



## **Social Media Policy**

Social media and online applications are very much a part of modern day society and the online safety of our pupils is paramount.

*To be a star, you must shine your own light,  
follow your own path and don't worry about the darkness,  
for that is when stars shine brightest*

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. This policy gives clarity to the way in which social media will be used by the school to celebrate and share learning, develop links with other professionals and to communicate with parents.

It will also outline how social media should be used by pupils, governors, visitors, parent helpers and school staff at Albemarle Primary School. This policy will also provide guidance for parents.

**There are five key areas:**

- 1.) How and why Albemarle is using social media.
- 2.) The use of social media sites by Albemarle pupils.
- 3.) Dealing with incidents of inappropriate online behaviour by Albemarle pupils.
- 4.) The use of social media sites by Albemarle staff.
- 5.) Comments posted online by parents/carers

How and why Albemarle is using social media

At Albemarle, we are always looking for ways to improve the quality of education that we provide for our pupils. We also strive to ensure that all involved in the Albemarle community have the chance to be a part of the learning journey experienced by our pupils. Albemarle uses a variety of strategies to celebrate learning and communicate our ethos with the wider community. We do this through the use of our website: <http://www.albemarle.wandsworth.sch.uk/>

There are also various other ways in which the school provides information for parents, such as the Our School App, the newsletter, invitational events such as performances and reading workshops. We are proud of what we offer, but believe that the use of a social media site can further improve the school's capacity to share our vision and celebrate our pupil's achievements.

Twitter @AlbemarleSchool



The use of twitter in school allows us to:

- Celebrate and share the learning of children across school through tweets and pictures.
- Involve parents in the learning journey and promote particular school events.
- Network with other professional bodies in an attempt to further develop practice.
- Liaise with authors and other various education professionals to enhance the school's curriculum.

Twitter at Albemarle would be used solely for the above purposes and will be closely monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. Any comments received to school tweets

that are defamatory or bring the school's name into disrepute will be deleted immediately. If parents/carers have any concerns, they should follow the school's usual procedures and speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

### The use of social media sites by Albemarle pupils.

The school's Social Media Consent Form outlines the rules for using IT in school and these rules therefore apply to use of social networking sites. Such sites cannot be accessed in school and are filtered by the LGFL web-filtering service.

Social media and online applications are very much a part of modern day society and the online safety of our pupils is paramount. Whilst we cannot control access to the internet outside of school we strive to provide children with the knowledge of how to appropriately conduct themselves online. E-safety is embedded across the computing curriculum over the course of the year and is taught specifically in the Spring term for all year groups.

In terms of private use of social networking sites by a child it is generally understood that children under the age of 13 are not permitted to be registered, including Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.

### Dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour online

The school's **Anti-Bullying Policy** sets out the processes and sanctions regarding any type of **bullying** by a child within our care. In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, the Head teacher will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels such as the Complaints Policy.

The Governing Body understands that, "There are circumstances in which police involvement is appropriate. These include where postings have a racist element or where violence is threatened or encouraged." Furthermore, "Laws of defamation and privacy still apply to the web and it is unlawful for statements to be written...which:

- expose (an individual) to hatred, ridicule or contempt
- cause (an individual) to be shunned or avoided
- lower (an individual's) standing in the estimation of right-thinking members of society or
- disparage (an individual in their) business, trade, office or profession."

(National Association of Headteachers)

### The use of social media sites by Albemarle staff.

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

We understand that some staff may use their social media accounts for professional networking with others involved in education. As a school we encourage staff to do

this, but they should avoid identifying themselves as this could bring the school's name into disrepute.

### Guidelines are issued to staff:

- Staff must never add pupils as 'friends' into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 16).
- Staff are strongly advised not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts.
- Staff must not post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including members of the Governing Body.
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).
- Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff should read and comply with the Staff use of ICT policy
- Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

### Comments posted online by parents/carers.

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion. School policies and documents provide further information regarding appropriate channels of communication and means of resolving differences of opinion. Effective communication that follows principles of mutual respect is the best means of ensuring the best learning experiences for the child.

Parents must not post pictures of pupils, other than their own children, on social networking sites where these photographs have been taken at a school event.

Parents should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites. Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.