Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL

From mountain to sea

Barthol Chapel School
Social Media Policy

Barthol Chapel School understands that social media is a growing part of life outside of school. We have a responsibility to safeguard our learners against potential dangers when accessing the internet at school, and to educate our pupils about how to protect themselves online when outside of school.

Everyone at Barthol Chapel School has a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the school, and to treat colleagues and members of the school with professionalism and respect.

Appropriate use of social media – Pupils

Before being allowed to use the internet at school, all pupils must obtain parental/carer permission and both the parent and the child must sign as evidence of approval and acceptance of Barthol Chapel School's internet acceptable use policy.

Barthol Chapel School, along with other Aberdeenshire Council schools, uses the latest screening techniques to prevent access to all categories of unsuitable, offensive and inflammatory internet materials. During school hours, teachers will supervise, guide and support pupils in using the internet and in finding and using appropriate materials. Whilst our aim for internet use is to further educational goals and objectives, no supervision or screening policy can guarantee complete security.

Pupils should not access social networking sites whilst at school. Pupils and parents will be reminded that the use of some social media sites is inappropriate for Primary-aged pupils.

Pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse, or defame other pupils, any member of staff or school in any way that brings disrespect to our school or individuals.

Pupils and the wider school community should not post images or videos of other pupils, staff or members of our school community taken within school or at school events/ trips on any social media site without prior permission from the school.

Appropriate use of social media – Parents and Carers

Parents/carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social media via this policy

Parents/carers are asked not to post images (photos and videos) of pupils other than their own children on social media sites unless they have the permission of parents of other children pictured

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Head Teachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. Barthol Chapel School considers the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community. In the event that any parent/carer at Barthol Chapel School is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, the school will take appropriate action to ensure such material is removed. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this

What should parents/carers do if they do have concerns/complaints?

In the first instance, please come and talk to us. We are always happy to talk through any concerns. If you do have a complaint about our service, again we would always ask that you first come to talk to us about it so we can deal with the complaint on the front line at school. However, at any time a parent/carers can enter into the Aberdeenshire Council Formal Complaints Procedure.

What should I do if I am concerned about my child's use of social media?

If you feel this is school related i.e. there are concerns about gaming, chats, social media, with other children in school, talk to your class teacher in the first instance. It is not really our place to investigate online matters taking place at home, but we are happy to help.

You can always contact Social Media service providers to report inappropriate content and ensure you have effective filters and parental controls set up at home. Whilst you cannot always access everything children are doing online, talk to your children about it and encourage good choices and positive online citizenship and reinforce online stranger danger messages. If your concern is significant and you are worried for the safety or wellbeing of those involved, always contact Police Scotland.

Appropriate use of social media – Staff

Contact on a social network site is no different from any other form of communication. Where there is a need to contact a pupil for legitimate work related reasons, utilise Glow. Interactions in Glow are recorded and users' identities can be validated. The only proviso to this is when using Glow Meet (Video Conferencing). Video Conferences should be conducted with regards to the same set of rules that govern face-to-face meetings in school.

Remember that your 'friends' on these sites may well live in the community in which you work. As such you may be teaching either their siblings, or their siblings friends. Keep your own social networking site private, so that only authorised users may view it

You should <u>NOT</u>

- Accept current pupils in a school as 'Contacts' or 'Friends' on social networks or photo-sharing sites, including offering 'limited profiles' access. If a student requests access, this should be politely but firmly declined.

- Attempt to make contact with current pupils via their own social network websites.

- Create specific 'school networking sites' without prior authority from the Head Teacher. Even then, the use of Glow should be the first choice considered.

Remember that any content put on social network sites or blogs may become known to a wider audience than it was initially intended for. Therefore:

- Get your facts straight. Libellous claims or comments on your site may make you, and potentially your employers, liable.

- Be respectful to your colleagues.

- Remember that you should write nothing that will damage the image of both your school and the authority as a whole.