

# Glow Blogs and Profiles

## MEMBERS, COMMENTS AND VISIBILITY OF BLOGS

- By default, pupil blogs are private. They do not have the option to make them public, whereas staff can make them public. (The list of blogs on the **My Sites** page is a list of North Ayrshire public blogs created by staff. These are searchable on Google and visible to anyone.) Students can make their blogs searchable within Glow, ie. anyone with a Glow login can access, but I never make them aware of this option.
- Students should make staff 'Administrators' of their blogs, which gives staff full control over the blogs.
- Students should make friends 'Contributors' which allows them to comment only. Comments made by contributors have to be approved, while those made by administrators appear immediately.
- Students can also remove comments if they don't like them, without anyone having ever seen them.
- Encourage students to be positive in their comments and make them aware that anything they write has their name against it. Any comments that make students uncomfortable should be reported to staff.

## CUSTOMISATION OF BLOGS

- Students can change the appearance of their blogs without it affecting the profiles, unlike the old blogs. They can change the theme, colour and wording of the title of their blogs by using **Theme** and **Customize** in the APPEARANCE menu.
- The students should have chosen the e-portfolio option when creating the blog. This then gives the word PROFILES in the menu (left side) on the dashboard. If this word does not appear, the pupil has created the blog as a blog. To change it to an e-portfolio, choose PLUGINS from the menu and click **Activate** under the e-portfolio plugin.

## ADDING MEDIA

- There is a media library that is part of the blog and students can upload Word documents, PowerPoints, audio, video as well as links to Microsoft Video and websites. They can also embed Sways by copying the embed code from the Sway and pasting it into a post.
- Simply click ADD MEDIA and upload the same way you would an e-mail attachment. Until they click INSERT INTO POST, the item will remain stored and 'hidden' in the media library.
- Photos can be aligned and/or changed in size within the post.

- Photos from the Internet can be used instead, but please use those licensed under Creative Commons. Flickr is a good source of copyright free images and Google Images can be filtered by permission.
- Adding photos makes a huge difference to a blog, making it more interesting looking. Photos do not necessarily have to be of students, it can be examples of their own work or classroom displays.
- Please note that anything uploaded into the blog is not part of the Profile PDF. If students want to see anything they have uploaded or indeed print it out, they have to do so through the blog.

### **THE PROFILE**

- When making posts, students should use PROFILE TAGS, which are radio buttons. The Assessment Team at Education Scotland was responsible for the profile tags. These tags pull the posts through to the Profile.
- Clicking on Profiles allows the student to add a profile. Students can have as many profiles as they wish, eg one at the end of P6, one at Christmas of P7, one in May of P7. While they are working on them, students should not PUBLISH their Profile as this converts it to a PDF and does not allow further editing. It should simply be saved as a draft until the student is completely happy with it.
- When they add a profile, students will see each of the curricular areas they have posts tagged with. They will see their most recent three posts. If they decide they do not like a particular post they can remove it and choose another from a dropdown box within that curricular area.
- Students are also able to create a learner statement about themselves and there are areas for Wider Achievement and the World of Work, which is more applicable to older students.
- Once the profile is published it is saved as a PDF, which can then be e-mailed out to parents or printed off if so desired.

### **BLOGGING TIPS**

- Use capital letters at the beginning of each word in the title of the post and make the title relevant and specific eg. don't simply use literacy, expressive arts, maths or PE. The chances are the student will make several posts in these subjects and curricular areas.
- Remember to give each post a profile tag.
- Don't change the colour of the font – it might look pretty to them, but it makes it difficult for staff to read.
- Use photos to make posts more visually appealing.

- Upload examples of best work in the form of Word documents, photos, audio etc. If they have a video and it's too large, upload it into a school channel on Microsoft Video and copy and paste the URL of the video into the blog.
- Powerpoints and Sways can be embedded which means they are useable within the blog and the student doesn't have to open them from elsewhere.

### **TIPS FOR STAFF**

- Encourage students to comment on each other's posts and try to comment yourself. Students are more likely to add to their blog if they know someone is reading it. Using emoticons is a quick and easy way of providing feedback. Keyboard symbols are converted to emoticons once the comment has been published.