Notting Hill Preparatory School

1.28 Policy for Social Media

(EYFS & KS1-3)

Social Media Policy

Introduction
This document sets out the school's policy on social media and networking. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's eSafeguarding and any other related policies and should also be read in conjunction with the school's disciplinary procedures as set out in NHP's Employment Manual.

Context

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to interact with each other, from rediscovering friends on social networking sites such as Facebook, to keeping up with other people's lives on Twitter and maintaining pages on internet encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia.

The School understands that employees have the right to a private life and will respect this, as long as employees follow the guidelines set out in this Policy and other documents it refers to. The School expects employees to maintain reasonable standards in their own behaviour, such that enable them to maintain an effective learning environment and also to uphold public trust and confidence in them and the teaching profession. Employees should avoid any conduct which is likely to bring the school into disrepute.

It is crucial that pupils, parents and the public at large have confidence in the school's decisions and services. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that staff members use social media responsibly so that confidentiality of pupils, parents and other staff is protected and the reputation of the school safeguarded.

Scope of policy
This Policy applies to all staff that work in the school. This includes all teaching and non-teaching staff. The general principles set out in this Policy should also be followed by adults who work at the school but are not employed by the school. This document should be read in conjunction with the **Staff IT Acceptable Use and eSafeguarding Policies.**

This policy covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official school purposes, including sites hosted and maintained on behalf of the school.

This policy applies to any personal activities of a member of the NHP staff team that takes place on a social networking site as well as any social media including but not restricted to: blogs, microblogs such as Tumblr, Twitter, chatrooms, online discussion forums, podcasts, media sharing, open access online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us and content sharing sites such as flickr and YouTube.

In a global environment we recognise that the internet is a fast-moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or all kinds of emerging media - the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium, platform or operating system.

Principles – Be Professional, Responsible and Respectful
Adults who work with pupils are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct, which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

- Staff in schools should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.

- Staff must be conscious at all times of the need to keep personal and professional lives separate. Staff should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between their work for the school and their personal interests.

- Staff must not engage in activities involving social media, which might bring Notting Hill Prep into disrepute.

- Staff must not represent their personal views as those of Notting Hill Prep on any social medium.

- Staff must not discuss or disclose personal information about pupils, their family members, Notting Hill Prep staff and other professionals they interact with as part of their job, on social media.

- Staff must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals and Notting Hill Prep

- Staff must be accurate, fair and transparent when creating or altering online sources of information on behalf of Notting Hill Prep.

- Staff must be aware that all information shared through social media sites apps, even in private spaces is subject to copyright, Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

Personal Use of Social Media
- Staff members must not identify themselves as employees of Notting Hill Prep in their personal webspace. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, particularly those involved in providing sensitive frontline services.

- No communication, irrespective of whether it is anonymous, may be shared that relates to a specific event, protocol, person or pupil at NHP.

- Staff members must not have contact through any personal social medium with any pupil, whether from Notting Hill Prep or any other school, unless the pupils are family members.

- Notting Hill Prep does not expect staff members to discontinue contact with their family members via personal social media once the school starts providing services for them. However, any information staff members obtain in the course of their employment must not be used for personal gain nor be passed on to others who may use it in such a way.

- Staff members must not have any contact with pupils' family members through personal social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.

- If staff members wish to communicate with pupils through social media sites or to enable pupils to keep in touch with one another, they can only do so through Firefly.

- Staff members must decline 'friend requests' from pupils they receive in their personal social media accounts.

- On leaving Notting Hill Prep's service, staff members must not contact Notting Hill Prep's pupils by means of personal social media sites. Similarly, staff members must not contact pupils from their former schools by means of personal social media.

- Information staff members have access to as part of their employment, including personal information about pupils and their family members, colleagues, and other parties and school corporate information, must not be discussed on their personal webspace.

- Photographs, videos or any other types of image of pupils and their families or images depicting staff members wearing school uniforms or clothing with school logos must not be published on personal webspace.

- School email addresses and other official contact details must not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

- Staff members must not edit open access online encyclopaedias such as *Wikipedia* in a personal capacity at work. This is because the source of the correction will be recorded as the employer's IP address and the intervention will, therefore, appear as if it comes from the employer itself.

- Notting Hill Prep corporate, service or team logos or brands must not be used or published on personal webspace.

- Notting Hill Prep only permits limited personal use of social media while at work. Access to social media sites for personal reasons is not allowed between 9am and 5pm. Any interaction outside of these hours using this medium must be kept to a minimum. Staff members are expected to devote their contracted hours of work to their professional duties and, in practice, personal use of the internet should not be on the school's time.

- Caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be 'friends' in personal social networking sites. Social networking sites blur the line between work and personal lives and it may be difficult to maintain professional relationships or it might be just too embarrassing if too much personal information is known in the work place.

- Staff members are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. Staff members should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online; it is not safe to reveal home addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information. It is a good idea to use a separate email address just for social networking so that any other contact details are not given away.

Monitoring of Internet Use
- Notting Hill Prep has the right to monitor usage of its Internet and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users.

- Users of Notting Hill Prep email and Internet services should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the school's IT system.

Breaches of the Policy
- Any breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the staff member/s involved in line with Notting Hill Prep's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

- Staff may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. If staff fail to remove postings, this could result in disciplinary action.

- A breach of this policy leading to breaches of confidentiality, or defamation or damage to the reputation of Notting Hill Prep or any illegal acts or acts that render Notting Hill Prep liable to third parties may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

Using Social Media on Behalf of Notting Hill Prep
- Staff members can only use official school sites for communicating with pupils or to enable pupils to communicate with one another.

- No official school site should be created without the prior consent of the Head. There must be a strong pedagogical or business reason for creating official school sites to communicate with pupils or others. Staff must not create sites for trivial reasons, which could expose the school to unwelcome publicity or cause damage to its reputation.

- Official school sites must not breach the terms and conditions of social media service providers, particularly with regard to minimum age requirements.

- Staff members must at all times act in the best interests of children and young people when creating, participating in or contributing content to social media sites.