

**ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL**  
**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

**Agreed by the Governors' Education Committee Summer 2019**  
**Approved by the Full Governing Body Summer 2019**  
**To be reviewed Summer 2020**

**Purpose**

The widespread use of social media applications brings opportunities to engage and communicate in new ways. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that the use of social media by St Bartholomew's School Community (staff, students and parents) is undertaken responsibly, and that the confidentiality of students and staff, and the reputation of the school, are safeguarded.

**Statement of intent**

This policy applies to all St Bartholomew's students, staff, parents and the wider school community. It covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official school purposes including sites hosted and maintained on behalf of the school.

This policy applies to any electronic communication software, including those running on mobile devices such as social networking sites (blogs, microblogs, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias, social bookmarking sites) and content sharing sites.

It is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media hence the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium.

**Principles**

- The School Community should be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate. They should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between their school and personal interests.
- The School Community should not engage in activities which could bring St Bart's into disrepute.
- The School Community should not present their own views as those of the School on any public platform.
- The School Community must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame any person or organisation.

**Related policies, guidance and expectations**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and related documents:

- Staff Code of Conduct (covered in the Disciplinary Policy and Teachers' Standards)
- ICT policies for staff and students
- Safeguarding & Child Protection (Protecting the Welfare of Children) Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy

- Equality Policy
- Whole School Expectations
- Home-School Agreement

### **Arrangements - staff use of social media**

All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they believe them to be private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation.

- You should maintain proper professional boundaries with students, parents and carers when communicating electronically.
- You should always decline 'friend' requests and/or block *follows* from students that you receive in your personal social media accounts
- You should not accept any contact from a former student of the school if under the age of 18
- You should not have contact with a student's family members through personal social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest
- Confirm whether the school holds the permission from the parent/ carer / individual to use a photograph and /or name on any media which could lead to the image being shared more widely.
- Do not tag photographs of staff or students
- Do not engage in posts or activities which may be detrimental to working relationships between staff.
- Assuming that permission has been gained, a photo may be posted on social media using their first name only.
- When using a hyperlink in any social media check that the content is appropriate, especially if you are sharing it
- Do not discuss personal information about other students, St Bartholomew's School and the wider community you interact with on any social media site
- You should set your privacy settings on Facebook and other sites as strictly as possible, but be aware that unless your friends' settings are the same as yours, your posts may be seen more widely
- Passwords and other login information must be kept safely; remember to lock your work station/portable device when you leave it unattended
- School email addresses should not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media
- All email communication between staff and members of the School and wider should be made from and to official school email accounts
- Do not engage in activities involving social media which might bring St Bartholomew's School into disrepute
- If you are aware of any inappropriate communications involving any student in a social media situation, please report it to the Miss R Mairs, Assistant Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (contact on 01635 576336). In the event of Miss Mairs being absent from school Mr J Lawes, Assistant Headteacher, will act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (contact

on 01635 576302). In the event that they are both absent, concerns should be raised with the most senior member of staff in school.

- If there is any concern regarding issues relating to specific students, please consult with the Head of House in the first instance.

### **Arrangements - guidelines for Students**

- Your online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that you use face-to-face
- Your use of social media should be age appropriate e.g. only over 13's should be using Facebook
- When posting comments or photos on social media channels ask yourself whether you would be happy for your parents or your future employer to read your posts
- Provide as little information about yourself as possible; not providing your date of birth, mobile phone number, location or email address publicly will improve your online security.
- You should set your privacy settings on Facebook as strictly as possible, but be aware that unless your friends' settings are the same as yours, your posts may be seen more widely
- Think carefully before engaging with strangers in 'open' environments, especially Twitter; be aware that 'protecting' your tweets will improve your online security
- Do not attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' any member of staff on any social media sites
- Do not tag or identify yourself (or other students) on St Bartholomew's School social media sites, even when using your own accounts, you should ask permission before tagging someone in a photo
- Do not engage in any activities involving social media which might bring St Bartholomew's School into disrepute
- Do not send or request any inappropriate or offensive images, including those of a personal nature
- Do not engage in any abusive, threatening, unkind or bullying behaviour
- Use of profanity or threatening language is not acceptable
- Under no circumstances should negative comments be made about staff, parents or other students on social media sites
- St Bartholomew's School reserves the right to monitor social media activity and if students are found contravening the guidelines then sanctions will be imposed, which may involve referral to other agencies, including the Police, where a crime may have been committed.

### **Arrangements - guidelines for Parents**

- The school will monitor, and where appropriate, moderate content and activity on St Bartholomew's School social media platforms
- The school cannot be held responsible for improper use of social media by students
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to monitor their child's activity on social media  
If you do not wish your child's name or photograph to be used in connection with the School's official social media platforms, website or PR, you must advise the school via the Data Collection Sheet at the beginning of each school year or to the relevant House Office at other times.

## Sanctioned use of social media

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum and to support student learning. The school currently has an official website, as well as Twitter, Facebook and Youtube accounts and potentially other social sites. A limited number of staff have administrator rights to post onto these sites. If you have any concerns about content you have viewed on school social media sites, you should contact the Headteacher.

When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff may set up a distinct and dedicated social media site or account for educational purposes. This should be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff, and must be linked to an official school email account
- The web address and identity of the site should be notified to the appropriate Head of Faculty or member of the Leadership Team before access is permitted for students
- The content of any school-sanctioned social media site should be solely professional and should reflect well on the school
- Staff should not engage with any direct messaging of students through social media where the message is not public
- All social media accounts created for educational purposes should include a link in the page to this policy on the school website. This will indicate that the account is officially sanctioned by St Bartholomew's School.

Whilst students and the wider school community are encouraged to interact with these social media sites they should do so with responsibility and respect.

### Monitoring

Monitoring with regard to usage of internet, online content, online services and email services is already in place and will continue. This is carried out without prior notification or authorisation from users.

There should be no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the School's ICT systems.

### Breaches of this policy

Any breach of this policy that leads to a breach of confidentiality, defamation or damage to the reputation of St Bartholomew's School or any illegal acts or acts that render St Bartholomew's School liable to third parties may result in legal action, disciplinary action or sanctions in line with the School's policies.

### Evaluation

Breaches of this policy will be reported as necessary to the Governors' Education Committee. The Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account the latest advice, good practice and technology available.

Signed..... Dated.....  
Chair of Governors