

Elmvale Primary School Parent Council

Social Media Policy



The purpose of this policy is to make us aware of our obligations and responsibilities when using Social Media both towards the school and our children. It is very important that we be made aware of these obligations as Scottish common law states that there is “*an implied duty of trust and confidence between the school and the parent council.*” This information should be made available to all parents and carers of the school- in other words, the wider parent forum.

The document acknowledges that Social Media- including sites such as Facebook and Twitter can be a powerful and useful tool in the running of a Parent Council. However, parents and carers are reminded of the risk of posting anything which is negative or emotionally biased.

Here are some of the key issues raised:

- Remember that everything you post is traceable
- Do not name any individuals on social media without their permission.
- Consider the long term consequences of what you post and try to avoid posting in the heat of the moment
- There are procedures for schools to follow when dealing with negative comments on Social Media- this can result in police involvement

We as a Parent Council have agreed to continue using social media as an additional way of communication.

Elmvale Primary School Parent Council has set up a Facebook page and a Twitter account. This has many benefits, some of which are outlined below.

BENEFITS OF USING FACEBOOK/TWITTER

* Easy access to updates via Facebook/Twitter feeds (on smartphones where

appropriate)

- * It is quick and easy to send out a message via Facebook/Twitter, without cluttering email inboxes.
- * It may help engage more Parents.
- * Using Facebook/Twitter could allow a more open dialogue between the Parent Council and the Parent Forum - by it's very nature, social media allows for more open 2 way conversation.
- * We would have additional online presence for any prospective parents looking to move in to the area.
- * Further down the line we could use Facebook/Twitter to canvas thoughts and opinions from the Parent Forum and use it to gauge attendance at meetings and fundraising events.

We are also aware however, that Facebook/Twitter, as in all social media, brings it's own possible problems and so we are proceeding in a cautiously optimistic manner. Guidelines for acceptable behaviour, and the proposed way of dealing with offensive behaviour (should it occur) are also outlined below.

GUIDELINES REGARDING ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR ON FACEBOOK

We would like to grow the use of Facebook/Twitter as a means of communicating with the Parent Forum but we are aware of how Facebook/Twitter can be abused. While only the administrators can update the status of the page, comments can be written by anyone and while comments are gratefully received and we would love for the Parent Forum to engage more with the Parent Council, we cannot tolerate any comments which are deemed to be abusive, offensive, bullying or threatening. Any such comments will be removed by the administrators and a warning issued to the offender. If there is repeated abuse of the page the offender will be blocked from receiving Parent Council feeds.

If problems continue on an ongoing basis then the Parent Council will discuss the use of Facebook/Twitter as a communication tool, and if in agreement, will close the pages.

As always, individual issues or concerns should be raised directly with the school.

So, we would read carefully and ask that everyone thinks about what is being written before posting and ensure that nothing is written in such a way as to bring the group in to disrepute.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

Elmvale Parent Council have 1 administrator who is able to post on the Parent Council Facebook page and 2 administrators who are able to post on Twitter Parent Council page.

Anything that is posted on the Parent Council Facebook/Twitter page is highlighted to the administrator, and weekly reports of usage are shared by Facebook or Twitter.

ONLY information that is in the public domain will be posted on Facebook and Twitter. Unless otherwise agreed, no names or photographs will be posted.

Anything posted on the Facebook and/or Twitter page will appear in the newsfeed of all those who have 'liked' or 'follow' the page. Examples of posts include: reminders of Parent Council meetings, requests for help, notification of changes to school meals, thanks for help, fundraising updates, community notices, etc.

Finally, it is our responsibility as parents and carers to ensure we demonstrate the same moral examples we expect from our children:

“Everything our children hear, see and feel is recorded onto a cassette. Guess who is the big star in their movie? You are. What you say and more importantly what you do is recorded there for them to replay over and over again.” (anon)

If you use Facebook or Twitter, here are the link to the Elmvale Primary School Parent Council page:

<https://www.facebook.com/elmvalepc>

To receive newsfeeds from Elmvale Primary Parent Council, please 'like' the page.

<https://twitter.com/ValersParents>

To receive newsfeeds from Elmvale Primary Parent Council, please “follow” the page

Approved on the 05/06/2015 by

Chairperson

Carol Aljundi

Vice – Chairperson

Fiona McMahon

Treasurer

Catherine Yuill

Secretary

Christine Reilly