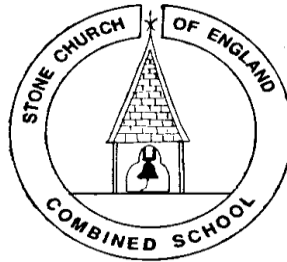


Stone Church of England Combined School



Social Media Policy and Use of Mobile Phones and Digital Photography Policy

This policy was adopted on Spring 2020

The policy is to be reviewed by Spring 2021

Aims

The school aims to encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

The school vision is:

‘Love one another as I have loved you’ (John 13: 34-35)

helping each other to reach for the stars.

The whole community aspire to fulfil this vision through our Christian values of community, perseverance, honesty, compassion, respect and responsibility each being a ‘stepping stone’ to success.

This policy aims to clarify how social media should be used by members of the whole school community in order to keep everyone safe and free from harassment or bullying.

Introduction

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 to be reaped. This gives clarity to the way in which social media, mobile phones and devices are to be used by pupils, governors, visitors, parent helpers and school staff at Stone CE Primary School. It will also provide guidance for parents.

There are four key areas:

- A. The use of social networking sites by pupils
- B. Use of social networking by all school staff (i.e. all teaching and non-teaching staff) and volunteers (e.g. students on work placement, parent helpers and school governors)
- C. Comments posted by parents/carers
- D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying

A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school

The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the rules for using IT in school and these rules therefore apply to use of social networking sites. Such sites should not be used/accessed in school unless under the direction of a teacher and for a purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience. If social media sites are used in lessons then school staff should carry out a risk assessment to determine which tools are appropriate to the task. Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phone devices to school, or on school visits.

In terms of private use of social networking sites it is generally understood that children under the age of 13 are not permitted to be registered to sites such as Facebook and Instagram. The school runs internet safety workshops annually for parents and we advise all to attend.

B. Use of social networking by school staff and volunteers in a personal capacity

Some school 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 are issued to all school staff and volunteers:

- Staff and volunteers must **never** add pupils as ‘friends’ into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 16).
- Staff and volunteers are advised not to add parents as ‘friends’ into their personal accounts. Pre-existing arrangements with parents are permitted under the conditions set out in this policy.

- Staff and volunteers **must not** post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including members of the Governing Body.
- Staff and volunteers **must not** post information or opinions about Stone C of E Combined School or pictures of school events.
- Staff and volunteers **must not** use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).
- Staff and volunteers should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.
- Staff and volunteers should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff and volunteers **must** read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'.
- Failure to adhere to the mandatory requirements of this policy should be referred to the Head teacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action. In the event of the Head teacher, or a governor failing to adhere, then the matter will be referred to the Chair of Governors.

C. Comments posted by parents/carers

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking and group chats such as WhatsApp. Methods of school communication include the website, newsletters, letters, parent forums and verbal discussion. Complaints procedures are detailed on the school's website. 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 is the best means of ensuring the best learning experiences for the child.

- Parents/Carers **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/Carers should comment or post appropriately about the school and must not post malicious comments or fictitious comments about the school or comments about pupils, staff or governors on social networking sites (please refer to Parents Code of Conduct).
- Parents should discuss concerns or make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites. Posting concerns or information about the school or staff on social media, including on group chats such as WhatsApp, can cause distress and unnecessary worry to other members of the school community.
- In the event of any offensive or inappropriate comments being made, the school asks the parent/carer to remove the post and may invite them to discuss the issues in person.

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

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy sets out the processes and sanctions regarding any type of bullying of or by a child on the school roll.

In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, the Governing Body will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments. Legal action may be advised or taken.

The Governing Body understands that, "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 still 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)

Cyberbullying by pupils will be managed in line with our Anti-bullying policy and Behaviour and Discipline policy.

Use of Mobile Phones, Devices and Digital Photography Policy

Children are not allowed to have mobile phones in school. If children bring a phone to school they should take it to the school office where it will be kept until the end of the school day.

Where social media, groups chats etc are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the head teacher does have the power to intervene; such incident will be managed in line with our Anti-bullying policy and Behaviour and discipline policy.

Only school devices will be used by staff to photograph children. Children will have their photographs taken in school, for example to evidence work or for display.

Staff, visitors, volunteers and students are not permitted to use their own mobile phones or devices to take or record any images of school children for their own records.

All staff and visitors must store their mobile phones and devices in their lockers or deposit their mobile phones and devices in the mobile phone lockers during the working day when children are on the premises.

- In line with the data protection act of 2018 we seek parental consent to take photographs and use video recorders. Photographs are stored on the school network which is pass word protected until the school ceases to operate, should this occur then all photographs will be shredded or deleted from the school network.
- The school's digital cameras/ipads must not leave the school setting (unless on an educational visit).
- Photographs are printed in the setting by staff and images are then removed from the camera memory.
- Photographs of children may be taken and used in accordance with parental consent obtained via the Media Permission Form.
- Often photographs may contain other children in the background.
- Events such as Sports Day, performances, Christmas and fundraising events may be recorded by video and photographs by staff and parent/carers but always in full view of all attending.
- Parents must not post photographs or video containing other children on the Internet/social media websites. (See Policy above).
- Staff must not use their personal mobile phones and devices to take pictures of children in our school.

- **Visitors may only use their phones in the foyer or outside the building, unless otherwise agreed by the headteacher, and should be challenged if seen using a camera inappropriately or photographing children.**
- The use of cameras, mobile phones and electronic devices are prohibited in toilets, changing areas and swimming pools.
- Staff are asked not to make personal calls during their working hours. However in urgent cases a call may be made or accepted if deemed necessary and by arrangement with the Head teacher.
- All school cameras and videos should be kept securely at all times and used with appropriate authority.