



Internet Social Networking Policy

Committee Responsible:

School Life

Reviewed By:

Assistant Head (Pastoral)

Adopted by Committee:

March 2020

Date of next review:

February 2023

Definition of Social Networking

Social Networking applications include but are not limited to blogs, online discussion forums, collaborative spaces, media sharing services, micro-blogging applications. Examples include Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, MSN, You Tube and can also include instant messaging systems (SMS)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.01 The School recognises that Internet Social Networking sites are a useful way of interacting socially with friends and gathering information. The School accepts that pupils may use Social Networking applications on the Internet. While the School does not wish to discourage acceptable use of such sites on the Internet, we expect certain standards of conduct to be observed in order to protect:

- The safety, welfare, confidentiality and dignity of staff, pupils, their families and that of the wider community.
- The reputation of the School.

1.02 The way in which pupils present themselves on Social Networking sites can have an impact on the public perception of the School and influence the way in which pupils and staff are perceived by the wider community. In their use of Social Networking sites, pupils should be aware that their online behaviour can affect their integrity and dignity.

1.03 In order to avoid boundaries becoming blurred and any potential misunderstanding, pupils should not use Social Networking sites to communicate with staff of the School.

1.04 This policy applies both on and off site. The following principles apply equally to information or comments posted by pupils from their home, personal, school computers or smart devices. This is irrespective of whether the posts are uploaded during school hours or in personal time.

1.05 The pupils are responsible for the content they publish on their Social Media platforms, this policy's primary aim is to provide pupils with guidance to keep them safe and avoid compromising situations which they later regret.

2.0 PROCEDURE

2.01 Pupils must not access Social Networking sites for personal use (Facebook etc.) during the academic day, unless otherwise specified by a member of staff.

2.02 Use of any Social Media should be age appropriate and pupils should not misrepresent their date of birth in order to gain access to sites such as Facebook. It is not acceptable to clone someone else's identity or to use a false identity to set up a profile.

2.03 Current pupils should not be 'friends' with staff on personal Social Networking sites as this could be viewed as a Safeguarding (Child Protection) issue. Pupils may however, 'follow'

or 'friend' official School accounts such as, but not limited to, 'Sibford School' on Twitter/Facebook/Instagram.

2.04 The school advises that staff do not befriend old scholars on social media until a period of at least two years since they left the school has elapsed.

2.05 Pupils should remember that their profiles on Social Networking sites could directly link their behaviour outside of School with the reputation of Sibford School. Any online conduct that could bring Sibford School into disrepute or cause a negative impact on the school community is forbidden.

2.06 Online behaviour that could, in the opinion of Sibford School, cause distress or jeopardise the safety, confidentiality, dignity or reputation of others, whether part of the Sibford School community or not, is not acceptable.

2.07 Pupils should take adequate precautions when using Social Networking sites and applications, both in vetting material that could be connected to them (e.g. through their own friendship profiles) and through the appropriate use of security settings. Appropriate security settings should be used to maintain privacy. Social Networking sites which hold personal information and that do not have security settings in place should be avoided.

2.08 The pupil's security settings on Social Networking sites such as Facebook should be reviewed regularly as these providers often update their security policies which may allow unauthorised access to the pupil's profile without them being fully aware of such changes.

2.09 Pupils should be aware that once content is shared online it is possible for it to be circulated more widely than intended without prior consent or knowledge (even if content is thought to have been deleted or privately shared).

2.10 Pupils should not post/tag comments, photographs, video or other content about any member of the community without their express permission. Sibford School must not be tagged as a location or mentioned in any Social Media posts, blogs, tweets except by official mediums such as Sibford School Twitter or Sibford School Facebook, or Sibford School Instagram.

2.11 It is not acceptable to produce any material that is offensive, defamatory, discriminatory or inappropriate about Sibford School, staff or other pupils. This includes the use of bad language and any form of Cyber bullying.

2.12 Sibford School will monitor IT systems and Social Media Sites as is deemed necessary in order to prevent inappropriate usage.

2.13 Transcripts of Social Networking communications may be used in any disciplinary proceedings.

2.14 If pupils become aware of misuse of Social Networking sites by another pupil, they should inform a member of staff immediately.

2.15 Pupils whose conduct breaches this policy in any way may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

2.16 It should be noted that online behaviour, deemed unsuitable by the Head and in accordance with this policy, may have an impact on a pupil's future relationship with Sibford School. This includes but is not limited to references.

3.0 SANCTIONS:

3.01 In the judgement of the Head, if a pupil is seen to bring Sibford School into serious disrepute, or if a pupil places the welfare, safety, dignity or reputation of others in jeopardy, whether or not they are members of the school community, a period of Fixed Exclusion may result.

3.02 In the opinion of the Head, pupils found using Social Media (including email) inappropriately may be sanctioned as follows:

- Required to remove offensive content
- Required to inform their parents/guardians
- Have their internet access temporarily removed (if appropriate)
- Have their free time curtailed
- Pupils with positions of responsibility may lose their posts temporarily or permanently as deemed appropriate by the Head
- Repeat offenders will have a Fixed Exclusion at the discretion of the Head.
- Dependent on the judgement of the Head, a pupil may be excluded permanently.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School Policies:

Behaviour

E-Safety

Student Computer Acceptable Use

January 2020