

Berriew CP School



Social Media Policy

Ratified: December 2024

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Social Media Policy

Social media is a broad term for any kind of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other.

Berriew CP primary school recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. Staff, parents/carers, and pupils are actively encouraged to find creative ways to use social media. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation. This policy aims to encourage the safe use of social media by Berriew CP primary school, its staff, parents, carers, and children.

Scope

This policy is subject to Berriew CP primary school's codes of conduct and acceptable use agreements.

This policy:

- Applies to all staff and to all online communications which directly or indirectly, represent Berriew CP primary school.
- Applies to such online communications posted at any time and from anywhere.
- Encourages the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education.
- Defines the monitoring of public social media activity pertaining to Berriew CP primary school.

Berriew CP primary school respects privacy and understands that staff and pupils may use social media forums in their private lives. However, personal communications likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or Berriew CP primary school's reputation are within the scope of this policy.

Professional communications are those made through official channels, posted on a school account, or using Berriew CP primary school name. All professional communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications are those made via a personal social media account. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with, or impacts on, Berriew CP primary school, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of Berriew CP primary school with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon Berriew CP primary school are outside the scope of this policy.

Digital communications with pupils are also considered. Staff may use social media to communicate with learners via a school social media account for teaching and learning purposes but must consider whether this is appropriate and consider the potential implications.

Organisational control - Roles & Responsibilities

SLT

- Facilitating training and guidance on Social Media use.
- Developing and implementing the social media policy
- Taking a lead role in investigating any reported incidents.
- Making an initial assessment when an incident is reported and involving appropriate staff and external agencies as required.
- Receive completed applications for social media accounts.
- Approve account creation.

Administrator of school-controlled accounts

- Create the account following SLT approval.
- Store account details, including passwords securely.
- Be involved in monitoring and contributing to the account.
- Control the process for managing an account after the lead staff member has left the organisation (closing or transferring)

Staff

- Know the contents of and ensure that any use of social media is carried out in line with this and other relevant policies.
- Attending appropriate training.
- Regularly monitoring, updating, and managing content he/she has posted via school accounts.

Adding an appropriate disclaimer to personal accounts when naming Berriew CP primary school (e.g., views are entirely my own and not of Berriew CP Primary School)

Process for creating new accounts.

Berriew CP primary school is encouraged to consider if a social media account will help them in their work. Anyone wishing to create such an account must consider the following points and consult with a member of the Senior Leadership Team covering the following points: -

- The aim of the account
- The intended audience
- How the account will be promoted
- Who will run the account?

- Will the account be open or locked?

Following consideration by the SLT an application will be approved or rejected. In all cases, the SLT must be satisfied that anyone running a social media account on behalf of Berriew CP primary school has read and understood this policy and received appropriate training. This also applies to anyone who is not directly employed by Berriew CP primary school, including volunteers or parents.

Monitoring

School accounts must be monitored regularly and frequently.

Any comments, queries or complaints made through those accounts must be responded to within 24 hours (or on the next working day if received at a weekend) even if the response is only to acknowledge receipt. Regular monitoring and intervention is essential in case a situation arises where bullying or any other inappropriate behaviour arises on a school social media account.

Behaviour

- Berriew CP primary school requires that all users using social media adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this policy and other relevant policies.
- Digital communications by staff must always be professional and respectful and in accordance with this policy. Staff will not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make ill-considered comments or judgments about staff. School social media accounts must not be used for personal gain. Staff must ensure that confidentiality is maintained on social media even after they leave the employment of Berriew CP primary school.
- Users must declare who they are in social media posts or accounts. Anonymous posts are discouraged in relation to school activity.
- If a journalist makes contact about posts made using social media, staff must follow Berriew CP primary school media policy before responding.
- Unacceptable conduct, (e.g., defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by Berriew CP primary school and will be reported as soon as possible to a relevant senior member of staff and escalated where appropriate.
- The use of social media by staff while at work may be monitored, in line with school policies. Berriew CP primary school permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites. However, where excessive use is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken.
- Berriew CP primary school will take appropriate action in the event of breaches of the social media policy. Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, Berriew CP primary school will deal with the matter internally. Where conduct is considered illegal, Berriew CP primary school will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies and may take action according to the disciplinary policy.

Legal considerations

- Users of social media should consider the copyright of the content they are sharing and,

where necessary, should seek permission from the copyright holder before sharing.

- Users must ensure that their use of social media does not infringe upon relevant data protection laws, or breach confidentiality.

Handling abuse

- When acting on behalf of Berriew CP primary school, users will handle offensive comments swiftly and with sensitivity.
- If a conversation turns and becomes offensive or unacceptable, school users should block, report, or delete other users or their comments/posts and should inform the audience exactly why the action was taken.
- If you feel that you or someone else is subject to abuse by colleagues through use of a social networking site, then this action must be reported using the agreed school protocols.

Tone

The tone of content published on social media should be appropriate to the audience, whilst retaining appropriate levels of professional standards. Key words to consider when composing messages are:

- Engaging
- Conversational
- Informative
- Friendly

Use of images

- School use of images can be assumed to be acceptable, providing the following guidelines are strictly adhered to.
- Permission to use any photos or video recordings should be sought in line with Berriew CP primary school's image consent policy. If anyone, for any reason, asks not to be filmed or photographed then their wishes should be respected.
- Under no circumstances should staff share or upload pupil pictures online other than via school owned/associated social media accounts
- Staff should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on school social media accounts. Pupils should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on any school list of children whose images must not be published.
- If a member of staff inadvertently takes a compromising picture which could be misconstrued or misused, they must delete it immediately.
- When taking photographs for social media use, this should be ideally completed with school technology. In the event technology is not available, staff are able to use their own devices but must upload to One Drive and delete from their phone within 14 days.

Personal use

Staff

- Personal communications are those made via a personal social media account. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with Berriew CP primary school or impacts on Berriew CP primary school, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of Berriew CP primary school with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.
- Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon Berriew CP primary school are outside the scope of this policy.
- Where excessive personal use of social media in school is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken.
- Berriew CP primary school permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites.

Pupils

- Staff are not permitted to follow or engage with current or prior pupils of Berriew CP primary school on any personal social media network account.
- Berriew CP primary school's education program should enable the pupils to be safe and responsible users of social media.
- Pupils are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about Berriew CP primary school within parents/carers accounts. Any offensive or inappropriate comments will be resolved by the use of Berriew CP primary school's behaviour policy.

Parent

- If parents/carers have access to a school learning platform where posting or commenting is enabled, parents/carers will be informed about acceptable use.
- Parents/Carers are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about Berriew CP primary school. In the event of any offensive or inappropriate comments being made, Berriew CP primary school will ask the parent/carer to remove the post and invite them to discuss the issues in person. If necessary, refer parents to Berriew CP primary school's complaints procedures.

Monitoring posts about Berriew CP primary school

- As part of active social media engagement, it is considered good practice to proactively monitor the Internet for public postings about Berriew CP primary school.
- Berriew CP primary school should effectively respond to social media comments made by others according to a defined policy or process.

Appendix

Managing your personal use of Social Media:

- “Nothing” on social media is truly private.
- Social media can blur the lines between your professional and private life. Don't use Berriew CP primary school logo and/or branding on personal accounts.
- Check your settings regularly and test your privacy.
- Keep an eye on your digital footprint.
- Keep your personal information private.
- Regularly review your connections – keep them to those you want to be connected to
- When posting online consider; Scale, Audience and Permanency of what you post.
- If you want to criticise, do it politely.
- Take control of your images – do you want to be tagged in an image? What would children or parents say about you if they could see your images?
- Know how to report a problem.

Managing school social media accounts

The Do's

- Check with a senior leader before publishing content that may have controversial implications for Berriew CP primary school.
- Use a disclaimer when expressing personal views.
- Make it clear who is posting content.
- Use an appropriate and professional tone.
- Be respectful to all parties.
- Ensure you have permission to 'share' other peoples' materials and acknowledge the author.
- Express opinions but do so in a balanced and measured manner
- Think before responding to comments and, when in doubt, get a second opinion.
- Seek advice and report any mistakes using Berriew CP primary school's reporting process.
- Consider turning off tagging people in images where possible.

The Don'ts

- Don't make comments, post content or link to materials that will bring Berriew CP primary school into disrepute.
- Don't publish confidential or commercially sensitive material.
- Don't breach copyright, data protection or other relevant legislation.

- Consider the appropriateness of content for any audience of school accounts, and don't link to, embed, or add potentially inappropriate content.
- Don't post derogatory, defamatory, offensive, harassing, or discriminatory content.
- Don't use social media to air internal grievances.

Specific Social Media use

In Berriew CP primary school Instagram and Facebook will be used as the primary social media tool. Usage and effectiveness will be monitored and reviewed termly by the headteacher and governing body as part of wider safeguarding reviews.

- The account will be managed by the headteacher.
- Any permanent staff who would like access will be given shared usage
- The account will be private in the first instance, only allowing those involved with the school to follow the page. This will be reviewed subject to the social media policy.
- The Instagram account will be used for the following purposes:
 - To deliver important information from the school to parents/carers via stories.
 - To share learning and experience via posts
 - To celebrate successes and achievements
 - To engage with the wider community
 - To follow stakeholders and wider engagement opportunities.
- The account will not follow parents.
- Both the Facebook and the Instagram account will be linked into the school website.

Acknowledgements

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