



Wellington Baptist Church, Somerset

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Social Networking Policy

This policy should be read and understood in conjunction with the WBC Safeguarding Policy

July 2023 – Wellington Baptist Church AGM

As a church we recognise that Social Networking is a modern day tool of communication of which this church through its membership & congregation are inevitably a part of.

For the uninitiated, Social networking is an internet form of communication which includes **Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Tinder, Pinterest, Snapchat, Linkedin, Instagram, Whatsapp, online game chat (such as Fortnite), facebook messenger, etc**

It takes place on websites which create and maintain social relations, especially amongst those who share common interests. Their ease of use makes them the communications medium of choice amongst the majority of teenagers. The largest of these is Facebook with 700,000 people joining every day.

Like all communication tools social networking has its limitations and we have therefore set out in this policy the following boundaries to enable this to be a positive and affirming method of communication.

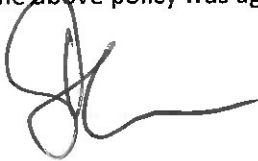
In forming a policy on social networking within Wellington Baptist Church, it should be noted that this is not a legal document that provides a set of laws which are enforceable. These are principles that rely totally upon covenant relationships to each other. Because of our commitment to each other, we therefore seek to hold these as important principles which we value and seek to operate by as a church membership and a congregation.

We also recognise the potential for abuse, misunderstanding, illegal and improper use of social networking and commit ourselves in this policy to be on our guard and pro-active against such misuses. Mindful in particular of those who are vulnerable within our church, we will do all that we can to watch over each and guard each other in our usage of social networking, especially in terms of inappropriate comments, release of private data etc.

We therefore commit ourselves to these principles:

- Abiding by the rules of Facebook, that no one in our church or congregation should be using this under the age of thirteen years. Parents should ensure that this law set by Facebook, should be abided by, because we are committed to upholding the law of the land.
- That we strongly recommend a degree of oversight & responsibility by parents in their children's use of social networking sites
- That no one in our church or congregation should use suggestive, cutting, abusive, hurtful or defamatory wording, or language of a suggestive sexual nature against another using social networking tools.
- That we will always be careful, and hesitant about what we say, recognising that we all make mistakes, but that we will always be slow to post and quick to delete!
- That as Christians we do not support the use of certain applications within social networking sites that promote horoscopes, and fortune cookies and the like.
- That we will never post provocative photos or racy prose.
- That no photos of children or young people who have requested not to be used in publicity – electronic or paper, will be displayed on social networking sites by anyone who is a part of WBC.
- That each of us will think carefully about who we allow on our friendship lists, particularly from the perspective of being wise about how such a relationship might be perceived or even misunderstood. And in particular, the place of adults and teenagers of the opposite gender being perhaps an example of such. This policy is not stating that these should not happen, but that wisdom, accountability, care need to be applied in thinking about these.
- That all who work within WBC, within any of our ministries will set rigorous standards in e-safety.

The above policy was agreed at the AGM of Wellington Baptist Church by the church members.



Revd Sam Griffiths

Pastor

July 2023