



**BRANNEL SCHOOL**

**SOCIAL  
NETWORKING  
POLICY**

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Next Review: Autumn 2017

## Introduction

Social networking activities conducted on-line outside working hours such as blogging (writing personal journals to internet pages which are publicly accessible), involvement in social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Myspace or Bebo and posting material, images or comments on sites such as You Tube, can have a negative effect on the reputation or image of the school. In addition Brannel School has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work. This policy has been written to set out the key principles and code of conduct in connection with the use of social networking sites.

## Key Principles

- Every member of staff, governor, or volunteer has a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the school and to treat colleagues and members of the school with professionalism and respect.
- It is important to protect every member of staff, governor or volunteer at Brannel School from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.
- Safeguarding children is a key responsibility for all members of staff, governors and volunteers and it is essential that everyone considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites out of school. No-one who works in the school either as a paid employee or volunteer must communicate with children via social networking.
- This policy relates to social networking outside work. Blogging and accessing social networking sites at work using school equipment is not permitted.
- No communications relating to any specific event, protocol, pupil or person at Brannel School should be shared, irrespective of their anonymity.

## Aims

- To set out the key principles and code of conduct expected of all members of staff, governors and volunteers at Brannel School in relation to social networking.
- To further safeguard and protect children and staff.

## Code of Conduct

The following are **not considered acceptable**:

- Use of the school's name, logo, or any other published material without prior written permission from the Headteacher. This applies to any published material including the internet or written documentation.
- The posting of any communication or images which link the school to any form of illegal conduct or 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 which could compromise the security of the school.
- The posting of any images of employees, children, governors or other persons directly connected with the school while engaged in school activities.

In addition, all members of staff, governors and volunteers must ensure that they:

- Do not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the school or anyone connected with the school.
- Use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that their personal or professional reputation, or the school's reputation, is not compromised by inappropriate postings.

- Are aware of the potential of on-line identity fraud and are cautious when giving personal information about themselves which may compromise their personal safety and security.
- Do not 'friend'/communicate with any student studying at Brannel School through a social networking site.
- Do not 'friend'/communicate with any parent/guardian of a student studying at Brannel School through a social networking site.
- Do not 'friend'/communicate with any past student of Brannel School who is under the age of 21 through a social networking site.

Exceptions to these obligations may be made under the following conditions:

- Staff, governors and volunteers who have children or grandchildren in the school or who have recently been at the school
- Staff, governors or volunteers who know or are related to parents/guardian of students of the school without that relationship being as a result of their role within the school.

**It is recommended that if a social networking account is used the highest security settings are in place.**

#### **Potential and Actual Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

In instances where there has been a breach of the above Code of Conduct, the following will apply:

- Any breaches of this policy will be fully investigated. Where it is found that there has been a breach of the policy, this may result in action being taken under the Disciplinary Procedure. A breach of this policy will be considered to be a serious disciplinary offence which is contrary to the school's ethos and principles.
- The Governing Body will take appropriate action to protect the school's reputation and the reputation of all staff, parents, governors, children and anyone else directly linked to the school

Implementation of this policy will take place from January 2014 following notice given to staff, governors and volunteers no later than 1 November 2013.