

Choysez

Social Media Policy

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to Choysez, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff at Choysez.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Protect Choysez from legal risks
- Ensure that the reputation of Choysez, its staff and young people are protected
- Safeguard all children
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of Choysez.

Definitions and Scope

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: blogs, online discussion forums, collaborative spaces, and media sharing services. 'microblogging' applications, and online gaming environments. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, Windows Live Messenger, Youtube, Flickr, Xbox Live, Blogger, Tumblr, Last.fm, and comment streams on public websites such as newspaper sites.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds.

All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information Legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the Choysez Equalities, Child Protection and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

Within this policy there is a distinction between use of Choysez sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes, and personal use of social media.

Use of Social Media in practice

1. Personal use of social media

- Choysez staff will not invite, accept or engage in communication with parents or children from the Choysez community in any personal social media whilst in employment at Choysez.

- Any communication received or attempted communication from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated person for Child Protection
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above
- Members of Choysez staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts. Be aware of what young people are able to see.
- All email communications between staff and members of the Choysez community on Choysez business must be made from an official Choysez email account.
- Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with members of the Choysez community on Choysez business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Centre Manager.
- Staff are advised not to make posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to Choysez and members of its community on any social media accounts.
- Staff are also advised to consider the reputation of Choysez in any posts or comments made on any social media accounts.
- Staff should not accept any current pupil of any age or any ex-pupil of Choysez as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account and should report to their line manager any such requests from young people.
- Staff should not access personal sites in class e.g. Netflix, Skygo etc.

2. Choysez sanctioned use of social media

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum and to support student learning. For example, Choysez has an official Twitter account. There are also many possibilities for using social media to enhance and develop students learning.

When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff should set up a distinct and dedicated social media site or account for educational purposes. This should be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff, and ideally should be linked to an official school email account.
- The URL and identity of the site should be notified to the appropriate Head of Faculty or member of the SMT before access is permitted for students.
- The content of any Choysez sanctioned social media site should be solely professional and should reflect well on Choysez.
- Staff must not publish photographs of children without the written consent of parents/ carers, identify by name any children featured in photographs, or allow personally identifying information to be published on Choysez social media accounts.
- Care must be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe.
- Any inappropriate comments on or abuse of Choysez sanctioned social media should immediately be removed and reported to the management team.