

# Threemilestone School

## Social Media Policy 2017

### Safeguarding

Threemilestone School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We expect all our team members to share this commitment.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 At Threemilestone School we use social media to reach out to parents/carers in a forum in which we know many are active participants. The School operates a Facebook Page named 'Official Threemilestone School' (known as the Page from here-on). It is managed by a team of administrators who fall under the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 1.2 The page is designed to:
  - 1.2.1 Inform, engage and communicate with parents, carers and other interested parties.
  - 1.2.2 Recognise, celebrate and promote the learning and events of the school and its students
  - 1.2.3 Communicate and reinforce school policies and good practice. Postings will include updates on everyday school life, activities, clubs, events, useful information and websites, advice, suggestions, songs, books and photos of activities.
- 1.3 In addition to the school page, the school operates a secret group which members of the school community can apply to join. This secret group is designed to enable to allow the school to share photos of pupils engaged in their learning. Parents/carers can apply by completing a form (available at the school office) and signing to say that they will follow the code of conduct set out by the school (see appendix) and no pictures of pupils are uploaded without consent from parents/carers.

## **2 Use of Facebook and Secret the group**

- 2.1 The 'Official Threemilestone School' is valuable to all members of the community to follow.
- 2.2 The 'Secret group' only parents/carers can be invited can apply to join. These applications will be vetted by the Senior Leadership Team.
- 2.3 While staff are able to follow the school page, they are reminded that doing so will place their personal accounts in a forum where parents/carers have access. Staff are

required to refrain from posting from their personal accounts - all communications should come from the school account only.

### **3 Posts and Comments**

- 3.1 The Senior Leadership Team will decide on and authorise administrators that will be responsible for updating the page on a regular basis. The administrators will communicate in a positive, accurate, respectful and responsible manner. They will uphold and promote the values of the school vision statement at all times
- 3.2 All parents/carers are also welcome to post their thoughts and ideas on the page, and to like, share and comment on postings. We would request that they do so in a similarly positive, respectful and constructive manner.
- 3.3 If followers have any specific concerns, particularly related to their own or other child/children, we ask that they do not post these on the page timeline and encourage them to speak directly to the Head/Class teacher.
- 3.4 Under no circumstances should any pupils be named or described on the page. This is due to data protection and the legal responsibility we have to keep the pupils safe.
- 3.5 Staff are not allowed to comment on the school's posts using their personal accounts. By doing so they could compromise the security of their personal details by making them available to all members of the Facebook group.

### **4 Photographs and videos**

- 4.1 Parents/carers are asked to fill in a permission form for the school to use their child's photograph on school publicity materials including the school Facebook page and the 'secret' group.
- 4.2 Only authorised administrators have permission to upload photographs and videos on to the page. This is because they are aware of the parental permissions held by the school.
- 4.3 No-one else is permitted to post any photographs or videos on to the page. The setting allowing people to post or tag photos will be turned off.
- 4.4 No pupils will be tagged or named in relation to a photo directly on the page. However, there may be links to the school website or to third party articles (eg. West Briton) where pupils may be photographed and named.

### **5 Site moderation**

- 5.1 The page will be moderated daily by administrators that are authorised by the Head Teacher.
- 5.2 All visitors to the page are asked to inform the Senior leadership team of any inappropriate comments, behaviour or concerns they have relating to the page.
- 5.3 The page profanity filter will be set to 'strong'.
- 5.4 Parents/carers are able to post regularly on the page. The Facebook private message facility will be active to allow for any private communication to the school via this portal.

### **6 Misuse**

- 6.1 In the event that an inappropriate or offensive comment is made it will be recorded by an administrator (screen shot) and brought to the urgent attention of the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership team. The school reserved the right to remove any comment or post deemed to be offensive. The Head Teacher will speak to the

individual(s) involved and explain the purpose and ethos of the page, and why their comment / behaviour is inappropriate or offensive.

- 6.2 In the event that a pupil is described or named (whether in the main post or within comments), it will be recorded by an administrator (screen shot), immediately deleted and brought to the urgent attention of the Head Teacher.
- 6.3 In the event that an inappropriate or offensive comment is made by someone who is unconnected to the school, the Head Teacher will respond accordingly. The response will depend on the content of the post but may include contacting the user via private message, deleting the comment and banning the user, or reporting the post to relevant external bodies.
- 6.4 The school has the discretion to ban the offending individual from the page and (where appropriate) report the offender to relevant external bodies.

## **7 Restrictions to the School Page**

- 7.1 The page is designed as a communication tool to engage with parents/carers and the immediate community.
- 7.2 The Head Teacher also has the discretion to remove or ban any followers that are known to be under 18 years old or who do not have a legitimate reason to follow.

## **8 The use of social networking sites by pupils within school**

- 8.1 The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the rules for using IT in school and these rules therefore apply to use of social networking sites. Such sites should not be used/accessed by pupils in school unless under the direction of a teacher and for a purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience. If social media sites are used then staff should carry out a risk assessment to determine which tools are appropriate.
- 8.2 Social Media sites to be used in school may include blogging and wiki sites. In most cases these sites settings allow the content put on by the children to be hidden from the wider internet and utilise password protection. In cases where children's work is accessible to the public children are taught to follow e-safety principals (not put any information which identifies them or their location or photographs of themselves). All use is monitored by the class teacher. Staff will consult with the computing co-ordinator before using these sites and, if deemed necessary, parents will be informed.
- 8.3 Private use of social networking sites by a pupil is prohibited and it is generally understood that children under the age of 13 are not permitted to be registered on most of the popular social media services. If the school are made aware of this then the Headteacher will contact the parent/carers if there is concern.

## **9 Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity**

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 Guidelines are issued to staff:
  - 9.2.1 Staff must never add pupils as 'friends' into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 18).
  - 9.2.2 Staff are strongly advised not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts.

- 9.2.3 Staff must not post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including members of the Governing Body, whether they be positive or negative.
- 9.2.4 Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).
- 9.2.5 Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.
- 9.2.6 Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- 9.2.7 Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

**10 The use of social networking sites by pupils and parents/carers out of school**

- 10.1 Bullying through the use of social media of pupils by pupils at TMS will be reported to the parents/carers by the Headteacher. The incident will also be logged on CPOMS.
- 10.2 Negative comments made about pupils at TMS by other parents/carers posted on social media sites, will be asked to be taken down by the Headteacher in the first instance. In necessary, the appropriate external agencies will be contacted.

\_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
Author

\_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
Headteacher

\_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson of Governing Body

\_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson of Teaching & Learning

**Ratified at Full Governing Body Meeting:**

**Date of next review:**