

Abbey Hill Primary and Nursery School



Twitter Policy

Adopted by the Governing Body 9th May 2023

To be reviewed July 2024



Abbey Hill Primary and Nursery School

Twitter Policy

Context

This policy has been written following the school's decision to establish a Twitter account. Twitter is a social media platform used as a method of communication known as 'Tweets'. Tweets may be referenced to specific people, groups or communities including through use of hashtags or use of '@' mentions. Users can be followed and blocked as well as accounts reported. Although Direct Messaging is a facility offered by the service, Abbey Hill will not make use of and not respond to messages through this facility.

Rationale

The rationale of this policy is to explain the acceptable use of Twitter relating to Abbey Hill Primary School and Nursery for staff, governors, children, families and our community. The policy will explain the purpose of our Twitter account, the benefits from its proper use, guidance as to how it will be used and the school's policies and procedures arising from any misuse or pitfalls.

The scope of the policy

This policy applies to all members of the Abbey Hill staff team who have access to its digital systems including social media. The Education Act 2006 empowers head teachers, to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of pupils where they are off the school site, and empowers members of staff to impose disciplinary penalties for inappropriate behaviour. This is pertinent to incidents of online-bullying or other online safety incidents including those covered by this individual policy, including incidents which do not happen or take place in school but are linked to membership of the school. The 2011 Education Act increases these powers with regard to searching for and of electronic devices and the deletion of data.

Roles and responsibilities

The head teacher has a duty of care for ensuring the safety (including online) of members of the school community. The head teacher and Senior Leadership Team are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a serious online allegation against a member of staff. The head teacher and Senior Leadership Team retain responsibility for ensuring up-to-date training is provided to all relevant staff in use of digital devices.

The school's technical support infrastructure is maintained by those with responsibility for our technical maintenance. They support the school in ensuring compliance with safety and digital cyber security.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies are trained in online safety issues and are aware of the potential for serious child protection issues which may arise.

Parents and carers play a crucial role in ensuring their children understand the safer use of social media when they are of an appropriate age to the platform. The school will take every opportunity to help parents, carers **and pupils** understand these issues including through,

but not limited to, lessons, materials and discussions. Parents and carers will be encouraged to promote and reinforce these messages including modelling the behaviour their children should be expected to exhibit.

The purpose of our Twitter use

Abbey Hill Primary and Nursery School will be accessible via the account handle @AbbeyHillPri. The account's primary purpose will be to celebrate and advertise the excellent work and life of our school. It may also be used to share information about special events, running alongside and reinforcing the more traditional methods of communication used by the school including letters, newsletters, posters, text messaging, email and face-to-face communication.

Use of Twitter enables the school to share and celebrate its life and work with a range of individuals and organisations. This is considered positive for the school as a means to celebrate and promote life at Abbey Hill. It may also be used as a means for individuals such as but not exclusive to poets, authors and other teachers, to provide positive comments, feedback or praise. They may choose to 'like' or 'retweet' to widen the audience of the work or experiences we have shared.

Tweets may include direct, targeted mentions '@' of individuals such as other teachers, educators, organisations, community groups and significant figures. Prior to making the decision to '@ mention' any individual, the member of staff posting the tweet will verify that the account they are mentioning is the correct and intended recipient.

The administration of the account

All members of the school's Senior Leadership Team have credentials enabling access to the Twitter account via a laptop.

Three nominated members of staff (Helen Chambers, Adam Jevons-Newman and Kellie Boyd) are classed as the 'Twitter Team' and will take responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance, posting and use of the account. The school business manager also has the school's login credentials.

Staff wishing to have content uploaded should share this content with one of the Twitter Team via a school email account.

The school has established a specific e-mail account, within the school's email domain, by which the Twitter account is verified. This is twitter@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk and all SLT and the School Business Manager have the credentials for this.

Agreed principles of good practice

- Reporting on 'events' should be retrospective, wherever possible, remarking on things which have happened as opposed to drawing attention or open or public invitations.
- Any 'commenting' made by the Abbey Hill account will be done so publicly and professionally.
- Abbey Hill Primary and Nursery School welcomes any references, mentions or interactions which reflect school in a positive light **only**.
- Prior to 'liking' or 'retweeting' the tweets of other accounts, the Twitter Team will

give due regard to the content of the message or tweet to ensure it does not endorse unprofessional, inappropriate, harmful and/or unacceptable messages contrary to the ethos and values of the school and professional standards.

- The use of Standard English and punctuation and grammar will be maintained by the poster.

Uploading of media (including video)

Consent will be obtained from parents and carers before the image of their child is uploaded or used on the school Twitter account. This is separate to permission for their child to appear on the school website.

Pupils work can only be photographed and posted with the consent of parents and carers **and the pupil**. Pupils will be told what the photograph has been taken for. School recognises this may also be a motivational experience if the work is to be shared and celebrated.

Photographs must reflect the educational aims of Abbey Hill. They are only to be taken on school equipment. The Twitter Team have specific devices, pin-protected, which facilitate app-based access to the school's account. The school's safeguarding policies govern the safe and appropriate use of these.

Photographs of pupils working or learning will be selected carefully. Wherever possible, photos will reflect pupils working and will not include any reference to a child's full name.

Note that in this policy, the term 'image' refers to both still (photo) and moving (video) images of a child along with audio (sound) should a child be audible but not visible in a video.

Safeguarding controls

As a public Twitter account, anyone with a Twitter account would be able to search for and discover the school's account. They would be able to 'follow' the school account, initially.

The Twitter Team receive notifications of new followers. Upon receiving a new follower, the Twitter Team will check the quality of the biography of each individual and make attempts, where possible, to verify the identify of this individual based on the information shared. This will include looking at the language used in the follower's tweets, imagery shared or content that has been liked and retweeted.

The school reserves the right to block an account of any person or organisation should school perceive that the account is inappropriate or may pose a safeguarding risk. Where individuals cannot be identified or identity verified, the school reserves the right to block these individuals.

Pupils and children below the age of approved Twitter use will not be allowed to follow the school. Such users will not be unblocked until such time as they are of an age appropriate to the use of Twitter. "Twitter requires people using the service to be 13 years of age or older." (Last checked 20th April 2023 and to be reviewed during the next review of this policy). In the unlikely but possible event that a parent or carer is blocked (or any other follower

whose relationship to school can be proven), a member of SLT will hear the case on an individual basis and make a decision about unblocking.

In the event of any offensive language or remarks being directed to school in any way, including by affiliation, the account will be blocked and the comments reported through Twitter's internal settings.

Personal information is not published. Training is provided to all staff including acceptable use of technology. Clear and robust reporting sanctions are in place for any safeguarding concerns. No reference is made to individual pupils without specific prior consent being sought.

Personal opinions are not to be attributed by the account.

The school actively discourages, but acknowledges it cannot fully prevent, others from using the images posted by the school. As a result of this, guidance on imagery shared by the school account is to be followed. Where school is aware that individuals or organisations have made unsolicited use of images shared, accounts will be reported, blocked and contact made through appropriate channels.

School's other policies including Safeguarding and E-Safety will be deployed, where necessary, to maintain the ongoing safety of our Abbeyhillian family.

Assessing Risks

All schools take reasonable precautions to ensure that only appropriate material and accounts interact with their school. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of the internet, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material may not be shared, nor the school mentioned or contact attempted. The school will audit, regularly monitor and robustly respond to all instances of unsuitable material using the full breadth and power of its policies.

Review

This policy will be subject to review in July 2024.