Holymead Primary School
Blogging Policy

Aims and Objectives

Whilst blogging has been around for 10 plus years, more and more schools are now giving their pupils a voice and an audience through blogging. These are mainly in the form of class blogs but can also be in the form of project blogs or individual pupil blogs. Whilst there are many blogging platforms, Wordpress is the most popular. This policy will outline the safe management of setting up and running a blogging platform. A successful blog can:

- safely give your pupils a wider audience for their learning
- encourage reluctant learners to participate and succeed
- allow pupils to receive quality feedback safely from many different people
- allow your pupils to peer assess each other's learning
- encourage parental engagement
- provide a platform that you can embed Web2.0/3.0 tools into teaching
- promote pupils' learning across the globe

E-Safety

Blogging involves pupils working on a dedicated blog site whilst in school and also at home. To be able to post, pupils need to log into the blog either using an individual sign in or post through forms. The advantages of individual sign in are that this gives more ownership to each pupil. All individual accounts are set to contributor which is the lowest level that allows a user to post. A contributor can submit a post for review; however, this will need to be authorised by the class teacher or blog admin before it appears on the blog. Any other permission level above that of 'Contributor' will allow posts to be viewable as soon as the pupil clicks 'Submit'. By giving the children the role of 'Contributor' the school is maintaining a 'gatekeeper' at all times between anything posted on the blog by a pupil or a guest and this being visible on the blog to the public. Only children that have demonstrated excellent blogging skills and behaviour in school, will be given greater access rights. This will still be monitored by the class teacher on a regular basis.

Holymead Primary School has sought permission for each child to have access to a blog, to display the learning from each pupil and for photographs of each pupil to be displayed on a blog. **Full names will not appear alongside images of pupils** unless the class teacher has sought additional permission. Users will tag their work with their username. E.g. 19jane

Each pupil has a unique log in and has been told to keep this private. If a pupil or parent thinks their log in needs changing, this can be done in the 'profile' setting on the dashboard. Parents and pupils are to contact the class teacher or blog admin through the school office should this need clarifying.

Blog Rules:

Using a blog safely is the most important thing about being a blogger. The following rules, if followed, will minimise any risks and will ensure that you will stay safe whilst blogging.

Don'ts:

1. Never give away any personal information about your location or identity.
2. Don't post pictures of yourself without specific permission from your teacher or parents.
3. Never give out your log in details to anyone.
4. Don't use text language in your posts

Do's:

1. Post about whatever you like.
2. If you receive a comment, it is polite to respond, say thank you and reply to a question if they have left one.
3. Comment on other people's posts too. Blogging is about commenting and posting!
4. If your post doesn't appear straight away, you teacher might be busy, do be patient.
5. Try to post about things that your audience would like to read.
6. If you see anything that shouldn't be on your screen, do tell your teacher or parents immediately.
7. Do visit other class blogs regularly to read and comment. This helps people come back to your blog.
8. Try to show off your best work/writing whilst blogging and use the tips people suggest to you to improve.
9. Always tag your posts with your first name and include key words specific to your post.

The Role of the Class Teacher:

Each blog site will be run by the class teacher. This responsibility as gatekeeper is key to ensuring safety for the pupils using the blog. The following guidelines should be followed if a successful flowing blog is to be achieved:

1. Visit the blog regularly. It is better to visit short and often than catching up once a week. Your bloggers will appreciate comments and posts being approved quickly!
2. If you use a shared computer, log out at the end of each session.
3. Promote the links on the class blog to the parents and the wider community through the use of Twitter and professional teacher Twitter accounts.
4. A blog can take a while to gather momentum and an audience. Be patient... the audience will come!
5. Ensure your class log in using their personal accounts. If the work is using a form, then ensure that the work is tagged correctly so it can be identified to a child.
6. Ensure all users are set to 'Contributor'. This will allow them to log in and post but the class teacher will need to approve each post.
7. Mention the blog in assemblies and have it on display at parent evenings or school events, a blogging culture will soon be established!
8. Ensure that your blog page is readable and links are easily accessible with the appearance that you choose. This will help keep the interest high for the pupils from year to year.
9. Visit other blogs regularly and promote these to your class through links on your blog. What goes around comes around with blogging and strong loyal communities will form quickly.

The role of blog administrator:
1) Ensure that blog user accounts are kept up to date and passwords are changed when necessary
2) Ensure that posts are being published in a timely fashion
3) Monitor the blog for inappropriate posts
4) Update the blog when required
5) Remove any posts that are flagged up as not appropriate
6) Promote the blog through assemblies and displays

Rights Respecting School Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. To have the right to get and to share information as long as the information is not damaging to them or others.

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