



## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

**This is a whole-school policy, within the framework of which the Primary Phase and the Nursery policies operate as appropriate.**

This policy is in addition to, and complements, any existing policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the Internet.

### Principles

1. The School recognises the role that social media can play in modern society and in raising the profile of the School. The School recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which social media presence offers. Staff, parents/carers and students/pupils are actively encouraged to find creative ways to use social media.
2. This policy applies to all employees of QEGS.
3. The intention of this policy is to protect all employees and the reputation of the School, by ensuring that employees are clear about and understand the appropriate use of social media. Employees are expected to uphold the reputation of the School, and not behave in ways that might compromise its good name.
4. For the purpose of this policy, social media refers to any on-line web-based tool which allows users to communicate with one another, by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests.  
Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, the use of apps, blogs/vlogs, instant messaging, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Google+, Skype and any 'Cloud' solutions.
5. The safeguarding of students/pupils, staff, Governors and the School's reputation is of paramount importance and should always override any other issues.
6. This policy is not intended to restrict genuine and work-related use of what is an important method of communication and engagement. It is aimed at helping get the most out of the social media tools available, whilst also maintaining a safe and professional environment for both the school and its employees.
7. The School recognises that any method of social media needs to be closely monitored by designated people.
8. The School will not be held responsible for any comments made on its social media sites without prior approval.
9. The aim of the School's official Facebook pages and Twitter accounts is to raise awareness of events, to record suitable images and written accounts of such events, and to share and recognise achievements.
10. Anyone may post comments and send direct messages. These are monitored daily by the designated administrator and guidance on how to respond complaints and

negative feedback is detailed in the 'SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY GUIDANCE' document available to all staff.

11. The School recognises that social media sites are open to misuse.
12. Any breaches of this policy will be investigated. This may include formal investigation in accordance with the School's Disciplinary policy and procedure.
13. Upon enrolment into the School, all parents/carers are asked to provide authorisation for their child's image and/or name to be used in any publicity material. This extends to, but is not limited to, the School's website, Facebook pages and Twitter accounts.
14. If a student/pupil, parent, member of staff or Governor objects to any particular photograph, on grounds of suitability or quality, it will be deleted as soon as possible and without further discussion.

### **Employees' responsibilities when using social media**

1. While the School is happy for staff to engage in personal social media, they should not under any circumstances connect with or follow students/pupils of the School on sites such as Facebook and Twitter, thereby ensuring professional boundaries are maintained at all times.
2. Employees must ensure that any personal on-line activity does not interfere with their employment, their colleagues, and their responsibilities and duties as a School employee.
3. Under no circumstances should employees post anything offensive, sensitive, disrespectful or detrimental to the business of the School, its employees, its current students/pupils, parents/carers, Governors, former staff, former students/pupils, or members of its wider Community.
4. As employees of QEGS, when using social media, you need to take responsibility for the information that you are putting online. Even in cases where blogs or web pages have private settings, any information that is posted, uploaded or shared can become public very quickly. It is therefore essential that employees stay within legal limits when using social media, both personally and professionally. All employees need to be aware that, if your actions on social media are considered to be unlawful, you may also be subject to legal and criminal proceedings.
5. Employees should only access social media for personal use from personal devices during their own time e.g. during breaks and lunchtime. Line Managers will monitor the use of personal devices at work in the same way that they would any other activity e.g. personal phone calls, breaks etc. and deal with any excessive use individually.

## **Using Social Media for work purposes**

The School currently operates six active Facebook pages:

- “QEGS Blackburn” - administered by the Marketing and Admissions Manager
- “Queen Elizabeth’s Nursery School Blackburn” - administered by the Nursery Manager
- “Queen Elizabeth’s Alumni” - administered by the OBA Administrator
- “QEGS Library Blackburn” - administered by the School Librarian

The School currently operates four active Twitter accounts:

- @qegs\_blackburn - administered by the Marketing and Admissions Manager
- @qegsblackburnpe - administered by the Head of Sport
- @qegs\_languages – administered by the Head of Languages
- @QEGSEnglishDept – administered by the Head of English

1. The designated administrators of all the School’s social media accounts will take the utmost care to protect the passwords, and will not reveal them nor delegate their control rights to any third party.
2. Staff should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on School social media accounts. Students/pupils should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule, and must not be on the list of children whose images must not be published. For additional copies of this list, please contact the Marketing and Admissions Manager.
3. Employees should be aware that they should not post, upload or share any information on-line that is libellous, defamatory or subject to copyright when using the School’s social media accounts. If you are unsure about what this includes please speak to your Line Manager.
4. Employees should keep personal or private information relating to work and colleagues confidential at all times. If you are unsure about what this includes please speak to your Line Manager.
5. School social media accounts must not be used for personal gain. Staff must ensure that confidentiality is maintained on social media even after they leave the employment of the School.

## **Process for creating new accounts**

The School community is encouraged to consider if a social media account will help them in their work and overall promotion of QEGS, e.g. a history department Twitter account. Anyone wishing to create such an account must speak to the Marketing and Admissions Manager to discuss the following points:-

- The aim of the account
- The intended audience
- Frequency of posts
- Who will run the account (at least two staff members should be named)
- Will the account be open or private/closed

In all cases, the Admissions and Marketing Manager must be satisfied that anyone creating and running a social media account on behalf of the School has read and understood this policy and received appropriate training. Those needing support or training is advised to speak to the Admissions and Marketing Manager.

This also applies to anyone who is not directly employed by the School, including volunteers or parents/carers.

For those wishing to progress with creating a new social media account, guidance has been created for staff: 'SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY PROCEDURE' which details guidance on style and tone, content and administration of the account.

Updated by Miss G Avery: March 2020

Approved by Board of Governors: