

Ysgol Pentrehafod

Pentrehafod School



Social Networking, Acceptable Use Policy for Parents/Carers

***Rhwydweithio Cymdeithasol, Polisi
Defnydd Derbyniol ar gyfer
Rhieni/Gofalwyr***

Introduced October 2021

Cyflwynwyd Hydref 2021

To be reviewed October 2022

I'w adolygu Hydref 2022

Created by Mr M J Goulding

October 2021



Pentrehafod School

Social Networking,

Acceptable Use Policy for Parents/Carers

Overview

Social networking sites such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other similar online forums are now widely used and these types of media allow people to communicate in ways that were not previously possible. Unfortunately, such sites can be used inappropriately by some, as a means of expressing negative or offensive views about schools and their staff members. This document sets out this School's approach to parental use of such sites and sets out the procedures that will be followed and action that may be taken when it is considered that parents/carers have used such facilities inappropriately. Where there is reference to 'parent' in this document, this also includes carers and other relatives of a child in School.

Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Encourage social networking sites to be used in a beneficial and positive way by parents/carers;
- Safeguard students, staff members and anyone associated with the School from the negative effects of social networking sites;
- Safeguard the reputation of the School from unwarranted abuse on social networking sites;
- Clarify what the School considers to be appropriate and inappropriate use of social networking sites by parents/carers;
- Set out the procedures the School will follow where it is considered that parents/carers have inappropriately or unlawfully used social networking sites to the detriment of the School staff, students or anyone else associated with School;



- Set out the action the School will consider taking if parents/carers make inappropriate use of social networking sites.

Appropriate Use of Social Networking Sites by Parents/Carers

The School recognises that many parents/carers and other family members will have personal social networking accounts which they might use to discuss/share views about School issues with friends and acquaintances.

However, it is not the way to raise concerns or complaints as the School will not respond to issues raised on a social networking site. If there are serious allegations being made/concerns being raised, social media or internet sites should not be used to name individuals and make abusive comments. Please contact the School to discuss any concerns you may have.

As a guide, individuals should consider the following prior to posting any information on social networking sites about the School, its staff, its students, or anyone else associated with the School:

- Is the social networking site the appropriate channel to raise concerns, give this feedback or express these views?
- Would private and confidential discussions with the School be more appropriate? E.g. if there are serious allegations being made/concerns being raised. Social media/internet sites should not be used to name individuals and make abusive comments about those people. Please contact the School to discuss any concerns you may have.
- Are such comments likely to cause emotional or reputational harm to individuals which would not be justified, particularly if the School has not yet had a chance to investigate a complaint?
- The reputational impact that the posting of such material may have to the School; any detrimental harm that the School may suffer as a result of the posting; and the impact that such a posting may have on students' learning.



Although social networking sites may appear to be the quickest and easiest way to express frustrations or concerns about the School and those associated with it, it is rarely appropriate to do so. Other channels such as a private and confidential discussion with school staff are much better suited to this. The School considers the following example to be inappropriate uses of social networking sites (this list is non-exhaustive and intended to provide examples only):

- Making complaints about the School of staff at the School;
- Making defamatory statements about the School or staff at the School;
- Posting negative or offensive comments about staff of any other individual connected to the School;
- Making allegations about staff or anyone else connected with the School;
- Naming children or posting any comments about children who attend Pentrehafod School;
- Posting comments or engaging in online discussion with children other than their own.

Procedure the School will Follow if Inappropriate use Continues

The School will always try to deal with concerns raised by parents/carers in a professional and appropriate manner and understands that parents/carers may not always realise when they have used social networking sites inappropriately.

Therefore, as a first step the School will usually discuss the matter with the parent/carer to try to resolve it and to ask that the relevant information be removed from the School networking site in question. If the parent/carer refuses to do this and continues to use social networking sites in a manner the School considers inappropriate, the School will consider taking the following action:

- Take legal advice and/or legal action where the information posted is defamatory in any way or if the circumstances warrant this;
- Set out the School's concerns to the parent/carers in writing, giving a warning and requesting that the material in question in removed;



- Contact the Police where the School feels it appropriate – for example, if it considers a crime (such as harassment) has been committed;
- If the inappropriate comments have been made on an online forum, the School may take action to block or restrict that individual's access;
- Contact the host/provider of the social networking site to complain about the content of the site and ask for removal of the information;
- Take other legal action against the individuals following appropriate advice.

The governing body would like to remind all members of the School community that a School should be a safe place where relationships between staff, parents/carers and visitors demonstrates a mutual respect and recognition of shared responsibility for pupils' welfare and educational progress.

Document Ratification

This Policy was presented to Governors on **13th October 2021**.

It will be reviewed in **October 2022** or if National and Local Policy or Guideline is updated.

Signed.....

Mrs M Hughes
Chair of Governors