JUDGEMEADOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Last reviewed date:

June 2017

Next review date:

June 2019

Responsibility of:

Vice Principal - Pastoral

1. Introduction

1.1 The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

1.2 The use of online social media applications (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat etc.) has become a very significant part of life for many people. They provide a very positive way to keep in touch with friends and colleagues, and can be used to exchange ideas and thoughts on common interests, both personal and work- related.

1.3 Judgemeadow Community College does not discourage staff and pupils from using such services. However, all should be aware that the college will take seriously any occasions where the services are used inappropriately.

1.4 The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff at the college.

1.5 The purpose of the policy is to:

- Protect the school from legal risks
- Ensure that the reputation of the school, its staff and governors is protected
- Safeguard all children
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the school

2. Policy

2.1 This policy applies to all members of Staff within Judgemeadow Community College. For the purposes of this policy, the term "Staff" means all members of staff including permanent, fixed term, and temporary staff, governors, secondees, any third party representatives, agency workers, volunteers, interns, agents and sponsors engaged with the college in the UK or overseas. This policy also applies to all members of staff employed by any of the college's subsidiary companies.

3. Definition and Scope

3.1 Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: Blogs, Online discussion forums, Collaborative spaces, Media sharing services, 'Microblogging' applications, and online gaming environments. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, Windows Live Messenger, SnapChat, Instagram, YouTube, Flickr, Xbox Live, Blogger, Tumblr, and comment streams on public websites such as newspaper sites and BBC News.

3.2 Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds.

3.3 All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the college's Equalities, Child Protection and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

3.4 Within this policy there is a distinction between use of college- sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes, and personal use of social media

4. Use of Social Media in Practice

4.1 Personal Use of Social Media:

- School staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or children from the college in any personal social media whilst in employed by the LAT
- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to one of the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media setting, these must immediately be reported as above
- Members of staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts
- Staff should make sure that their profile picture is appropriate as this can be seen by anyone even with the highest security permissions in place
- All email communication between staff and parents or children from the college must be made from an official school email account
- Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with parents or children from the college on college business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Headteacher.
- Staff are advised to avoid posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to the college on any social media accounts
- Staff are also advised to consider the reputation of the college in any posts or comments related to the college on any social media accounts
- Staff should not post anything via social media that could offend any other staff member, parent of, or pupil at the college.
- Staff should not use statements as statuses or in communication that could be misinterpreted

- Staff should not discuss any aspect of their work at all online with any persons
- Staff should not accept any current pupil of any age or any ex- pupil of the college under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account
- Staff should be aware that once posted information is no longer private as it could be shared by other users even after an account has been deleted.
- Viewing and updating personal sites should not take place during working times except when, by agreement it is relevant to teaching, learning or pupil support. Reasonable access is acceptable before or after working hours and during work breaks.

4.2 School-Sanctioned Use of Social Media:

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum and to support student learning. For example, the college has an official Twitter account and some courses may require the use of blogs for assessment. There are also many possibilities for using social media to enhance and develop students' learning. When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff should 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 should be linked to an official school email account.
- The URL and identity of the site should be notified to the appropriate Head of Faculty or member of the SLT 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.

- The site should be moderated by the member of staff who provisioned the account. Any inappropriate comments or abuse of school- sanctioned social media should immediately be removed and reported to a member of SLT
- Staff must not publish photographs of children without the written consent of parents/carers nor should they identify by name any children featured in photographs, or allow personally identifying information to be published on school social media accounts
- Care must be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe

- Staff should not engage in any direct messaging of students through social media where the message is not public

4.3 The college may consider taking action, in accordance with the college's Behaviour Policy, where staff do not comply with this policy

5. Review

5.1 This policy will be reviewed periodically as it is deemed appropriate, to take account of changes in the law and use of social media. These reviews will be no less frequently than every two years. The policy review will be undertaken by the VP Pastoral Care and ratified by the IEB.