



Policy Document for: Social media, mobile phones & other electronic devices

Approved by Directors: February 2020

Updated: June 2020

Due for Review: February 2021

At Timu Trust we recognise that mobile phones and electronic devices are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community. These devices present positive and exciting opportunities, as well as challenges and risks. Timu will empower our learners to acquire the knowledge needed to use the mobile technology and social media in a safe, considered and respectful way, and develop their resilience so they can manage and respond to online risks.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones and devices for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

At Timu Academy Trust our schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This policy considers the guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy. Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

This policy links with several other policies, practices and action plans, including but not limited to:

Positive Behaviours Principles Handbook (including Anti-bullying and behaviour policies)

- Acceptable Use Policies (AUP) and/or the Code of conduct/staff behaviour policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Curriculum policies, such as: Computing, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
- Data protection (GDPR) policy
- Online Safety policy
- Confiscation of inappropriate items policy

Safeguarding

- Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.
- Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.
- Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.
- Where staff have 2 factor verification for CPOMS, the staff member's mobile phone can be used in order to login, but then it must be stored safely away once login is completed
- All phones and devices **must** be connected through the Trust wifi for safeguarding purposes.

See the **Child Protection and safeguarding policy** and **online safety policy** for more details

Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and are handed in when they arrive at school so they can be safely stored.

Pupils must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or mobile devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

All members of Timu Trust community are advised to use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised calls or actions cannot be made on their phones or devices; passwords and pin numbers should be kept confidential and mobile phones and personal devices should not be shared

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office. Any lost phone should be returned to the school office so that we can attempt to contact the owner.

Use of mobile phones by staff

Personal mobile phones

The sending of abusive or inappropriate messages or content via mobile phones or personal devices is forbidden by any member of the community; any breaches will be dealt with in line with our **anti-bullying and behaviour policies**. All members of Timu community are advised to ensure that their mobile phones and personal devices do not contain any content which may be offensive, derogatory or would otherwise contravene our behaviour or child protection policies.

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room and front office).

If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a mobile phone or personal device, or have committed a criminal offence using a personal device or mobile phone, the police will be contacted and the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) will be informed in line with our allegations policy.

Exceptions

The exception to this is that staff may use their phone for CPOMS safeguarding 2-factor authentication to login, in class time when children are present where there is a red level concern about a child. Otherwise the staff will login and add concerns to CPOMS when children are not present wherever possible.

There may be other circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The Head of School will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information. See the Trust **Acceptable Use Policy** and **Online safety policy** for more information.

Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips (such as sports competitions)
- Supervising residential visits

Generally, the Trust will endeavour to ensure the Trust supplied mobile phone has been provided for this use. See the **Educational visits policy** for more information.

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

Timu Trust work mobile phone

The Trust has a mobile phone which is provided for use in off-site sporting events, trips and residential. This phone must be collected from, and returned to, Iwade school office.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

Use of Mobile phones by children

Mobile phones are not permitted in school unless the child walks to or from school on their own. If this is the case, the phone must be switched off and handed to the teacher either on the door in the morning or their class teacher at the beginning of the day. The phone will be kept in the school office and collected by the child at the end of the school day.

June 2020 update: Year 6 children should only bring a mobile phone to school where their parent has given permission for them to walk to/from school alone. Phones should be taken to class where they will be wiped clean, stored in an envelope and held securely in the classroom.

Should Parents/Carers need to contact pupils in an emergency, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures via the school offices or email to the Head of School or Executive Headteacher using the following contact information.

Bobbing Village School

Email: manager@bobbing.kent.sch.uk

Tel: 01795 423939

Iwade School

Email: admin@iwade.kent.sch.uk

Tel: 01795 472578

In addition, mobile phones/recording equipment are not be used by pupils during educational visits. This includes phone calls/texts to parents/guardians. No child will be allowed to take a mobile phone on a residential visit. In the event that a pupil needs to contact home, this will be arranged through the lead teacher on the visit via the school office.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff or another child to be using, or in the possession of a mobile phone or other device, it will be taken from the child and returned ONLY to the parent, guardian or carer. Please refer to our **confiscation of inappropriate items policy**, available at www.timuacademytrust.org.uk which also gives details of search processes which may be used, both for the physical item and the any details, photographs or data held on it.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or staff, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Positive Behaviour Principles Handbook (containing behaviour and antibullying policies). This phone will be taken from the child and returned ONLY to the parent, guardian or carer. If images of other pupils or staff have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a teacher and Parent, Guardian or Carer. The child's Parents, Guardian or Carer will be contacted and asked to discuss the matter with the Head of School or Executive Headteacher.

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#).

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (youth produced sexual imagery)
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

In these instances, the staff follow the guidance in the **Child Protection and safeguarding policy**. See also Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.

Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting pictures or videos including other children on their social media
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use as part of our safeguarding leaflet when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school. Mobile phones can only be used at reception so that no children are present.

Parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

Other electronic devices

Smart watches (wearable technology)

- Any member of staff wearing a smart watch or fitness tracker must ensure this is connected to the school wifi for safeguarding purposes
- Wearable technology may NOT be used to take photos or videos of children by school staff, visitors, volunteers or children
- Children may only wear smart watches and fitness trackers that cannot connect to the internet, nor take photos. Any device not meeting these criteria will be taken by the teacher, held securely and then returned to the parent or carer at the end of the day
- Any child causing a distraction with their wearable technology during lesson time will have the item confiscated and held securely until the end of the day

Cameras and tablets used to take photos or videos

Under the Data Protection Act of 1998 and subsequent General Data Protection Regulations schools must seek parental consent to take photographs and use video recorders. This consent is used to inform how school photos and videos will be taken and used.

- Photographs will be stored on the school network which is password protected until the school ceases to operate, should this occur then all photographs will be shredded or deleted from the school network.
- The school's digital cameras must not leave the school setting (unless on an educational visit). Photographs are printed in the setting by staff and images are then removed from the camera memory.
- Photographs may be taken during indoor and outdoor play and learning and displayed in school, on our website, albums or a child's development records for children and parents, carers, governors, directors, OFSTED etc to look through.
- Any photo which can be accessed externally (such as in school social media or on the website) will conform to the permissions granted by the parents/carers
- Often photographs may contain other children in the background.
- Events such as Sports Day, outings, Christmas and fundraising events may be recorded by video

- and photographs by staff and parent/carers but always in full view of all attending
- Staff mobile phones must not be used to take pictures of children in our school.
- The use of cameras, mobile phones and other recording devices are prohibited in toilets and nappy changing areas.
- All school cameras and videos should be kept securely at all times and used with appropriate authority.

Social Media

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many young people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. This document gives clarity to the way in which social media are to be used by pupils and school staff within the Timu Academy Trust.

These expectations are regarding safe and responsible use of social media applies to all members of Timu community.

- The term social media may include (but is not limited to) blogs, wikis, social networking sites, forums, bulletin boards, online gaming, apps, video/photo sharing sites, chatrooms and instant messenger apps or services.
- All members of Timu community are expected to engage in social media in a positive and responsible manner.
- All members of Timu community are advised not to post or share content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others on any social media service.
- We will control pupil and staff access to social media whilst using Timu provided devices and systems on site.
- Concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of Timu community on social media, will be reported to a DSL and will be managed in accordance with existing policies, including anti-bullying, allegations against staff, behaviour and child protection.

Acceptable use policies (AUP's)

A number of AUP's exist to protect staff and pupils within the Trust.

- The staff and volunteer AUP is signed annually
- The pupil AUP is divided into sections for years R,1 and 2 and then key stage 2 and is reviewed annually, in school and then sent home for parent signature

The use of social networking sites by pupils within school.

The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) makes it clear to pupils what use of social media is allowed. This states that, 'Social network sites should never be accessed/used within school'. The online safety policy states sanctions for breaching the policy.

- Safe and appropriate use of social media will be taught to learners as part of an embedded and progressive education approach via age appropriate sites and resources.
- We are aware that many popular social media sites are not permitted for use by children under the age of 13, or in some cases higher. As such, we will not create accounts for learners under the required age as outlined in the services terms and conditions
- Any concerns regarding learners use of social media will be dealt with in accordance with existing policies, including anti-bullying, child protection and behaviour.
- The DSL (or deputy) will respond to online safety concerns involving safeguarding or child protection risks in line with our child protection policy.
- Sanctions and/or pastoral/welfare support will be implemented and offered to learners as appropriate, in line with our behaviour policy. Civil or legal action will be taken if necessary.
- Concerns regarding learners use of social media will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate, particularly when concerning underage use of social media services and games.

Pupils will be advised:

- to consider the benefits and risks of sharing personal details or information on social media sites which could identify them and/or their location.
- to only approve and invite known friends on social media sites and to deny access to others by making profiles private.
- not to meet any online friends without a parent/carer or other appropriate adults' permission, and to only do so when a trusted adult is present.
- to use safe passwords.
- to use social media sites which are appropriate for their age and abilities.
- how to block and report unwanted communications.
- how to report concerns on social media, both within the setting and externally.

Staff personal use of social media

It is likely that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them **to protect their professional reputation** by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

- All members of staff are advised that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the Trust
- Civil, legal or disciplinary action may be taken if staff are found to bring the profession or institution into disrepute, or if something is felt to have undermined confidence in their professional abilities.
- All members of staff are advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media services. Advice will be provided to staff via staff training and by sharing appropriate guidance and resources on a regular basis. This will include, but is not limited to:
 - Setting appropriate privacy levels on their personal accounts/sites.
 - Being aware of the implications of using location sharing services.
 - Opting out of public listings on social networking sites.
 - Logging out of accounts after use.
 - Using strong passwords.
 - Ensuring staff do not represent their personal views as being that of the setting.
- Members of staff are encouraged not to identify themselves as employees of Timu schools on their personal social networking accounts; this is to prevent information being linked with the setting and to safeguard the privacy of staff members.
- All members of staff are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post online. Staff are expected to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance our policies, and the wider professional and legal framework.
- Information and content that staff members have access to as part of their employment, including photos and personal information about learners and their family members or colleagues, will not be shared or discussed on social media sites.
- Members of staff will notify the leadership team immediately if they consider that any content shared on social media sites conflicts with their role.
- Staff must not post pictures of school events without the Head of School's consent.
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff must not post negative comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including Governors.

Staff use of social media in school

- The safe and responsible use of social media sites will be discussed with all members of staff as part of staff induction
- Safe and professional online behaviour is outlined for all members of staff, including volunteers, as part of our code of conduct and in the acceptable use policy.
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times.
- All social media services must be approved by the Executive Principal in advance of any educational work being undertaken.
- Staff need to use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.
- Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'.
- Any complaint about staff misuse or policy breaches will be referred to the Head of School or Executive Principal, in accordance with our allegations against staff policy.
- Any allegations regarding a member of staff's online conduct will be discussed with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).
- If appropriate, disciplinary, civil and/or legal action will be taken in accordance with our staff code of conduct as part of the staff handbook.

Staff Communicating with pupils and parents/carers

- Staff will not use any personal social media accounts to contact pupils/ex-pupils under the age of 18 or parents/carers, nor should any contact be accepted.
- All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add any current or past pupils or their family members, as 'friends' on any personal social media sites, applications or profiles.
- Any pre-existing relationships or exceptions which compromise this requirement will be discussed with the DSL and the Executive Principal
- Decisions made and advice provided in these situations will be formally recorded in order to safeguard pupils, the setting and members of staff.
- Staff may use their class email address to contact parents, but they should not use their school internal email address.
- June 2020 update: Safeguarding addendum 2020 includes the use of Zoom, in the absence of using Microsoft Teams, and sets out the strict criteria how this should be used for safeguarding purposes.

Comments posted by parents/carers.

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion.

- Parents are not expected to post pictures of pupils other than their own children on social networking sites.
- Parents should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites.
- Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

Official use of social media

Timu official social media channels is Facebook. The official use of social media sites by Timu only takes place with clear educational or community engagement objectives and with specific intended outcomes. The official use of social media as a communication tool has been formally risk assessed and approved by the Executive Principal.

- Leadership staff have access to account information and login details for our social media channels, in case of emergency, such as staff absence.
- Official social media channels have been set up as distinct and dedicated accounts for official educational or engagement purposes only.
- Staff use setting provided email addresses to register for and manage official social media channels.
- Official social media sites are suitably protected and, where possible, run and/or linked to/from our website.
- Public communications on behalf of the setting will, where appropriate and possible, be read and agreed by at least one other colleague.
- Official social media use will be conducted in line with existing policies, including but not limited to anti-bullying, image/camera use, data protection, confidentiality and child protection.
- All communication on official social media platforms by staff on behalf of the setting will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny.
- Parents/carers and learners will be informed of any official social media use, along with expectations for safe use and action taken to safeguard the community.
- Only social media tools which have been risk assessed and approved as suitable for educational purposes will be used.
- Parents and carers will be informed of any official social media use with pupils; written parental consent will be obtained, as required.
- We will ensure that any official social media use does not exclude members of the community who are unable or unwilling to use social media channels.
- Members of staff who follow and/or like our official social media channels will be advised to use dedicated professional accounts where possible, to avoid blurring professional boundaries.

If members of staff are participating in online social media activity as part of their capacity as an employee of the setting, they will:

- Sign our social media acceptable use policy.
- Be aware they are an ambassador for the setting.
- Be professional, responsible, credible, fair and honest, and consider how the information being published could be perceived or shared.
- Always act within the legal frameworks they would adhere to within the workplace, including libel, defamation, confidentiality, copyright, data protection and equalities laws.
- Ensure appropriate consent has been given before sharing images on the official social media channel.
- Not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of the setting, unless they are authorised to do so.
- Not engage with any private/direct messaging with current or past learners or parents/carers.
- Inform their line manager, the DSL (or deputy) and/or the headteacher/manager of any concerns, such as criticism, inappropriate content or contact from learners.

Dealing with incidents of online bullying

The schools **online safety policy** and **Positive behaviour principles handbook** (Anti Bullying Policy) makes sanctions regarding bullying using new technologies very clear.

The school can take action against incidents that happen outside school if it:

- Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school or
- Poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public or
- Could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

June 2020 update: see the safeguarding addendum to support the investigation of online bullying incidents.

Use of social networking sites to harass, bully or intimidate would be covered by this irrespective of when/where the post was made.