



# Beaufort Primary School

## Social Media Policy



This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Agreement Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- School Photographic and Film Consent form
- Home/School Agreement
- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Data Protection Policy

**The Online Safety co-ordinator for the school is Natasha Haycraft.**

The Internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to interact with one another, for example from rediscovering friends on social networking sites such as Facebook to keeping up with other people's lives on Twitter and Instagram, communicating by WhatsApp and maintaining pages on Internet encyclopedias such as Wikipedia.

While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that Beaufort staff and contractors are expected to follow when using social media. It is crucial that pupils, parents and the public at large have confidence in the school's decisions and services. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that staff members use social media responsibly so that confidentiality of pupils and other staff and the reputation of the school and Swan Trust are safeguarded. Staff members must be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate.

### Scope

This policy applies to Beaufort Local Governing Committee, all teaching and other staff, whether employed by the Swan Trust or employed directly by the school, external contractors providing services on behalf of the school, teacher trainees and other trainees, volunteers and other individuals who work for or provide services on behalf of the school. These individuals are collectively referred to as 'staff members' in this policy.

This policy covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official school purposes, including sites hosted and maintained on behalf of the school. This policy applies to personal webspace such as social networking sites, blogs, microblogs, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopedias, social bookmarking sites and content sharing sites. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media – the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium.

### Legal Framework

Beaufort is committed to ensuring that all staff members provide confidential services that meet the highest standards. All individuals working on behalf of the school are bound by a legal duty of confidence and other laws to protect the confidential information they have access to during the course of their work. Disclosure of confidential information on social media is likely to be a breach of a number of laws and professional

codes of conduct, including:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Common Law Duty of Confidentiality
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

- Person-identifiable information, for example pupil and employee records, protected by the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Information divulged in the expectation of confidentiality
- School or Swan Academy Trust business or corporate records containing organisationally or publicly sensitive information
- Any commercially sensitive information such as information relating to commercial proposals or current negotiations
- Politically sensitive information

Staff members should also be aware that other laws relating to libel, defamation, harassment and copyright may apply to information posted on social media, including:

- Libel Act 1843
- Defamation Acts 1952 and 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Malicious Communications Act 1998
- Communications Act 2003
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018

Beaufort and the Swan Trust could be held vicariously responsible for acts of their employees in the course of their employment. For example, staff members who harass co-workers online or who engage in cyberbullying or discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, sex, disability, or who defame a third party while at work may render Beaufort or the Swan Trust liable to the injured party.

### **Principles – Be professional, Responsible and Respectful**

- You must be conscious at all times of the need to keep your personal and professional lives separate. You should not put yourself in a position where there is a conflict between work for the school or the Swan Trust and your personal interests.
- You must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Beaufort or the Swan Trust into disrepute.
- You must not represent your personal views as those of Beaufort or the Swan Trust on any social medium.
- You must not discuss personal information about pupils, Beaufort or the Swan Trust staff and other professionals you interact with as part of your job on social media.
- You must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations, Beaufort or the Swan Trust.
- You must be accurate, fair and transparent when creating or altering online sources of information on behalf of Beaufort or the Swan Trust.

## **Personal use of social media**

Staff members must not identify themselves as employees of Beaufort or the Swan Trust or service providers for the school or Swan Trust in their personal web space. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and the Swan Trust and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, particularly those involved in providing sensitive frontline services.

Staff members must not have contact through any personal social medium with any pupil, whether from Beaufort or any other school, unless the pupils are family members.

Beaufort does not expect staff members to discontinue contact with their family members via personal social media once the school starts providing services for them. However, any information staff members obtain in the course of their employment must not be used for personal gain nor be passed on to others who may use it in such a way. Staff members must not have any contact with pupils' family members through personal social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.

Staff members must decline 'friend requests' from pupils and former pupils they receive in their personal social media accounts. If a friendship request is made by a pupil the Online safety officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead to be alerted. On leaving Beaufort's service, staff members must not contact Beaufort's pupils or former pupils by means of personal social media sites. Similarly, staff members must not contact pupils from their former schools by means of personal social media.

Information staff members have access to as part of their employment, including personal information about pupils and their family members, colleagues, the Swan Trust staff and other parties and school or the Swan Trust corporate information must not be discussed on their personal web space.

Photographs, videos or any other types of images of pupils and their families or images depicting staff members wearing school uniforms or clothing with school logos or images identifying sensitive school or Swan Trust premises must not be published on personal webspace.

School or Swan Trust email addresses and other official contact details must not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff members must not edit open access online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia in a personal capacity at work. This is because the source of the correction will be recorded as the employer's IP address and the intervention will, therefore, appear as if it comes from the employer itself.

Beaufort or the Swan Trust service or logo or brand must not be used or published on personal web space.

Caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be 'friends' in personal social networking sites. Staff should not accept or invite parents to be 'friends'. Social networking sites can blur the line between work and personal lives and it may be difficult to maintain professional relationships or it might be just too embarrassing if too much personal information is known in the work place.

Staff members are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of the public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. Staff members should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online; it is not safe to reveal home addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information. It is a good idea to use a separate email address just for social networking so that any other contact details are not given away.

## **Using Social media on behalf of Beaufort**

Official school sites must be created only according to the requirements specified in Appendix A of this policy. Sites created must not breach the terms and conditions of social media service providers, particularly with regard to minimum age requirements.

Staff members must at all time act in the best interests of children and young people when creating, participating in or contributing content to social media sites.

**Monitoring of internet use**

Beaufort monitors usage of its internet and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users. Users of Beaufort’s email and Internet service should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the school’s ICT system.

**Breaches of the policy**

Any breach of this policy leading to breaches of confidentiality, or defamation or damage to the reputation of Beaufort Primary School or the Swan Trust or any illegal acts or acts that render Beaufort or the Swan Trust liable to third parties may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

Date written: Spring 2014

Reviewed and agreed by LGC in Autumn 2023

Date for next Review: Autumn 2024

## **Appendix A**

### **Requirements for creating social media sites on behalf of Beaufort Primary School.**

#### **Creation of sites**

Staff members participating in social media for work purposes are expected to demonstrate the same high standards of behaviour as when using other media or giving public presentations on behalf of Beaufort Primary School.

Prior to creating a site, careful consideration must be given to the purposes for using social media and whether the overall investment is likely to be worthwhile for achieving the pedagogical outcome. The proposed audience and level of interactive engagement with the site, for example whether pupils, school staff or members of the public will be able to contribute content to the site, must be discussed with the head teacher.

Staff members must consider how much time and effort they are willing to commit to the proposed site. They should be aware that maintaining a site is not a one-off task, but involves a considerable time commitment.

The head teacher, or relevant managers, must take overall responsibility to ensure that enough resources are provided to keep the site refreshed and relevant. It is important that enough staff members are trained and are able to maintain and moderate a site in case of staff absences or turnover. There must be a clear exit strategy and a clear plan from the outset about how long the site will last. It must not be neglected, creating a potential risk to the school's brand and image.

Consideration must also be given to how the success of the site will be evaluated to assess whether the site has achieved the proposed objectives.

#### **Children and young people**

Staff members must ensure that the sites they create or contribute to for work purposes conform to the Good Practice Guidance for the Providers of Social Networking and Other User Interactive Services (Home Office Task Force on Child Protection on the Internet, 2010).

Staff members must also ensure that the web space they create on third party sites comply with the site owner's minimum age requirements (this is often set at 13 years). Staff members must also consider the ramifications and possibilities of children under the minimum age gaining access to the site. Care must be taken to ensure that content is suitable for the target age group and contributors or 'friends' are vetted.

#### **Approval for creation of or participation in web space**

Beaufort Primary School's social media sites can be created only by or on behalf of the school. Site administrators and moderators must be Beaufort employees or other authorised people.

Approval for creation of sites for work purposes, whether hosted by the school or hosted by a third party such as a social networking site, must be obtained from the head teacher. Content contributed to own or third-party hosted sites must be discussed with and approved by the head teacher.

Staff must complete the Social Media Site Creation Approval Form (Appendix B) and forward it to the school's social media administrator before site creation. Content or the site may attract media attention. All media enquiries must be forwarded to the head teacher immediately. Staff members must not communicate with the media without the advice or approval of the head teacher.

#### **Content of web space**

Staff members must not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of Beaufort primary School without authorisation.

Information provided must be worthwhile and accurate; remember what is published on the site will reflect on the school's image, reputation and services.

Staff members must respect their audience and be sensitive in the tone of language used and when discussing topics that others may find controversial or objectionable.

Permission must be sought from the relevant people before citing or referencing their work or referencing service providers, partners or other agencies.

Beaufort Primary School – hosted sites must always include the school logo to ensure transparency and confidence in the site. The logo should, where possible, link back to the relevant page on the school website.

Staff members participating in Beaufort Primary School- hosted or other approved sites must identify who they are. They must disclose their positions within the school on these sites.

Personal opinion should not be expressed on official sites.

### **Contributors and moderators of content**

Careful consideration must be given to the level of engagement of contributors – for example whether users will be able to add their own text or comments or upload images.

The content and postings in Beaufort Primary School-hosted sites must be moderated. Moderation is the responsibility of the team that sets up or initiates the site.

The team must designate at least two approved Administrators whose role it is to review and moderate the content, including not posting or removal of comments which breach the Terms of use and House Rules. It is important that there are enough approved moderators to provide cover during leave and absences so that the site continues to be moderated.

Behaviour likely to cause extreme offence, for example racist or homophobic insults, or likely to put a child at risk of harm must never be tolerated. Such comments must never be posted. Any such content posted must be removed immediately. The Online safety Co-ordinator will inform appropriate authorities, for example the Police or Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), in the case of illegal content or behaviour.

Individuals wishing to be 'friends' on the school's closed Facebook page must be checked carefully before they are approved by ensuring all three pre-decided questions are answered correctly. Their comments must be reviewed regularly and any that do not comply with the House Rules must be removed.

Approval must also be obtained from the head teacher to make an external organisation a 'friend' of the school closed Facebook Group.

**Appendix B**  
(2 pages)

Beaufort Primary School

**Social Media Site Creation Approval Form**

Use of social media on behalf of Beaufort Primary School must be approved prior to setting up sites. Please complete this form and forward it to Debbie Harrison.

<b>Team details</b>	
Name of author of site	
Author's line manager	
<b>Purpose</b> (Please describe why you want to set to this site and the content of the site)	
<p>What are the aims you propose to achieve by setting up this site?</p> <p>What is the proposed content of this site?</p>	
<p><b>Proposed Audiences</b> Who are the proposed audiences of the site? (Please tick all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Beaufort Staff</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Pupils' family members</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Pupils from other schools – You must provide names of schools</li> <li><input type="radio"/> External organisations</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Members of the public</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Others (Please provide details)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Proposed Contributors</b> Who are the proposed contributors to the site? (Please tick all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Staff of Beaufort</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Pupils' family members</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Pupils from other schools – you must provide names of schools.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> External organisations</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Members of the public</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Others (please provide details)</li> </ul>

<b>Administration of the site</b>	
Names of Administrators (must have at least 2 approved Administrators)	
Names of Moderators (must have at least 2 approved moderators)	
Who will vet external contributors?	
Who will host the site?	<input type="radio"/> Beaufort Primary School  <input type="radio"/> Third party (Please give host name)
Proposed date of going live	
Proposed date for site closure	
What security measures will you take to prevent unwanted or unsuitable individuals from contributing or becoming 'friends' of the site?	
<b>Approval</b> Approval from relevant people must be obtained before the site can be created. The relevant managers must read this form and complete the information before final approval can be given by the headteacher.	
<b><u>Line Manager</u></b> I approve the aims and the content of the proposed site.	Name:  Signature:  Date:
<b><u>Headteacher</u></b>	Name:  Signature:  Date: