



The Gedling Family of Schools Social Networking Policy



The Gedling Family of Schools is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff, volunteers, parents/carers and children to share this commitment.

Objectives

This joint letter sets out the Gedling Family of School's policy on social networking and the impact it can have on staff and children. Social networking activities conducted online, such as blogging, involvement in social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter and posting material, images or comments on sites such as YouTube can have a negative effect on an organisation's reputation or image. In addition, the family of schools has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work. This letter has been written to set out the key principles and code of conduct that we expect of all members of staff, volunteers, parents/carers and children with respect to their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites.

Key Principles

- Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the school, and to treat members of the school with professionalism and respect.
- It is important to protect everyone from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.
- Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members and it is essential that everyone within the family considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites. Anyone working in the school either as a paid employee or volunteer must not communicate with children via social networking.
- The discussion of particular school related issues through social media is deemed to be inappropriate and can lead to unnecessary escalation.

Code of Conduct : Social Networking

Under no circumstances should social media entries make reference to any staff member, pupil, parent or school activity/event in a negative fashion.

The following are also **not considered acceptable** by the Gedling Family of Schools:

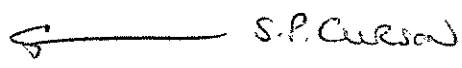
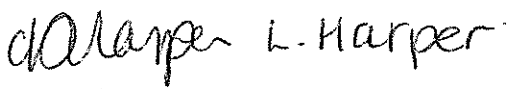
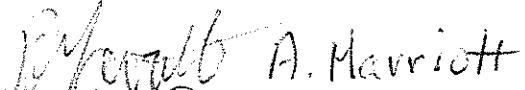

- The use of the school's name, logo, or any other published material without written prior permission from a Head Teacher. This applies to any published material including the internet or written documentation.
- The posting of any communication or images which links the school to any form of conduct which may damage the reputation of the school. This includes defamatory comments.
- The disclosure of confidential or business-sensitive information; or the disclosure of information or images that could compromise the security of the school.
- The posting of any images of employees, children, governors or anyone directly connected with the school whilst engaged in school activities.
- Do not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the school, or anyone at or connected with the school.
- Use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither their personal nor professional reputation, nor the school's reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.

As adults, it is important that we present appropriate role models and use social media in a responsible manner. As a family of schools we teach the children about the dangers of social media and promote safe usage. For parents/carers who want to find out more about how to keep their child safe online the NSPCC have produced some useful resources on <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety> which includes guidelines on appropriate times for children to use social media. As a family of schools we are noticing that a small number of our older children are using email or text to contact each other late into the evening, and as a result coming to school very tired.

At the heart of our Gedling Family of Schools is an ethos of trust and teamwork, and the overall priority to keep our children safe. We hope that social media is used responsibly by all parties, and where problems arise that parents/carers talk to the appropriate staff in the school, and do not cause concern through postings which can lead to misinterpretation.

This letter has been signed by the heads and chairs of all our family schools, and reflects our united policy. We thank all staff, parents/carers, and volunteers for their support.

Yours faithfully,

 S.P. Curson
 L. Harper
 A. Marriott
 J. GRAHAM