



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

(Based upon The Heatons Primary Cluster & Priestnall School model policy)

- October 2021
- Adopted by The Heatons Primary Cluster and Priestnall School
- Policy Review Date: October 2024

At Mersey Vale Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all irrespective of race, gender, ability, religion, socio-economic factors and disability. The achievement of all pupils is monitored and we use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching and learning.

We aim to provide our pupils with a firm foundation which will enable them to fulfil their potential. We seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination. At Mersey Vale we believe that diversity and inclusion are strengths, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Statement of intent

Mersey Vale Primary School understands that social media is a growing part of life outside of school. We have a responsibility to safeguard our children against potential dangers when accessing the internet at school, and to educate our children about how to protect themselves online when outside of Mersey Vale Primary School.

We are committed to:

- Educating our children, parents and staff about the safe use of social media.
- Encouraging the responsible use of social media.
- Protecting our children from the dangers of social media.
- Preventing and avoiding damage to the reputation of the school through irresponsible use of social media.
- Protecting our staff from cyber bullying and potentially career damaging behaviour.



1. Key roles and responsibilities

- 1.1. The governing body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Social Media Policy and procedures of Mersey Vale Primary School.
- 1.2. The governing body has responsibility for ensuring that the Social Media Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 1.3. The governing body has responsibility for ensuring that any complaints relating to the policy are handled using the schools complaint procedures at all their stages.
- 1.4. The headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Social Media Policy and procedures of Mersey Vale Primary School.
- 1.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for following the Social Media Policy and teachers and support staff also have responsibility for ensuring children do so. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently in the classroom.
- 1.6. There will be an expectation that parents and carers will work with the schools policy and ensure the promotion of safe social media behaviour in the home.

2. The school's e-safety team and network manager

- 2.1. The school's e-safety team consists of: Catherine Whitehead (Headteacher), Matthew Ellis (Curriculum Leader – Computing) and Shane Farrell (School Business Manager)
- 2.2. The school's network manager is Ben Marshall, Stockport AVA Services

3. Definitions

Mersey Vale Primary School defines “social media” as any online platform that offers real-time interaction between the user and other individuals or groups including but not limited to:

- Blogs
- Class pages on school website
- Online discussion forums
- ‘Micro-blogging’ applications, such as Twitter.
- Media sharing services, such as YouTube.

- 3.1. Mersey Vale Primary School defines “cyber bullying” as any use of social media or communication technology to bully an individual or group.
- 3.2. Mersey Vale Primary School defines “members of the school community” as any member of staff, child, parent/carer of child or governor. The definition also covers friends, relatives or associates of children or parents/carers.

4. Training of staff

- 4.1. At Mersey Vale Primary School, we recognise that early intervention can protect children who may be at risk of cyber bullying or negative social media behaviour.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on the Social Media Policy as part of their Safeguarding induction.

4.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and on-going e-safety training as part of their professional development.

5. Social media use - staff

- 5.1. Members of staff may not access social media during lesson time, unless it is part of a curriculum activity. However, staff may use social networking during non-contact time in a private area away from children. This does not include PPA or 1265 directed times away from the classroom unless for educational research or lesson preparation.
- 5.2. Teachers may use social media during their break times and lunchtimes in a private area away from children unless they are on duty.
- 5.3. Members of staff **must not** “friend” or otherwise contact children or ex-children through social media. They should also carefully consider whether it is appropriate to “friend” parents/ carers.
- 5.4. If children or ex-children attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact members of staff through social media, they must be reported to the head teacher.
- 5.5. Members of staff should avoid identifying themselves as an employee of Mersey Vale Primary School on social media.
- 5.6. Members of staff **must not** post content online which could be deemed damaging to the school or any of its staff or children.
- 5.7. Where teachers or members of staff use social media in a personal capacity, they should make it clear that their views are personal.
- 5.8. Teachers or members of staff must not post any information which could identify a child, class or the school on their own personal social media. This includes any images of children, staff, the school or children’ work.
- 5.9. Members of staff should not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.
- 5.10. Breaches of this policy by members of staff will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content, could lead to prosecution, disciplinary action or dismissal.
- 5.11. Members of staff should be aware that if their online activity during work or out of work hours brings Mersey Vale Primary School into disrepute, disciplinary action will be taken.
- 5.12. Members of staff should regularly check their online presence for negative content via search engines.
- 5.13. Attempts to bully, coerce or manipulate members of the school community, via social media, by members of staff will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.
- 5.14. Members of staff should not leave a computer or other device logged on when away from their desk.

5.15. Staff members should use their school email address for school business and personal email address for their private correspondence; the two should not be mixed.

6. Social media use – children and parents/carers

- 6.1. Children may not access social media during the school day unless under the direction of their Class Teacher as part of their education.
- 6.2. Breaches of this policy by children will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content could lead to exclusion and may have to be notified to the Police.
- 6.3. Children **must not** attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact members of staff through social media. If attempts to contact members of staff through social media are made, they will be reported to the headteacher.
- 6.4. If members of staff attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact children or ex-children through social media, they should be reported to the headteacher.
- 6.5. Children and parents/carers should not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.
- 6.6. Children and parents/carers **should not** post content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or children.
- 6.7. Children at Mersey Vale Primary School must not sign up to social media sites that have an age restriction above the child’s age.
- 6.8. If children or parents are aware that inappropriate content has been accessed online on school premises, it **must** be reported to a member of the e-safety team immediately.

7. Blocked content

- 7.1. All social media websites are blocked by the network’s firewalls:
- 7.2. Attempts to circumvent the network’s firewalls will result in an exclusion and may also lead to a ban from using school computing equipment.
- 7.3. Inappropriate content which is accessed on the school computers should be reported to a member of the e-safety team so that the site can be blocked.

8. Cyber bullying

- 8.1. At Mersey Vale Primary School cyber bullying is taken seriously.
- 8.2. Incidents of cyber bullying that occur during the school day will be dealt with in line with the schools’ behaviour policy.
- 8.3. Incidents of cyber bullying that occur outside of the school day should be reported to/by parents/carers. Families should then decide whether to contact the networking site to report the issue, CEOP and/or the Police.
- 8.4. Mersey Vale Primary School will not investigate cyber bullying issues that have taken place outside of school. However we will work with children to repair relationships and to prevent further cyber bullying.

- 8.5. Staff members should never respond or retaliate to cyber bullying incidents. Incidents should instead be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and to the police.
- 8.6. Evidence from the incident should be saved, including screen prints of messages or web pages, and the time and date of the incident.
- 8.7. Where the perpetrator is a parent/carer, he/she will be invited into school to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and will be asked to remove the offensive content.
- 8.8. If the perpetrator refuses to comply, it is up to the school to decide what to do next. This could include contacting the internet service provider in question through their reporting mechanisms, if the offensive content breaches their terms and conditions.
- 8.9. If the material is threatening, abusive, sexist, of a sexual nature or constitutes a hate crime, the school should consider contacting the Police.
- 8.10. As part of our on-going commitment to the prevention of cyber bullying, regular education and discussion about e-safety will take place as part of computing and P.S.H.E.

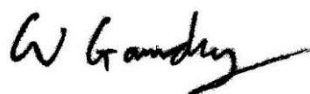
9. Sexting

- 9.1 Mersey Vale Primary School takes sexting very seriously. We will report any incidents of sexting including the possession and distribution of child pornography to parents and the Safeguarding Unit who will involve the Police.
- 9.2 Mersey Vale Primary School will always try to establish who has possessed or distributed an indecent image so that we are able to provide the Police with accurate information.
- 9.3 Mersey Vale Primary School will use the DfE's current advice Searching, Screening and Confiscation to search phones if we believe they contain pornographic material.

10. Be SMART online

- 10.1. We encourage children to take a SMART approach to social media behaviour and this advice is supplemented by our E-Safety Policy which should be read in conjunction with this document :
 - **Safe** – Do not give out personal information, or post photos of yourself to people you talk to online. Follow age restriction rules.
 - **Meeting** – Do not meet somebody you have only met online. We encourage parents/carers to speak regularly to their children about who they are talking to online.
 - **Accepting** – We advise that children only open emails and other forms of communication from people they already know.
 - **Reliable** – We teach children about the dangers of believing everything they see online.
 - **Tell** – We encourage children to tell a teacher, parent or carer if they see anything online that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Signed



Chair of Governors 22/11/21