



# iCollege

Alternative Education West Berkshire

## Staff Social Networking Responsibilities

Document Control	
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<b>Written by:</b>	Monica Romano / West Berks Model Policy
<b>Associated policies and useful information</b>	Safeguarding H & S Staff Conduct
<b>Review:</b>	2 years
<b>Status</b>	Approved

## Staff Social Networking Responsibilities

<b>Purpose of guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is to support the safeguarding of yourself, the <b>iCollege</b> services and all within them. It is based on the professional responsibilities required to work in education.</li> <li>• It has been written to help you consider the implications of what you do electronically. For example, the possibility of compromising situations to yourself and the services, potential 'grooming' situations, confidential information being made public etc.</li> <li>• Remember; <b>you could lose your job!</b></li> <li>• Remember that friends of friends of friends...of friends can gain access to your material.</li> </ul>
<b>Do</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the security of your profile and be aware who has access to your information if you use a social networking site</li> <li>• Consider the appropriateness of information that you volunteer about yourself</li> <li>• Consider the appropriateness of photographs of yourself</li> </ul>
<b>Don't</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a work PC or laptop for personal social networking</li> <li>• Add photographs of school events</li> <li>• Comment on incidents that occur within the <b>iCollege</b> Service</li> <li>• Give detail or talk in a negative way about the <b>iCollege</b> Service</li> <li>• Add current learners as 'friends' and consider the appropriateness of keeping in touch with past learners</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there is evidence that an ex-employee is bringing <b>iCollege</b> into disrepute via social networking then the West Berkshire legal team will be informed. This may constitute misconduct / gross mis-conduct.</li> <li>• If a learner on roll with the <b>iCollege</b> is found to be 'friends' with a member of staff from their previous school, then the Headteacher of that school will be informed.</li> <li>• WBC Social Networking - Advice for Schools Appendix A</li> </ul>



## Staff Social Networking Responsibilities

Sign:		Sign:	
Jacqueline Davies		Tim Pritchard	
Head Teacher		Chair of Governing Body	
Date:		Date:	

Change Record				
Version Number	Date Approved	Management Committee Minute Reference	Description of Amendments	Review Date
3	March 2023			March 2025
4	9.12.25	MC		2025

### Keeping Children Safe in Education

All staff at iCollege take seriously their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in their care; this includes providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**INSPIRATION KS1 & 2**  
Foxglove Way, Thatcham,  
Berkshire, RG18 4DH

**POD Plus KS3**  
Modular Building  
Paynesdown Road  
Thatcham RG19 3TE  
01635 243208

**The POD KS2**  
**INTERVENTION KS3 & 4**  
88 Newtown Road,  
Newbury, Berkshire,  
RG14 7BT

**INTEGRATION KS3 & 4**  
22, Highview  
Calcot, Reading  
Berkshire RG31 4XD  
01189 416636

**INDEPENDENCE KS4 & 5**  
Richmond House, Bath Road,  
Newbury, Berkshire,  
RG30 1QY



## Staff Social Networking Responsibilities



### Appendix A Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to schools on the appropriate use of social networking by school staff.

The governing body may wish to approve additional guidance after consultation with staff and relevant professional associations to meet the operational needs of the school.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this advice note is to guide the judgements of management and staff using social networking sites and the information that they provide through these by:

**2.11** Advising management and staff to ensure that children are safeguarded

**2.12** Advising management and staff to ensure that the reputation of the school is not adversely affected through use of social networking sites.

**2.13** Ensuring that the school is not subject to legal challenge as a result of school employees using and providing information on social networking sites e.g. data protection, discrimination and other sensitive information.

2.2 School managers should make all staff aware of this advice note and the expectations of staff conduct related to social networking. For new staff this should form part of their induction.

### **Social Networking Sites / Applications**

3.1 Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: Blogs, Online discussion forums, Collaborative spaces, Media sharing services, 'Microblogging' applications. Examples include, but are not limited to X (was Twitter), Facebook, MSN, WhatsApp, Instagram, Reddit, SnapChat, Tik Tok, Messenger, Discord, YouTube etc.

### **Staff Conduct**

4.1 The West Berkshire Model Code of Conduct for schools (paragraph 4.1) states "*In general terms, the school expects that the conduct of its employees is such that no justifiable complaint can be made by parents, pupils, colleagues, Governors, other bodies or agencies or members of the community in relation to conduct and behaviour of school staff.*" This principle applies to the use of social networking sites.

4.2 The way in which school staff present and conduct themselves on social networking sites can have an impact on the public perception of the school and influence the way in which those staff members are perceived by pupils and parents of the school. In their use of social networking sites, staff should be aware that that their online behaviour could affect their professional standing, dignity and perception of their integrity.

4.3 It is recommended that school staff take adequate precautions when using social networking sites/applications, both in vetting material that could be connected to them (through their own profile and information added about them) and through the use of appropriate security settings.

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- 4.4 It is recommended that school employees should not be “friends” with pupils on social networking sites as this could be viewed as a safeguarding issue.
- 4.5 It is recommended that management and school staff do not identify their school on social networking sites as this could directly link their behaviour outside of work with the reputation of the school.
- 4.6 It is recommended that the school identifies a member of their senior leadership team from whom staff can seek advice on their personal use of social networking sites and/or report concerns about the inappropriate use of a social networking site/application by another member of staff.
- 4.7 Where schools use email and learning platforms to communicate with pupils, e.g. about homework, the Headteacher should set out local guidance around the use of these applications for both pupils and staff.
- 4.8 Where pupils behave inappropriately with staff this should be reported to a member of the senior leadership team and dealt with through the school’s pupil disciplinary process.
- 4.8 The Model Disciplinary Rules state that the follow are examples of gross misconduct:
- 4.8.1 (paragraph 5.2) *Conduct that is a serious abuse of position – e.g. entering into a personal relationship with a pupil.*
- 4.8.2 (paragraph 5.10) *Criminal offences and other conduct outside employment could cause an employee’s position at the school to become untenable particularly in circumstances where the conduct or offence is unacceptable to colleagues, management or parents or where the conduct or offence has the potential to affect the reputation of the school.*
- 4.8.3 (paragraph 5.11) *Making defamatory statements in the course of employment (e.g. making statements that are or could be slanderous or libellous) whether orally, written, or in electronic communication.*
- 4.9 Breach of these disciplinary rules in the section above (4.8) in relation to social networking or any inappropriate use of social networking sites and applications by staff will be dealt with through the School’s Disciplinary Procedure.