**Muckhart Primary School Parent Council**



**Social Media Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to make all adults (staff and parents/carers), involved in the Muckhart PS community, 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 children within the school- in other words, the wider parent forum.

This 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 and this can result in police involvement

We as a Parent Council have agreed to continue using Social Media as an additional way of communication. Muckhart Primary School Parent Council has set up a closed group Facebook page and Muckhart Primary school has a secure Twitter account. These have 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 its very nature, social media allows for more open two-way conversation.

\* Facebook can be used to canvas thoughts and opinions from the Parent Forum and to gauge attendance at meetings and fundraising events. We are also aware however, that Facebook/Twitter, as in all social media, brings its own possible problems and so we are proceeding in a cautiously optimistic manner.



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. Posts and comments can be written by anyone within the closed group, 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 on-going 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 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?

Muckhart Parent Council have one administrator who is able to add members to the Parent Council Facebook page. Parents, or the main carers, of current pupils, and current Muckhart Primary School staff are the only people who should be members of the closed Facebook group. Parents and carers sign an annual consent form to enable photographs of their child to be shared on the Facebook page. Any posts shared will appear in the notifications of all those who 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, children’s experiences in school, community notices, etc.

Finally, it is our responsibility as parents and carers to ensure we demonstrate the same reasonable behaviour that 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, contact Jayne Price (who is also the administrator) to be added to the closed group.

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