

Port Erroll School and Nursery



Social Media and Mobile Device Policy

Date: April 2021

Review: April 2023

Contents

1. For Parents – What should I do if I am concerned about my child's use of social media?
2. Appropriate use of social media – Parents and Carers
3. Appropriate use of social media - Staff
4. Pupils taking mobile phones to school
5. Pupils use of mobile devices on a school trip
6. Pupils use of mobile devices at a school event outwith school hours e.g. disco
7. Parents / Carers taking photos / videos at events e.g. concerts.

1. For Parents – 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. We generally will make the parents of those children aware of the potential situation.
 - You can always contact service providers to report inappropriate content.
 - Ensure you have effective filters and parental controls set up at home.
 - Do what you can to monitor online behaviour. Whilst you cannot always access everything children are doing online, talk to your children about it and encourage good choices and positive online citizenship.
 - Reinforce online stranger danger messages
 - Talk about “friends.” Are their so called “friends” on social media really friends?
 - Constantly discuss what is appropriate to share and what is not.
 - We are always happy to help and we can plan for specific inputs for a child, for groups of children, for a class or at whole school assembly if there are any challenges.
-
- If your concern is significant and you are worried for the safety or wellbeing of those involved, always contact POLICE SCOTLAND.

2. Appropriate use of social media – Parents and Carers

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils.

Port Erroll 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 pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren at Port Erroll 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 content or activity which breaches this.

Please note parents must not post information on social media about other pupils. Furthermore, parents must not name or discuss staff in the school in public forums. Where the school is notified of parents naming / discussing members of staff in public forums, appropriate action will be taken to ensure this is removed.

So what should parents / carers do if they do have concerns / complaints?

In the first instance, please come and talk to us. We operate an open door policy and are always happy to talk through any concerns. If you are concerned about something in class, please come to the class and speak to the class teacher. If you are concerned about something in the playground, talk to us. We will always work with you in order to find a resolution.

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 / carer can enter into the Aberdeenshire Council Formal Complaints Procedure which is available on the Policies page of the Port Erroll School Website.

3. Appropriate use of social media – STAFF

CODE OF PRACTICE: SOCIAL NETWORK SITES

Over the past decade social media has become one of the most utilised of technologies. This is an evolving technology which has many benefits but there are also potential risks that staff should be aware of.

Aberdeenshire Education and Children's Services has therefore produced the following code of practice.

General Principle

Contact on a social network site is no different from any other form of communication. As a member of staff:

- you must not discuss your own private and personal relationship with pupils.
- you must maintain an appropriate balance between formality and informality when dealing with pupils.
- you must take care to avoid becoming personally involved in pupils' personal affairs.
- you should be aware of the potential dangers of being 'alone' with a pupil in a private or isolated situation, avoiding circumstances which are or could be perceived to be of an inappropriate nature.

You should

- 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.
- If you are newly entering a school environment, review the current content and access rights of any existing sites.
- 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 NOT

- Accept current pupils or students 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 your head teacher. Even then, the use of Glow should be the first choice considered.

Content of Social Network Sites

Remember that any content put on social network sites or blogs may become know 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.

If you require any more guidance please contact Graeme Slapp, SSDN Project Officer, by email at graeme.slapp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

4. Pupils taking mobile phones to school

We find increasingly that there are more and more pupils who wish to bring their mobile phones to school, particularly children in the upper stages. In many cases, parents and carers encourage pupils to take their phone to keep in touch after school.

Whilst we feel it would be inappropriate for the school to impose a “no phones” rule, it is imperative that we provide very clear guidance as to how we handle the use of phones to ensure that everyone is safe and that everyone’s rights are respected.

If a pupil comes to school with a mobile phone:

- The phone must be kept in a school bag whilst inside the school grounds i.e. there should be no phones outside in the school playground before the school bell.
- Under no circumstances should any pupils ever capture any photos or videos in the school playground.
- Once into school, the phone should be placed in the “phone box” which the class teacher will then keep locked in the classroom.
- Pupils will not have access to phones during the school day.
- At the end of the day, pupils can collect phones and the phone should not be used until pupils leave the school grounds.

5. Mobile phones on school trips

Class Day Trip

In the majority of cases, when a class goes on a day trip, they are not travelling great distances and so the use of any electronic devices is not necessary or appropriate. However, there are occasions where a class makes a day trip further afield and where pupils are spending several hours on a bus. In such cases, it is common that pupils wish to bring electronic devices e.g. ipod to listen to music.

It is important to ensure pupils, parents and staff are clear on our rules and procedures in order to ensure the safety of everyone on the trip.

- No phones
- Small handheld devices only i.e. no tablets or laptops. Examples of devices which would be acceptable include ipods, PSP, Nintendo DS etc.
- No device can be brought which is wirelessly enabled e.g. ipod with sim card providing access to the Internet.
- Any of the small handheld devices which have an integrated camera can be brought, but the camera must not be used. At no point should children be taking photos of themselves or anyone else on the trip. Adults on the trip will be taking photos which can be made available to pupils and parents at a later date.
- Any music / other digital material stored on electronic devices must be age appropriate.
- When the bus arrives at the destination, pupils must then keep their device in their ruc sac and the device should not be used during the course of the day. Pupils are responsible for the safe keeping of their device and the school will accept no responsibility for loss or damage.

Residential Trip

Our procedures for a residential trip are exactly as above with one minor amendment. All electronic devices must be handed to a member of staff upon arrival at the residential centre. The member of staff will keep the device safe for the duration of the trip. This will ensure children are not accessing electronic devices in their rooms unsupervised at night and more importantly, it will ensure no photos can be taken in any of the dorms. This is again to ensure the safety and the protection of rights of all children.

If any pupil is found to be breaking this rule, arrangements may be made for him / her to be collected from the residential trip and brought home early.

6. Pupil using mobile devices at a school event outwith school hours e.g. disco

For any event or club organised by the school, by the parents of the school or by volunteers in the local community working on behalf of the school, we have a firm **“NO MOBILE DEVICE”** rule. For example, if there is a school disco, we cannot allow pupils to bring phones, text, take photos and share media on social networks from a school event. The following is a list of events where this rule would apply:

- School Fayre e.g. Christmas fayre
- School Discos
- After School Clubs e.g. football, running, dancing etc.
- Fundraising events e.g. bingo evening
- Annual Cycle

Pupils are not permitted to use mobile devices at any such event.

Again it would be unrealistic to say that pupils are not allowed to take a mobile device as some parents will want their pupils to use their phone after a school disco. It would also be unreasonable to ask the Parent Council to take responsibility for the devices at such an event.

If a pupil does bring a mobile device to a school event outwith school hours, it must remain out of sight e.g. in a bag or a pocket. Furthermore, the pupils are entirely responsible for their device and the school will accept no liability for loss or damage.

7. Parents / Carers taking photos / videos at events e.g. concerts.

Of course parents and carers will be keen to take photos and videos of their children at special events such as concerts or sports day. We are very happy for parents / carers to take photos and videos under the following conditions:

- Try as far as possible to take photos and videos which **ONLY** feature your child.
- Where any other children do feature in the captured media, **please do not share this content on any social media sites.**

TO CONCLUDE

The value, benefits and overall approach from the implementation of this policy and procedures will be reviewed bi-annually.

Any changes will be discussed and communicated to all staff and parents / carers.

Consultation on this policy as draft was with Port Erroll School Parent Council and Port Erroll School Staff.

The Head Teacher at Port Erroll School welcomes feedback on this document.

Contact:

Mrs Yvonne O'Neil

Port Erroll School
Braehead Drive
Cruden Bay
Petehead
AB42 0NP

Tel. No.: 01779 403690

Email: porterroll.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk