of pupils, other than their own children, on social networking sites where these photographs have been taken at a school event.

Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

Dealing with incidents of online bullying/inappropriate use of social networking sites:

In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, the Governing Body will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels such as the Complaints Policy and will send a letter.

The Governing Body understands that in extreme cases there are circumstances in which police involvement is appropriate. These include where postings have a racist element or where violence is threatened or encouraged. Furthermore, laws of defamation and privacy apply to the web and it is unlawful for statements to be written which:
• expose (an individual) to hatred, ridicule or contempt
• cause (an individual) to be shunned or avoided
• lower (an individual’s) standing in the estimation of right-thinking members of society or
• disparage (an individual in their) business, trade, office or profession.” (National Association of Head teachers)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Behaviour Policy
LA Code of Conduct for Teachers and Disciplinary Policies
E-safety policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Preventing Extremism Policy and
Anti-Bullying Policy

To be reviewed December 2018

Article 2: non-discrimination Article 3: the best interests of the child Article 12: respect for the views of the child
Article 28: right to education Article 31: right to leisure, play and culture