

# St John's Catholic Primary School



## TWITTER POLICY

*“Christ is the Centre of our School Community where we live, love and learn together”*

### **Introduction**

At St John's Catholic Primary School, we recognise that access to school Twitter accounts (and future emerging social media networks) gives pupils and staff greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping pupils develop 21st-Century technology and communication skills. In this technology rich world our pupils, parents and the wider community live in, Social Media is becoming more and more part of daily life. When agencies like Ofsted release new guidance on Twitter days before it appears elsewhere, it's important that staff at St John's Catholic Primary School embrace Twitter to not only keep up to date with important changes that can impact learning in their classroom but also to connect with teachers across the globe who are sharing resources, ideas and discussing important aspects of education. This policy will explain acceptable use of Twitter relating to St John's Catholic Primary School twitter account: TBC. The policy will explain the purpose of Twitter in St John's Catholic Primary School and the benefits that will arise from its proper use.

This Twitter Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviours that users are expected to follow when interacting with any school Twitter accounts.

### **Aims of using Twitter**

- (1) To quickly share and celebrate children's achievements, successes and school updates.
- (2) To demonstrate safe and responsible use of social media.
- (3) To encourage the use of 21st Century technology.
- (4) Engage parents who may not check the school website or online portal
- (5) Promote school activities and useful information
- (6) 'Market' the school and promote a positive picture of the learning that is taking place
- (7) Communicate with other schools and public figures and take learning beyond the four walls of the classroom.

## **What is Twitter ?**

Twitter is used primarily as a method of communication made up of 140 characters called a 'Tweet'. Tweets are an answer to the generic question "What are you doing?" Tweets tend to reference people, places, and/or activities and broadcast information to which others can reply and respond. Twitter users are able to follow or be followed. To follow somebody/thing ensures that all of their activity and comments appear in the followers news feed. The obvious benefit of having followers is that the information you broadcast is instantly distributed into their news feed. Users can also private message each other when they don't want conversations to appear.

At St John's Catholic Primary School, Twitter will not be used to engage with individual parents directly, however, important announcements and notices could be sent as part of general communication to parents. The St John's Catholic Primary School Twitter account, will be monitored and maintained by SLT only, who will have access to the official school twitter account.

## **What is the primary purpose of the St John's Catholic Primary School Twitter feeds ?**

The school Twitter page will be used principally to advertise the excellent work by staff, children, parents and governors. Similarly, it will also contain information detailing special events in school. The aim of this is to run alongside more traditional methods like sending home letters, and not to replace it.

## **Twitter etiquette:**

Any Tweets from the official school account will be grammatically correct and will not contain text language like lol, gr8 or l8r. Some tweets may contain hashtags. Hashtags are things you can add to the end of your tweets like #TTRS that enable tweets to be added to a collection of other related tweets that are generally viewed by more people. If tweets are being sent to spread the news of a new blog post, they could look something like this: In this tweet you can see a request to view a new blog post and the hashtag #edchat.

## **Safeguarding pupils:**

In order to safeguard the pupils at St John's Primary School no names of pupils will be used alongside any pictures of pupils and photographic consent of all the pupils before a picture is tweeted. Images tweeted by parents may be 'liked' or 'retweeted' to show recognition or in a response. Children will not be directly addressed or named. Posts will be generalised to all followers or to a specific class by quoting the class name / year group at the beginning of each tweet. Photographs of work completed may be posted, but again, no names will be shown.

**No personal information will be shared by staff or parents.**

## **Twitter followers**

St John's twitter account will be a private account in which parents will need to request to follow the school Twitter account. However, we reserve the right to block accounts deemed inappropriate or offensive to ourselves and/or others. Staff members should not follow the school's account unless their account is a profession, private account.

**Under no circumstances should staff members follow parents or students. In no circumstances should pupils be allowed to follow staff. Should this happen, the staff are to block the pupil and inform a member of the SLT at their earliest convenience.**

St John's will only follow accounts that benefit the school, such as children's authors, Government accounts or educational accounts. This will be reviewed on a regular basis.

### **Acceptable Usage**

- (1) The school Twitter account will be accessed from school devices only, using a specific school allocated email account. No personal Twitter accounts can be added to the school issued devices.
- (2) The school Twitter account will be a private account. Senior Managers will monitor the followers and block any who appear to not be school focused. If staff have any concerns about followers or activity, they are to report it to the SLT.
- (3) St John's Twitter account will be managed and maintained by SMT.
- (4) Class Twitter accounts will be managed by the class teacher and maintained by SMT.
- (5) The school Twitter will be used to promote school activities, trips and useful information.
- (6) The school Twitter account will only tweet between the hours of 8am and 6pm between Monday and Friday. The only time tweets outside of this time are for school events (e.g. football matches, residential trips, performances) or to share urgent school news (e.g. closers due to adverse weather). If staff wish to tweet outside these hours, the headteacher must be informed beforehand.
- (7) The school Twitter account will only follow educational accounts. No personal accounts, unless they are educationally linked, will be followed. For example a children's author.
- (8) The school Twitter account will not use children's names.
- (9) The school Twitter account will use Twitter to share positive messages about the school.
- (10) The school Twitter account will not post photos of children whose parents/carers have not provided consent.
- (11) Educational accounts and linked school accounts can be retweeted. By retweeting, the school broadens its audience base and allows the tweet to be shared to more followers.
- (12) The use of the @twittername handles of others is to be used with caution. For example "excited about @someone visiting our school". It is not acceptable to reply to any 'replies' or initiated conversations with parents. This is not the platform to discuss or debate school related issues.
- (13) By advertising our Twitter account we may be encouraging children to use Twitter so staff are advised to reinforce Online Safety rules in-line with our Online Safety Policy.
- (14) Any inappropriate content will be deleted and its users will be removed, blocked, and, depending on the nature of the comment, reported to Twitter. Furthermore, incidents of a more serious nature may be reported to the appropriate authority.

### **Inappropriate context and referencing**

St John's Primary School welcomes any referencing, mentions, or interactions that posit the school in a positive light only. Therefore, we deem any of the following as inappropriate:

- Offensive language or remarks aimed at the school, its staff, parents, governors or others affiliated with the school.
- Unsuitable images or content posted or finding its way from another's account into St John's Catholic Primary School feed.
- Images or text that infringe upon copyright.

- Comments that aim to undermine the school, its staff, parents, governors or others affiliated with the school.

Any inappropriate content will be deleted and its users will be removed, blocked, and, depending on the nature of the comment, reported to Twitter. Furthermore, incidents of a more serious nature may be reported to the appropriate authority.

### **Discussion with children**

**The minimum age for a twitter account is 13**, meaning none of our pupils should have their own account. For this reason, if any accounts belonging directly to children follow the school's account, they will be removed and reported.

However, each of these points will still be discussed with the children by staff, and should be re-enforced by parents & carers.

1. Never post any personal information (give examples such as age, hobbies, phone numbers, where they live, photographs etc).
2. Never post anything that you would find upsetting (bullied/bullying).
3. If you find anything upsetting, don't reply, tell an adult you trust.
4. Be careful who you talk to, not everybody is who they say they are.
5. If somebody asks you to meet them in the real world, tell your parents or an adult

Twitter's own safety rules can be found on their website, please visit: <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/twitter-rules>

To report violations, please visit: <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/twitter-report-violation>

To report abusive behaviour, please visit: <https://help.twitter.com/en/safety-and-security/report-abusive-behavior>