



Social Networking Websites and ICT Code of Conduct

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Information and Communications Technology covers a wide range of resources including web-based and mobile learning. It is also important to recognise the constant and fast paced evolution of ICT within our society. Currently the internet technologies children and young people are using both inside and outside of the classroom include:

- Websites
- Learning Platforms and Virtual Learning Environments
- Email and Instant Messaging
- Chat Rooms and Social Networking
- Blogs and Wikis
- Podcasting
- Video Broadcasting
- Music Downloading
- Gaming
- Mobile/ Smart phones with text, video and/ or web functionality
- Other mobile devices with web functionality

Whilst exciting and beneficial both in and out of the context of education, much ICT, particularly web-based resources, are not consistently policed. All users need to be aware of the range of risks associated with the use of these Internet technologies.

At Moneyrea Primary School, we understand the responsibility, along with parents, to educate our pupils on e-safety issues; teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies, in and beyond the context of the classroom.

This policy is inclusive of both fixed and mobile internet; technologies provided by the school (such as PCs, laptops, whiteboards, digital video equipment, etc); and technologies owned by pupils and staff, but brought onto school premises (such as laptops, mobile phones, camera phones, smart watches and portable media players, etc).

Social Networking

Social networking is everywhere. It is common to find parents, children, co-workers and others on such sites. With social networks people across the world have access to tools and options that were previously non-existent. However, there are now just as many new opportunities to connect as there are to get into potential danger. One thing we often forget while having fun on social networks is that almost anybody can see what we are doing. While we are tagging photos of our friends or are posting comments to them, it can be easy to forget that someone else who has been invited onto a social networking site can also view them.

Once something appears on the Internet, it's almost impossible to remove. As these sites continue to grow in popularity, so too does the value of the information on them to parties other than those directly involved. Social networking users need to take a step back and think about just what they're posting onto the Internet.

Code of Conduct

People who work with children and young people should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid improper contact or relationships, and respect their position of trust.

Regarding relationships, individuals who work with children and young people should not attempt to establish an inappropriate relationship which might include:

- communication of a personal nature
- inappropriate dialogue through the internet
- the sending of emails or text messages of an inappropriate nature

Individuals who work with children and young people, should be extremely careful in corresponding with people on social networking sites. Staff relationships with children and young people should always remain professional and they should **not** correspond with children and young people through such sites or add them as 'friends'. It is worth bearing in mind that on such sites an inappropriate or even misconstrued communication may have the potential to impact upon their careers or even result in criminal investigation. In addition, staff should bear in mind who may access their own profiles on such websites and should therefore take care as to the information they display about themselves and their personal lives. They should also ensure that they have installed and are using the appropriate privacy settings.

Individuals who work with children and young people, should not make, view or access illegal or inappropriate images of children.

Individuals who work with children and young people and others, with whom they may be in a position of trust, should exercise caution when using social networking sites and avoid inappropriate communication of any kind.

Safer Online Behaviour

Some social networking sites and other web-based sites have fields in the user profile for job title etc. If you are an employee of a school and particularly if you are a teacher, you should not put any information onto the site that could identify either your profession or the school where you work. In some circumstances this could damage the reputation of the school, the profession or the local authority. In their own interests, staff need to be aware

of the dangers of putting personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers. This will avoid the potential for children or their families or friends having access to staff outside of the school environment. All staff, particularly new staff, should review their social networking sites when they join the school to ensure that information available publicly about them is accurate and appropriate.