RedscopePrimary School
Parental Use of Social Networking and Internet Sites Policy

	Name of School	**Redscope Primary School**
	Policy review Date	**September 2023**
	Date of next Review	**September 2024**
	Who reviewed this policy?	**E. E. Cobley** **A Bradbury**

Overview
Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are now widely used. This type of media allows people to communicate in ways that were not previously possible. However, such sites can be inappropriately used by some as a means of expressing negative or offensive views about schools and their staff. This document sets out this school's approach to parental use of such sites and sets out the procedures we will follow and action we may take when we consider that parents have used such facilities inappropriately. When we have referred to "parent" in this document, we also include carers; relatives; or anyone associated with Redscope Primary School.

Objectives
- Encourage social networking sites to be used in a beneficial and positive way by parents;
- Safeguard pupils, staff and anyone associated with the school from the negative effects of social networking sites;
- Safeguard the reputation of Redscope Primary School from abuse on social networking sites;
- Clarify what Redscope Primary School considers to be appropriate and inappropriate use of social networking sites by parents;
- Set out the procedures that Redscope Primary School will follow where it considers parents have inappropriately or unlawfully used social networking sites to the detriment of the school, its staff or its pupils, and anyone else associated with Redscope Primary School; and
- Set out the action that Redscope Primary School will consider taking if parents make inappropriate use of social networking sites.

Appropriate use of social networking sites by parents
The school recognises that many parents and other family members will have personal social networking accounts, which they might use to discuss/share views about school issues with friends and acquaintances. As a guide, individuals should consider the following prior to posting any information on social networking sites about Redscope Primary School, its staff, its pupils, or anyone else associated with the school:

- Is the social networking site the appropriate channel to raise concerns, give this feedback or express these views?
- Would private and confidential discussions with relevant staff at Redscope Primary School be more appropriate? E.g. if there are serious allegations being made/concerns being raised. Social media/internet sites should not be used to name individual pupils or staff, or to make abusive comments about those people. **Please contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have.**

- Are such comments likely to cause emotional or reputational harm to individuals which would not be justified, particularly if appropriate staff from Redscope Primary School has not yet had a chance to investigate a complaint?
- Will the posting make a detrimental impact on the reputation of the school and cause any type of harm?

Inappropriate use of social networking sites by parents

Although social networking sites may appear to be the quickest and easiest way to express frustrations or concerns about Redscope Primary School (and those associated with it), it is inappropriate to do so. Other channels, such as a private and confidential discussion with the school, or using Redscope Primary School's formal complaints process are much better suited to this.

Redscope Primary School considers the following examples to be inappropriate uses of social networking sites. (This list is non-exhaustive and intended to provide examples only)

- Making allegations about staff, governors or pupils at Redscope Primary School /cyber-bullying;
- Making complaints about staff, pupils, other parents or governors at Redscope Primary School;
- Making defamatory statements about staff, pupils, other parents or governors at Redscope Primary School;
- Posting negative/offensive comments about specific pupils/staff/governors, at staff, pupils, other parents or governors at Redscope Primary School;
- Posting comments which threaten violence or encourage violence;
- Making discriminatory comments that breach the terms and conditions of the social networking sites.
- Posting of photographs taken at school performances etc which include *other pupils and staff.

   please note that although consent is sought from parents concerning the use of photographs in the public domain, this is not always given. Therefore posting other pupils' photographs on Social Networking Sites could compromise the safety and well-being of some pupils.

It is considered to be good practice for parents/carers to monitor their children's online activity, including their access to social media sites. Primary aged pupils should not have access to certain Social Networking Sites, including Facebook. Parents should also ensure that their children are not using social networking/internet sites in an inappropriate manner. It is expected that parents/carers explain to their children what is acceptable to post online.

Procedure the School will follow if inappropriate use continues

- Redscope Primary School will always try to deal with concerns raised by parents in a professional and appropriate manner and understands that parents may not always realise when they have used social networking sites inappropriately. Therefore, as a first step, the school will usually discuss the matter with the parent to try and resolve the matter and to ask that the relevant information be removed from the social networking site in question. If the parent refuses to do this and continues to use social networking sites in a manner that staff, pupils, other parents or governors at Redscope Primary School considers inappropriate, the school will consider taking the following action:
- Set out the school's concerns to you in writing, giving you a warning and requesting that the material in question is removed;
- Contact the host/provider of the Social Networking site to complain about the content of the site and ask for removal of the information;
- If inappropriate Tweets are received by followers the school will block the follower;

- If inappropriate e-mails are received through the school website e-mail functions the school may take action to block future e-mails from the sender;
- Take legal advice and/or legal action where the information posted is defamatory in any way or if the circumstances warrant this;
- Take other legal action against the individual;
- Contact the Police where the school feels it appropriate – for example, if it considers a crime (such as harassment) has been committed; or in cases where the posting has a racial element, is considered to be grossly obscene or is threatening violence.