

SAINT MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



Policy on Twitter Usage

Our pathway to a successful future is grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Article 17

Every child has the right to reliable information from the media. This should be information children can understand

Article 16

Every child has the right to privacy. The law should protect the child's private, family and your home life.

Aims of Using Twitter:

- **To quickly share and celebrate children's achievements, successes and school updates.**
- **To demonstrate safe and responsible use of social media**
- **To encourage the use of 21st Century technology**

Rationale

The rationale of this policy is to explain acceptable use of Twitter relating to the Saint Mary's Primary School Kircubbin handle **@stmaryskircubb1** for staff, children, parents and governors. The policy will therefore aim to explain the purpose of Twitter in Saint Mary's Primary School and the benefits that will arise from its proper use, and also deal with any potential pitfalls.

What is Twitter?

Twitter is used primarily as a method of communication made up of 140 characters called a 'Tweet'. Tweets tend to reference people, places, and/or activities to which the said referee can respond. Tweepers either directly reference another person or 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.

@stmaryskircubb1 will not enter into public discussions with others.

Why use Twitter

One of the best uses of Twitter in a school environment is a "broadcast" account.

This is a **one-way** flow of communication to parents and/or students and can be used for many things: news and events, important information, informing parents of homework set and deadlines.

Who controls content for @stmaryskircubb1?

The uploading of content for **@stmaryskircubb1** will be controlled by **Mr Dorrian and Mr Gilmore**. Teaching staff will have access to uploading promotional photographs of their pupils at work.

Who can follow @stmaryskircubb1?

When @stmaryskircubb1 receives a follow request it will make informed decisions on a case-by-case basis as to accept or decline. These decisions will be based upon a number of factors:

- The name of the individual as read on their Twitter account and whether this name correlates to that of a parent on the SIMS database; is a member of staff; Is a school governor; is a past pupil (over 13 years old); is a known and proper person to **Mr Dorrian and or Mr Gilmore**;
- The quality of the biography of each individual as read in the bio section of their Twitter account;
- The images on view in the potential followers Twitter account.
- If it becomes apparent that a follower has inappropriate images, words or content on their own feed they shall be blocked by **@stmaryskircubb1**
- Current pupils of St Mary's are legally too young to have twitter account and will not be accepted as followers.

In most cases, one or more of the above will be enough to accept a follow request. In the unlikely event that a parent, or other suitable follower is inadvertently rejected, **Mr Dorrian and or Mr Gilmore** will hear each individual on a case-by-case basis.

These hearings will usually involve the prospective follower making themselves known in person to the above named persons, with their Twitter details, and should take no more than a few minutes.

Who will *@stmaryskircubb1* follow?

In order to protect itself from inappropriate content being distributed into its news feed, will be selective in who we seek to follow. We will only seek to follow those whose @ handle has obvious benefits to the school and is in keeping with the school's catholic ethos. Once again, these will be decided on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of **Mr Dorrian and or Mr Gilmore**.

***@stmaryskircubb1* sees itself as a distributor of information to those who follow it and not as a receiver of information.**

What is inappropriate content and referencing and how will it be dealt with?

@stmaryskircubb1 welcomes any referencing, mentions, or interactions that portrays the school in a **positive light only**.

Therefore, Saint Mary's PS deems 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 into its feed;
- Unsuitable images or content finding its way from another's account into the @stmaryskircubb1 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.

If any parent or member of our school community has any concerns regarding content we would ask that they contact either Mr Dorrian or Mr Gilmore at the earliest available opportunity.

In the event of extremely inappropriate content being detected on @stmaryskircubb1 please contact the Chair of Governors who will have direct access to the Principal.

In Summary.

- The school Twitter account will be ran by Mr Dorrian & Mr Gilmore.
- The school Twitter account will be a public account (May 2015).

Mr Dorrian & Mr Gilmore will monitor the followers and block any who appear to not be school focused or any who breach the criteria for followers as outlined in our policy.

- The school Twitter account will generally only tweet between the hours of 7am and 10pm 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. closures due to adverse weather).
- The school Twitter account will only follow educationally linked accounts. No personal accounts, unless they are educationally linked, will be followed.
- The school Twitter account will not reply to any 'replies' on Twitter. This is not the platform to discuss or debate school related issues.
- The school Twitter account will only use children's first names when referencing children.
- The school Twitter account will use Twitter to share positive messages about the school.
- The account may be used to share news and information during a school trip. Photos taken on the phone for the purpose of sharing on Twitter will be deleted once they have been shared.
- Individually targeted content will not be posted e.g. "Well done Josh a better lesson today". Tweets to a year group or class along the lines of "don't forget the..." are acceptable.
- **Twitter Services are not directed to persons under 13.** If you become aware that your child has provided Twitter with personal information without your consent, please contact Twitter at privacy@twitter.com. They do not knowingly collect personal information from children under 13. If they become aware that a child under 13 has provided them with personal information, they take steps to remove such information and terminate the child's account.

By endorsing twitter we may inadvertently be encouraging your children to use twitter so reinforce e-safety rules such as *“Never tweet anything that would be potentially upsetting; make sure you know how to report anything you find that disturbs you; be careful who you talk to they may not be all they appear; never meet anyone from twitter world without telling your parents.”*

- We recommend that our tweets are shared with pupils using a parental account.
- We will not knowingly let anyone under the age of 13 follow us on twitter.
- Current pupils of St Mary’s will not be permitted to follow the feed and will be blocked.

- Twitter’s own safety rules can be read on:

https://support.twitter.com/groups/33-report-abuseorpolicyviolations#topic_166

- As with any internet based service or social media site close parental supervision is recommended.

Revised November 2016