



Dear Parents/Carers,

### **Safe and responsible social media use**

We have noted in recent weeks an increased number of incidents where parents/carers have used social media or private Facebook or chat groups to:

- › Complain about the school
- › Complain about the school's and LEA's interpretation of the **non- statutory** government 'guidance' when responding to the COVID 19 crisis.
- › Make inappropriate comments about members of staff
- › To encourage others to share information on their child's needs, vulnerability status or SEND needs.
- › To criticize the measures taken by staff to continue the learning for those pupils working from home.

At St. Pius X RCVA Primary School we want our pupils to grow into respectful young people, who understand how to settle differences in a respectful and constructive manner, both online and offline.

Our ICT and internet acceptable use agreements set clear expectations for pupils and parents about online conduct. All of our parents have signed this agreement.

We expect parents to abide by these guidelines so that you can help us model safe, responsible and appropriate social media use for our pupils.

This includes voicing opinions about the school in a way that respects the hard work, dedication and professionalism of our staff, and speaking to or about other parents and children in a way that is respectful and appropriate.

Where we are aware of any social media activity that impacts upon the reputation of staff or the school in general, we will monitor and approach individuals as and when appropriate to do so.

### **Complaints and concerns**

There may be times where, as a parent, you don't agree with something the school is doing, or where you may have specific concerns. We welcome your feedback, and the opportunity to address any concerns you may have.

The most appropriate way to raise concerns is directly with the school, in line with our complaints procedure. Airing complaints or negative opinions on social media doesn't help the school to address the issue in the most constructive way.

You can call the school and speak to a member of staff, or book an appointment to speak with the headteacher or another member of staff. In these unusual times, this could be in the form of a virtual meeting if preferred.

### **Posting issues on public or private groups**

We would ask parents to consider the impact on the reputation of your own child's school when negative posts are added to groups where other members don't have the benefit of knowing the school or staff members. Very often such posts omit very important information and school staff are not able to respond or clarify because of their position. It is also important to remember that information posted on any forum can be shared where a member of the group feels it is unjust, untrue or intends to invite negativity about the school, staff member or another child or parent.

It is always reassuring to know that those who do know our school and know how hard the staff work to improve outcomes for your children, alert us when they know something online is unfair or unjust. We are very grateful for this. We would much rather parents came straight to us with any issues so that we can work things out together and seek further support where we are able to do so.

## **Moving Forward**

I once again thank those of you who have supported us throughout the last very challenging 4 months. It has been very difficult and we are looking towards a more normal September school day. Once again, we have to remember that September could bring differences in provision from one school to the next. One immediate concern is whether we will be able to have any before or afterschool provision due to any possible continued restrictions on our teaching 'bubbles'. Whilst we hope for a return to normal, none of us knows if this will happen. I can only ask that you continue to support and respect the decisions that we make and keep the lines of communication open with us as staff rather than the wider online community.

We absolutely accept that we haven't been able to accommodate all of the pupils who have wanted to return to school but we have achieved a huge 40 pupils across 5 bubbles when we anticipated 36 at the most. Thankfully some of our siblings have agreed to 'cosy' up together so that we can squeeze more in. Some have been initially reluctant but helped us out of a tight spot by agreeing to do so.

As a school leader, I have had the greatest support from our governing body and our wonderful staff in an attempt to keep everyone safe. My greatest concern has been the loss of any member of our lovely school family. We are aware that staff and families have lost extended family members and we are aware that whilst some of us are looking forward to an easing of lockdown, some of our children, parents and staff are continuing to shield themselves or someone very precious to them. We continue to send messages of strength and blessings to those who need it.

We thank you for your continued support, patience and kindness

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Cruise and the staff of St Pius School.