THE HELIX

EDUCATION CENTRE

Enabling Partnerships of Excellence in Continuity of Education for All Pupils

ASPIRE – STUDY – PERSEVERE

Title:	**Internet Social Networking Websites & Online Policy**
Policy Co-ordinator:	**Jiten Patel**
Date Reviewed:	**07th October 2024**
Date Ratified:	**07th October 2024**
Status:	**Statutory**
Delegation:	**Management Committee**
Review Frequency	**Annually**
Policy Review Date	**October 2025**

Chair of Management Committee: **Seeta Mepani**
Head Teacher: **PK Maselino**

What is this policy?

Online safety is an integral part of safeguarding and requires a whole school, cross-curricular approach and collaboration between key school leads. Accordingly, this policy is written in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024 (KCSIE), 'Teaching Online Safety in Schools' 2019 and other statutory documents. It complements existing and forthcoming subjects including Health, Relationships and Sex Education, Citizenship and Computing; it is designed to sit alongside our school's statutory Safeguarding Policy. Any issues and concerns with online safety must follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008
- Employment Act 2008
- Equality Act 2010

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Acas Code of Practice 1 - Disciplinary and Grievance
- Bullying and Harassment at Work: A Guide for Managers and Employers (Acas)
- Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures (Acas)
- Discipline and Grievances at Work - The Acas Guide (Acas)

We acknowledge that social networking has become part of everyday life with many people of all ages using social networking sites on a daily basis.

Many feel that there are valid reasons for exploring the educational benefits of these sites because research shows that the most discussed topics on these sites by young people are those dealing with homework and lessons.

However, school based staff need to be aware that 'posting' anything on these social networking sites about themselves, others or their place of work must be prepared for the possibility that anyone could gain access to it. This has been a major factor in identity theft.

In terms of school personnel's use of social networking and the web, they must be careful what information is posted due to potential security risks.

School personnel should use social networking sites wisely and cautiously and if absolutely necessary bearing in mind they should not jeopardise themselves, others or their place of work. The school will monitor its IT system for inappropriate usage and will take the necessary disciplinary measures if need be.

We believe the following recommendations should be considered if school personnel use social networking websites:

- Use only your name for the profile.
- Do not put your date of birth on the profile.
- Be wary of what photographs you put online of yourself, family or friends.
- Remember you must have their permission to publish.
- Make your profiles 'invite' only and thus only allow people you trust with certainty to view your information.
- Do not post your occupation.
- Do not discuss your work or place of work.
- Do not place derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive remarks about the school, work colleagues, parents, pupils, MC Members or anyone else connected with the school.
- Do not divulge confidential information of any form.
- Do not publish photographs taken at your work.
- Do not discuss your political or religious views.
- Be careful what viewpoints you express.
- If you do post anything online be mindful of the fact you could lose total control of it.
- Be careful of what other people post on your profile. You might be careful but are your friends?

Filtering & Monitoring Systems provide a safe environment to learn and work by protecting pupils and staff from harmful and inappropriate content online. What's seen to be harmful will depend on each pupil.

At The Helix Education Centre, and in line with KCSIE 24, all staff will:

- Follow policies and procedures

- Report any problems

- Monitor what's happening on screens

Our DSL takes lead responsibility for filtering and monitoring reports and any safeguarding concerns that appear (via BEESAFE)

Senior Leadership Team makes sure staff understand their roles, reviews the effectiveness of our systems and oversees reports, whilst the schools' IT service provider [WIBIRD} has technical responsibility for maintaining and managing our internal systems.

We strongly recommend that school personnel do not use the school's IT system to access social networking sites for their own personal use.

We believe Facebook is a useful tool for marketing the school by promoting and explaining our values, aims and work. All school personnel and other members of the school community are reminded that when using this social media platform for the school they must contribute to it mindful of school protocol and that they are not derogatory of the school or anyone connected with it.

We support all school personnel and will ensure that any abusive comments made about them on social media by pupils or parents brought to our attention will be taken very seriously and will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Aims

- To ensure all school personnel are aware of the dangers of using internet social networking sites.
- To ensure that all school personnel use internet social networking websites wisely and cautiously and not jeopardising themselves, others or their place of work.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Management Committee

The Management Committee has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- appointed members of the school personnel to be in charge of the school's website and the school's social networking website;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated Equalities MC Member to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;

- nominated a link MC Member to:

  - ☐ visit the school regularly;
  - ☐ work closely with the Headteacher and the coordinator;
  - ☐ ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
  - ☐ ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
  - ☐ attend training related to this policy;
  - ☐ annually report to the Management Committee on the success and development of this policy.

- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- ensure all school personnel comply with this policy;
- monitor the school website and the school's social networking website;
- take disciplinary action in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy if any employee breaches this policy;
- support all school personnel that are subjected to abusive comments made about them on social media by pupils or parents;
- report to the appropriate authorities any abusive comments made on social media to and about school personnel;
- work closely with the link MC Member;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- annually report to the Management Committee on the success and development of this policy.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy
- not access social networking sites during the school day;
- not post confidential school information or information about any member of the school personnel on any social networking site;
- not make reference to the school or anyone connected to it when using any social networking site;
- not bring the school into disrepute by making any derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive comments on any social networking site;
- not make discriminatory or offensive comments about any member of the school personnel on any social networking site;
- not make contact with parents or pupils via social networking websites;
- be aware that the Management Committee will take the necessary disciplinary action if any member of the school personnel breaches this policy;

- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community.

Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- not make contact with school personnel via social networking websites;
- not make abusive comments about any member of the school personnel on social media;
- work in partnership with the school;
- comply with this policy for the benefit of their children;
- be asked to take part in periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the Staff Handbook
- meetings with school personnel
- reports such annual report to parents and Headteacher reports to the Management Committee

Training

All school personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on induction which specifically covers:

  - ☐ All aspects of this policy
  - ☐ School Personnel Code of Conduct
  - ☐ Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment at the Workplace
  - ☐ Grievance Procedure
  - ☐ Disciplinary Procedure
  - ☐ Whistle Blowing
  - ☐ Equal opportunities
  - ☐ Inclusion

- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

We believe that this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010, and as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated MC Member.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Management Committee for further discussion and endorsement.

Linked Policies

- Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment at the Workplace
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Induction of New Staff
- School Personnel Code of Conduct
- Whistle Blowing