

Walmore Hill Primary School

Blogging policy



Written October 2015
Review due: October 2016

Aims and Objectives

- Whilst blogging has been around for 10+ 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 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
 - Promote your pupils' learning across the globe

e-Safety

Blogging involves pupils working on a blog 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 a class sign in. The advantages of individual sign in is that this gives more ownership to each pupil. Most blog platforms allow accounts to have different permissions. Contributor 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 admin before it appears on the blog. The 'Contributor' permission level is recommended for Primary School. Any other permission level above that of 'Contributor' will allow posts to be viewable as soon as the pupil clicks 'Submit'.

When setting up a blog Walmore Hill Primary School will ask permission for each child to have access to the blog, has sought permission to display the learning from each pupil and has sought permission for the photographs of each pupil to be displayed on a blog. Names will not appear alongside images of pupils unless additional permission has been sought by the class teacher.

Each pupil with a unique log in 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 named admin 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:

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

Do's:

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

The Role of the Blog Admin/Teacher:

- The blog admin normally is 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:
- 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!
- If you use a shared computer, log out at the end of each session.
- Promote the links on the class blog to the parents and the wider community. Twitter is a great way to promote a blog.
- A blog can take a while to gather momentum and an audience. Be patient... the audience will come!
- Your users will need to log in. For a quick solution, you can have one Username and Password for your class to get posts on the blog. However, for older pupils of 7+ they are more than capable of having their own log in.
- The safest permission setting for your blogger is 'Contributor'. This will allow them to log in and post but the blog admin will need to approve each post.
- Mention the blog in assemblies and have it on display at parent evenings or school events, a blogging culture will soon be established!
- Make sure each blog looks different in your school. This will help keep the interest high for the pupils from year to year.
- 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.
- Try using a free project like Quadblogging. This will give your pupils a quick audience. See <http://quadblogging.net> for more details.