



## Sledmere and Wetwang Federation

### **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY – January 2026**

Adopted by Sledmere and Wetwang Federation Policy Review Group

Signed: Andrew McCormack

Position: Chair of Governors

To be reviewed by Governors January 2026

**Vision**  
**‘Learning and growing in the love of God’ (1 John 4:16)**

**1. Background**

The popularity of social media over recent years opens up new opportunities for contact and communication. With these opportunities there are however pitfalls which give rise for the need to ensure robust procedures and governance are in place to minimise the risk to the Sledmere and Wetwang Federation and its community.

This policy seeks to identify appropriate social media use for all members of school staff, pupils and parents. However, the policy cannot cover all eventualities and members of school staff should consult their Line Manager if they are in any way unsure about what is and is not acceptable use of social media.

**2. Key Roles and Responsibilities**

2.1 The Governing Board has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Social Media Policy and procedures at Sledmere and Wetwang Federation.

2.2 The Governing Board has responsibility for ensuring that the Social Media Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

2.3 The Governing Board has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school’s Complaints Policy.

2.4 The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Social Media Policy and procedures of Sledmere and Wetwang Federation.

2.5 Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for following the Social Media Policy and for ensuring pupils do so also. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently in the classroom.

2.6 Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the social media habits of their child/children at home.

2.7 Parents and carers will be expected to promote safe social media behaviour.

**3. The School’s E-safety Team and Network Manager**

3.1 The school’s e-safety team consists of: Mr Richardson, Miss Shier, Mrs Headley and Mr McCormack (Governor.)

3.2 The school’s network manager is East Riding Local Authority.

3.3 Changes to this section will be recorded and notified in writing.

**4. Definitions**

4.1 Sledmere and Wetwang Federation defines “social media” as any online platform that offers real-time interaction between the user and other individuals or groups including but not limited to:

- Online discussion forums, such as netmums.com.
- Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook.
- Media sharing services, such as YouTube.
- Micro-blogging' applications, such as X.

4.2 Sledmere and Wetwang Federation defines "cyber bullying" as any use of social media or communication technology to bully an individual or group.

4.3 Sledmere and Wetwang Federation defines "members of the school community" as any teacher, member of support staff, pupil, parent/carer of pupil or governor. Former pupils are encouraged to adhere to sections 6, 8, 10 and 11 this policy once they have left the school.

## 5. Training of Staff

5.1 At Sledmere and Wetwang Federation, we recognise that early intervention can protect pupils who may be at risk of cyber bullying or negative social media behaviour. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils.

5.2 Teachers and support staff will receive training on the Social Media Policy as part of their new starter induction.

5.3 Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

## 6. Pupil Expectations

Pupils are responsible for following the school rules and will be expected to follow all reasonable requests from teachers.

## 7. Social Media Use – Staff

7.1 Staff may not access social media during lesson time, unless it is part of a curriculum activity.

7.2 Staff may use social media during their break times on their personal devices.

7.3 Members of staff should avoid using social media in front of pupils.

7.4 Members of staff **must not** "friend" or otherwise contact pupils or parents/carers through social media.

NB: where parents/carers and members of staff are related or otherwise have a pre-existing relationship, this should be disclosed to the Headteacher who may give exceptional permission in writing to depart from the requirements of this sub-paragraph of this policy. However, the remaining paragraphs of the policy will continue to apply. **(From Staff Code of Conduct 17.7 It is advised that employees exercise caution and do not accept friend requests from parents other than where close personal or familial relationships already exist.)**

7.5 If pupils or parents/carers attempt to "friend" or otherwise contact members of staff through social media, they should be reported to the Headteacher.

7.6 Members of staff should avoid identifying themselves as an employee of Sledmere and Wetwang Federation on social media.

7.7 Members of staff **must not** post content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or

pupils.

7.8 Where teachers or members of staff use social media in a personal capacity, they should make it clear that their views are personal.

7.9 Teachers or members of staff must not post any information which could identify a pupil, class or the school.

7.10 Members of staff should not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.

7.11 Breaches of this policy by members of staff will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content, could lead to prosecution, disciplinary action or dismissal.

7.12 Members of staff should be aware that if their out-of-work activity brings Sledmere and Wetwang Federation into disrepute, disciplinary action will be taken.

7.13 Members of staff should regularly check their online presence for negative content via search engines.

7.14 If inappropriate content is accessed online, an inappropriate website content report form should be completed and passed on to the Headteacher.

7.15 Attempts to bully, coerce or manipulate members of the school community, via social media, by teachers and members of staff will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

7.16 Members of staff should not leave a computer or other device logged in when away from their desk, or save passwords.

## **8. Social Media Use – Pupils and Parents/Carers**

8.1 Pupils shall not access social media during lesson time or at any time on school devices, unless it is part of a curriculum activity.

8.2 Breaches of this policy by pupils will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including exclusion.

8.3 Pupils and parents/carers **should not** attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact members of staff through social media. If attempts to contact members of staff through social media are made, they will be reported to the Headteacher.

8.4 If members of staff attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact pupils or parents/carers through social media, they should be reported to the Headteacher.

8.5 Pupils and parents/carers are requested not to post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.

8.6 Pupils and parents/carers **should not** post content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or pupils. Content which is illegal, harassing, defamatory or discriminatory may result in disciplinary action, up to and including exclusion, or referral to other authorities for action including the police.

8.7 Pupils at Sledmere and Wetwang Federation must not sign up to social media sites that have an age restriction above the pupil’s age.

8.8 If inappropriate content is accessed online on school premises, it **must** be reported to a teacher.

## **9. Blocked Content**

9.1 All social networking sites are blocked for use by the pupils on school devices. This is a blanket ban for all forums and social networking.

9.2 Attempts to circumvent the network's firewalls will result in a ban from using school computing equipment, other than with close supervision.

9.3 Inappropriate content which is accessed on the school computers should be reported to the Headteacher so that the site can be blocked.

9.4 Requests may be made to access erroneously blocked content by request to Mr Richardson.

9.5 The final decision on whether access should be granted to a site will be made by the Headteacher.

## **10. Cyber bullying**

10.1 At Sledmere and Wetwang Federation, cyber bullying is taken seriously.

10.2 Incidents of cyber bullying will be dealt with and reported along the same chain as the Anti-Bullying Policy.

10.3 Staff members should never respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Incidents should instead be reported as inappropriate, and support sought from their line manager or senior staff member.

10.4 Evidence from the incident should be saved, including screen prints of messages or web pages, and the time and date of the incident.

10.5 Where the perpetrator is a current pupil or colleague, most cases can be dealt with through the school's own disciplinary procedures.

10.6 Where the perpetrator is an adult, in nearly all cases, a senior staff member should invite the victim to a meeting to address their concerns. Where appropriate, the perpetrator will be asked to remove the offensive content.

10.7 If the perpetrator refuses to comply, it is up to the school to decide what to do next. This could include contacting the internet service provider in question through their reporting mechanisms, if the offensive content breaches their terms and conditions.

10.8 If the material is threatening, abusive, sexist, of a sexual nature or constitutes a hate crime, the school should consider contacting the police.

10.9 As part of our on-going commitment to the prevention of cyber bullying, regular education and discussion about e-safety will take place as part of computing and PSHCE.

## 11. Be SMART Online

We encourage pupils to take a SMART approach to social media behaviour:

- **Safe** – Do not give out personal information, or post photos of yourself to people you talk to online. Follow age restriction rules.
- **Meeting** – Do not meet somebody you have only met online. We encourage parents/carers to speak regularly to their children about who they are talking to online.
- **Accepting** – We advise that pupils only open emails and other forms of communication from people they already know.
- **Reliable** – We teach pupils about the dangers of believing everything they see online.
- **Tell** – We encourage pupils to tell a teacher, parent or carer if they see anything online that makes them feel uncomfortable.

### Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly. Its effectiveness will be monitored by the Headteacher and governors and fed back to the Full Governing Board.