



William Brookes Academy Trust

Social Media Policy

Updated October 2017



***Social Media Policy
William Brookes Academy Trust
(October 2017)***

This policy is due for review in twelve months

At William Brookes Academy Trust, the governors and staff fully recognise the contribution the school makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that the safety and protection of all students is of paramount importance and that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm.

We believe that the school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes all students' social, physical, emotional and moral development

William Brookes Academy Trust understands that social media is a growing part of life outside of school. We have a responsibility to safeguard our students against potential dangers when accessing the internet at school, and to educate our students about how to protect themselves online when outside of school.

We are committed to:

- Encouraging the responsible use of social media in support of the William Brookes Academy Trust's mission, values and objectives.
- Protecting our students 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.

Ultimately, effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016.

1. Key Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.1 The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Social Media Policy and procedures of William Brookes Academy Trust
- 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 handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- 1.4 The Assistant Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Social Media Policy and procedures of William Brookes Academy Trust.
- 1.5 Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for following the Social Media Policy and for ensuring students do so also. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently in the classroom.
- 1.6 Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the social media habits of their child / children at home.
- 1.7 Parents and carers will be expected to promote safe social media behaviour.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 William Brookes Academy Trust 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
 - Online discussion forums, such as netmums.com
 - Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook
 - Media sharing services
 - 'Micro-blogging' applications, such as Twitter
 - Snapchat
 - Kik Messenger
 - Mobile TV applications such as Sky Sports
- 2.2 William Brookes Academy Trust defines "cyber bullying" as any use of social media or communication technology to bully an individual or group.
- 2.3 William Brookes Academy Trust defines "members of the school community" as any teacher, member of support staff, student, parent / carer of student, governor or ex-student.

3. Training of Staff

- 3.1 At William Brookes Academy Trust, we recognise that early intervention can protect students who may be at risk of cyber bullying or negative social media behaviour. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at risk students.
- 3.2 Teachers and support staff will be directed to read and understand the Social Media Policy as part of their new starter induction.
- 3.3 Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

4. Student Expectations

- 4.1 Students are responsible for following the school rules and will be expected to follow requests from teachers.

5. Social Media Use – Staff

- 5.1 William Brookes Academy Trust strongly recommends against the use of social media due to the potential for misuse. Staff using social media does so at their own risk.
- 5.2 School social media passwords must never be shared.
- 5.3 The IT Support team is responsible for the school's social media accounts.
- 5.4 Teachers must not access social media during lesson time
- 5.5 The use of smart phone technology is outlined in our Mobile Phone Policy.
- 5.6 Members of staff must not use social media in school except for specific educational purposes lead by ICT staff.
- 5.7 Members of staff **must not** "friend" or otherwise contact students or parents / carers through social media.
- 5.8 If students attempt to "friend" or otherwise contact members of staff through social media, they should be reported to the Headteacher/Student Support.
- 5.9 Members of staff are advised not to identify themselves as an employee of William Brookes School/William Brookes Academy Trust on social media.
- 5.10 Members of staff **must not** post content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or students.
- 5.11 Where teachers or members of staff use social media in a personal capacity, they should make it clear that their views are personal.
- 5.12 Teachers or members of staff must not post any information which could identify a student, class or the school unless using the official school accounts.

- 5.13 Members of staff should not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.
- 5.14 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.
- 5.15 Members of staff should be aware that if their out-of-work activity brings William Brookes Academy Trust into disrepute, disciplinary action will be taken.
- 5.16 Attempts to bully, coerce or manipulate members of the school community by teachers and members of staff will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

6. Social Media Use – Students and Parents /Carers

- 6.1 Students may not access social media whilst in school, unless it is part of a curriculum activity.
- 6.2 Breaches of this policy by students will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content could lead to prosecution, or exclusion.
- 6.3 Students and parents / carers **must not** attempt to “friend”/“follow” 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 head teacher.
- 6.4 If members of staff attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact students or parents / carers through social media, they should be reported to the head teacher.
- 6.5 Students and parents / carers should not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.
- 6.6 Students **must not** post content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or Students.
- 6.7 Students at William Brookes School are advised not to sign up to social media sites that have an age restriction above the student’s age.
- 6.8 If inappropriate content is accessed online on school premises, it **must** be reported to a teacher.

7. Blocked Content

- 7.1 The majority of social media websites are blocked by the network's firewalls.
- 7.2 Attempts to circumvent the network's firewalls will result in a ban from using school computing equipment, other than with close supervision.
- 7.3 Inappropriate content which is accessed on the school computers should be reported to the assistant head teacher so that the site can be blocked.
- 7.4 The final decision of whether access should be granted to a site will be made by the head teacher.

8. Cyber Bullying

- 8.1 At William Brookes Academy Trust, cyber bullying is taken seriously.
- 8.2 Incidents of cyber bullying will be dealt with and reported along the same chain as the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- 8.3 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 PSHE.

9. Be SMART Online

- 9.1 We encourage students to take a SMART approach to social media behaviour:
 - **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 students only accept emails and other forms of communication from people they already know.
 - **Reliable** – We teach students about the dangers of believing everything they see online.
 - **Tell** – We encourage students to tell a teacher, parent or carer if they see anything online that makes them feel uncomfortable.