

**Lissan Primary School**



# **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

*“Together we learn, grow and play in God’s love and care.”*

Use of ICT allows all pupils to gain confidence and ability in an ever-changing society and prepares them for the challenge of a rapidly developing and evolving technological world.

In Lissan Primary School we aim:

- To provide opportunities to enable all our staff and pupils to be confident, competent and independent users of ICT.
- To provide an environment where access to ICT resources is natural and commonplace.
- To ensure ICT has a fundamental role in developing and enhancing our school's key learning aims in promoting the pupils' educational, physical and social needs.
- ICT encourages our staff and pupils to work collaboratively.

### **Social Networking**

Social networking is everywhere. It is common to find parents, children, co-workers and others on such sites. With social networks people across the world have access to tools and options that were previously non-existent. However, there are now just as many new opportunities to connect as there are to get into potential danger.

One thing we often forget while having fun on social networks is that almost anybody can see what we are doing. While we are tagging photos of our friends or are posting comments to them, it can be easy to forget that someone else who has been invited onto a social networking site can also view them.

Once something appears on the Internet, it's almost impossible to remove. As these sites continue to grow in popularity, so too does the value of the information on them to parties other than those directly involved. Social networking users need to take a step back and think about just what they're posting onto the Internet.

## Responsibilities of staff

People who work with children and young people should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid improper contact or relationships and respect their position of trust.

With regard to relationships, individuals who work with children and young people should not attempt to establish a relationship, which might include:

- communication of a personal nature
- inappropriate dialogue through the internet
- the sending of emails or text messages of an inappropriate nature

Individuals, who work with children and young people, should be extremely careful in corresponding with people on social networking sites.

Staff relationships with children and young people should, at all times, remain professional and they should not correspond with children and young people through such sites or add them as 'friends'.

It is worth bearing in mind that, on such sites, an inappropriate or even misconstrued communication may have the potential to impact upon their careers, or even result in criminal investigation.

In addition staff should bear in mind who may access their own profiles on such websites. Staff should therefore take care as to the information they display about themselves, their personal lives and should not make any reference to school or individuals within it. They should also ensure that they have installed, and are using, the highest level of privacy settings.

**\*\*Individuals who work with children and young people, should not make, view or access, illegal or inappropriate images of children.\*\***

Individuals, who work with children and young people and others, with whom they may be in a position of trust, should exercise caution when using social networking sites and avoid inappropriate communication of any kind.

### **Responsibilities of parents/carers**

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking through the implementation of this policy.

Methods of school communication include the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters/ Class Dojo and verbal discussion. It is recommended that pictures taken of pupils within the school setting/at school events should not be posted on social networking sites without the pupils' parents' permission.

Parents/carers should not post comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community or any school policy, process or procedure. Parents should be aware that comments which could be defamatory could be subject of legal proceedings.

It would be of benefit to the school that if any parent has a concern, comment or complaint in relation to any school related matter that they voice it through the correct forum/ procedure, such as speaking to a teacher/ principal, or following the School Complaints' Procedure

### **Guidance/protection for pupils on using social networking**

Facebook and Twitter do not permit children under 13 to have a Facebook or Twitter account.

There is a mechanism on Facebook where children below the age of 13 who are using Facebook can be reported via the Help screen.