

Keeping Hurst Park Safe & Happy – Use of Social Media Code of Conduct

The governing body of Hurst Park is committed to ensure that the school remains a safe and happy place for all members of the school community and will act swiftly to ensure that no negative behaviour, either in person or online, undermines this purpose.

At Hurst Park, we recognise that social media has many benefits in terms of good communication. The school uses Twitter as a method of communicating news to the wider community and we recognise that many staff and parents use social media to discuss upcoming events, fundraising and meetings associated with the school. Social media has many benefits when used responsibly.

However, we acknowledge that social media can also be used negatively and do not tolerate the use of social media where it:

- Exposes the school and its community to legal risk;
- Adversely affects the reputation of the school and its community;
- Misrepresents the school and its vision & values.

We have devised the following simple list of do's and don'ts to ensure all members of our school community use social media responsibly when referring to matters relating to the school, either explicitly or implicitly:

DO...

Use good judgment – Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared on your social media is public information.

Be respectful – The school has a responsibility to ensure that all members of the school community, be they staff, parents or pupils, are treated with respect at all times. One cannot see a smile or understand the nuances of speech on social media. Please keep the tone of discussion positive and respectful.

Be responsible and ethical – Unless you are specifically authorised to speak on behalf of the school as a spokesperson, you should state that the views which you express on social media are your own. If you have a worry or concern relating to the school or a decision made by the school, the proper channels should be used to communicate this. Comments made online are considered to be 'published' and remain on the internet forever. Please think very carefully before making negative comments online as, should those comments be considered to be offensive*, the school will have no option but to refer matters to the LA's legal team.

Correct any mistakes – Be sure to correct any mistakes immediately, apologising publically if necessary, making it clear what you have done to fix it.

DON'T...

Publish private, personal or confidential information – If it seems confidential, it probably is. Online ‘conversations’ are never private. To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide. Avoid talking about personal schedules or situations. NEVER give out or transmit personal information regarding pupils, parents or staff. Always respect the privacy of the school community members.

Publish images/photos/videos – it is not acceptable to publish images of pupils without the express consent of their parents. Parents/carers at Hurst Park Primary School agree/disagree to using images their child(ren) for publication. For reasons of confidentiality, this list can only be seen by school staff. Therefore, if a child is not on this consent list or you do not have access to the list, the permission of the parent/carer must be sought before uploading images of children.

Provide links to other sites – Links to other sites may provide interesting/useful content. However, do not repost a link without checking the content first.

Blur professional boundaries – ‘Friend’ requests should not be exchanged between staff and parents/carers, or staff and pupils (including former pupils under the age of 18). Friend request exchanges between parents and pupils (including former pupils under the age of 18) are discouraged. Please note that social media sites such as Facebook have acceptable use policies which prevent accounts being operated by under 13s.

*Posts shall be deemed ‘offensive’ if they contain:

- Personal attacks on members of the school community;
- Are libellous, profane, defamatory, disparaging, hateful, harassing, threatening or obscene;
- Break the law;
- Are fraudulent, deceptive or deliberately misleading.

July 2014; updated September 2018