'Traffic Light' Code on Social Networking and Internet Sites created in agreement with schools in the Smithdon Cluster

The Department for Education (DfE) advice to schools' states;
"Schools should encourage all members of the school community including parents to use social media responsibly. Parents have a right to raise concerns about the education of their child, but they should do so in an appropriate manner." "Schools should make it clear that it is not acceptable for pupils, parents or colleagues to denigrate and bully school staff via social media in the same way that it is unacceptable to do so face to face." (DfE November 2014)

What this code is for:

- To encourage parents and staff to use social networking sites in a positive way;
- To safeguard the school (and anyone connected with the school) from any negative effects such as abuse.
- To set out clearly what the cluster schools think is an appropriate (or inappropriate), use of social networking sites;
- To set out the actions a school will take if they believe that anyone has acted inappropriately.

What will happen if the code is broken?

In the Smithdon Cluster of schools, we work hard to stop any bullying amongst our children, and we are not ready to allow parents to behave in a way we wouldn't want their children to. So, if you do break this code then, for the sake of our pupils, staff and parents, we will take action.

- First, we will discuss the matter with the people involved to try and sort things out.
- If the problem continues however the school will take legal advice.
- We will set out the school's concerns in writing, warning the person involved and asking them to take the posting down.
- We will contact the police if the posting is threatening or obscene.
- Block the person's access to school websites and forums or contact the provider of the social networking site to complain about the content.
- Take other legal action against the offending person.

SMITHDON CLUSTER 'TRAFFIC LIGHT' CODE for SOCIAL NETWORKING and INTERNET SITES.

POSITIVES > Social networking sites can be very helpful.

- They can help parents to get information about the school.
- They can be used to boost pupils' learning and achievements.
- They can be used to provide feedback to organizations like OFSTED.

STOP & THINK

Before you use social networking sites, we would ask you all to STOP & THINK!

- Is the social networking site the best place to raise concerns or let off steam?
- Would it be better to talk to someone at the school rather than posting ideas on the internet?
- Will the things that you want to say cause upset or offence?
- Could what you write be thought of as cyber-bullying?
- If you post threats or abuse online, you may have to face legal action!

PLEASE DON'T > The school thinks that these actions are INAPPROPRIATE, and may be against the law, so please don't:

- Make allegations online about staff or pupils;
- Make complaints about the school or our staff;
- Make negative/offensive comments about the school, our staff or our pupils;
- Make abusive comments about anyone's race, religion, gender or sexual orientation;
- Make threats of violence.