**Social Media – Get connected**



In this day in age social media is becoming more prevalent in everyday life, so what’s stopping you from joining?

Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, online forums and discussions, blogs, websites; they are all forms of **Social Media** providing a cheap and effective way of raising awareness of what you do.



**Facebook** is a social networking site where you can create a personal account; once you have an account you can search and add friends and your network will begin to grow. A news feed on your page allows you to post updates about what you’re thinking or what you’ve been doing. You’ll be able to see all of your friend’s updates and comment on them, it’s so easy once you get going.

**Creating an account**

**Step 1:** Type in Facebook to a search engine like Google and click the link

**Step 2:** Fill in your basic details; name, email address, date of birth gender and create a password

**Step 3:** You will receive a confirmation email, so make sure you click the link to activate your Facebook account

You’ve now established your account and can search for friends, you can do this by searching your hotmail or Yahoo email address contact list. In addition if you add places where you’ve worked or gone to school this will enable Facebook to search for potential friends and suggest people you may know.

**Creating a Page for your Supplementary School**

Facebook accounts as we mentioned are for individuals, so what about promoting your supplementary school? You need to create a Fan Page to officially represent your group. Let’s go through the steps to create your Fan Page.

**Step 1:** Login in to your Facebook personal account, in the top right hand corner you will see a Home button with a down arrow, click on the arrow and then on advertising. You will then see a link which says create a page. (If you have trouble finding it here is the link; [www.facebook.com/pages/create.php](http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php) )

**Step 2:** Customise your page, upload a profile picture this could be the school logo and fill in the basic details about your Supplementary School contact information, when it’s open, where you run from, introduce staff/volunteers, explain about the subjects you teach, opening times, and contact details.



**Step 3:** You need to get people to ‘like’ your page, do this by putting an update on your personal account so that your friends can see it, then this will appear on their page and all their friends can see your page. This is where you can make a huge impact on raising awareness. For example the NRC Page has had 64 “likes” which will have appeared on users walls, if all of their “friends” saw this post it would equate to 22,218 people – now where else can you reach so many people without spending money on advertising!

Now when you login to your Facebook account you will see a Home button in the top right hand corner, if you click here you will be able to use Facebook as an individual or as the Page you’ve set up. When you’re on your Page for your Supplementary School you can then post updates about what’s happening at the school, pictures (get permission for children), celebration events, everything really.

**Top tips for engaging people on Facebook**

When is it best to post updates? It’s best to post updates either before 10.00am or after 4.00pm as that’s when most people login and are more likely to see your updates. Also if you post and update on a Thursday and Friday there’s an 18% higher probability that someone will read your update.

Keep your updates short; post containing 80 characters or less have a 27% higher engagement rate.

Keep your updates direct, conversational and to the point – but keep them brief. Ask questions that get a response.

Once you have set up your page make sure you ‘like’ the ‘National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education’ and get daily updates on events and funding deadlines.



LinkedIn is another social networking site; however this one is more suitable for networking for your professional life rather, as opposed to Facebook which is aimed at your personal life. Creating an account is straight forward; the process takes you through a number of steps asking questions so that you build a profile. Make sure your biography tells people who you are, who you help and how you help them. Highlight your area of interest eg Education, Community Education etc LinkedIn provides some generic examples to help get you started.

Now you are LinkedIn, people in your network are called connections and your network is made up of your 1st-degree - People you're directly connected to because you have accepted their invitation to connect, 2nd-degree – these are people who your 1st degree connections are connected to, 3rd-degree connections and fellow members of your LinkedIn Groups.

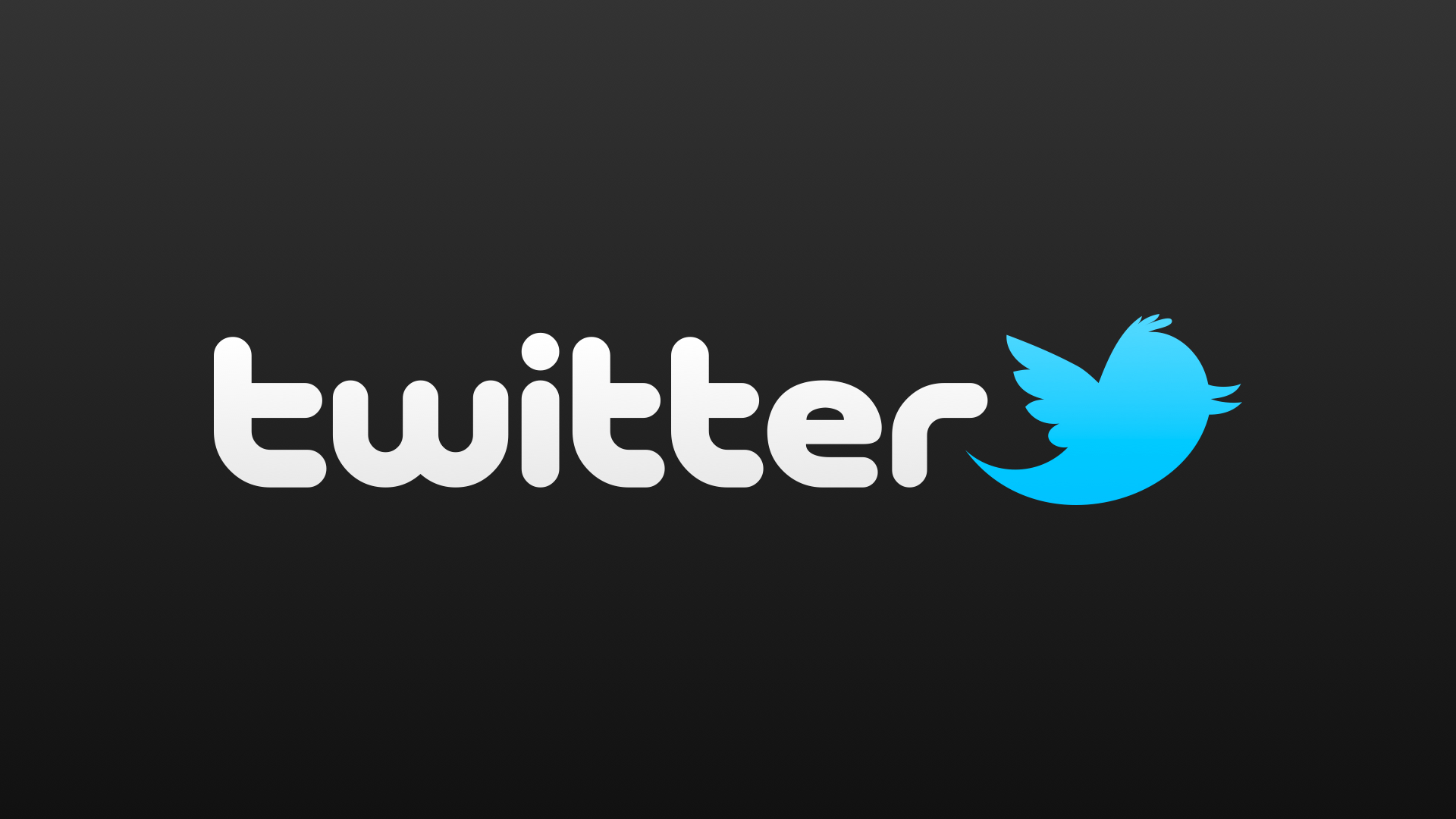
LinkedIn like Facebook will make recommendations of people you may be interested in connecting with.

**Groups**

There are many different discussion groups on LinkedIn, this is a great way to get to know people in your field of interest and make your network grow. LinkedIn will suggest potential groups for you to join; some will give you immediate access whilst other will need approval. Once you’ve joined introduce yourself in the forum and join in discussions, this will help you to build relationships with other in your group and in turn help your network to grow.

**Top tips for helping your network grow**

* When you send an invitation to connect add a short personal message, introduce yourself and ask them about something connected to their job role.
* Follow up your connections with a phone call if possible, speaking to people gives them a personal touch.
* Look for super-connectors (those with 500+ connections)and ask them to join your network
* Update your status, tell people what you’ve been up to – this will appear on their updates and will raise your profile
* If you have a website for your school add this to your profile and don’t forget to include contact information
* Add all of your job or volunteer roles to your profile then get recommendations from people you’ve worked with. Simply click on the profile link then choose recommendations and invite your colleagues to add a recommendation, this is a great endorsement of your work.



Twitter is a real time information network that connects you to the latest stories, ideas and opinions of people who you are connected with. When you post an update it is called a tweet and is no more than 140 characters long. You can add photo’s, video’s and links to articles on the web.

**Create an account**

Use your real name to create an account, this will help people to find you and write a short biography about yourself and your interests, you will also need to create a “handle” which is your Twitter ID. For example Sam Freedman, Policy adviser at the Department for Education, father of two year old twins. His handle is @Samfr.

**Twitter lingo**

Handle – a users Twitter name

Tweet – This is your message, always less than 140 characters long

Tweeting or Twittering – The act of composing and sending a message

Reweet (RT) – When someone forwards your tweet, you manually put RT in front of the tweet and give credit

@reply - The @ symbol directly in front of someone’s handle will ensure they get your message, this is still a public message for all to see

DM – Direct Message, this is a private message to another Twitter user, in order to DM someone they must be following you

Follower – Someone who has consciously decided to follow you

Friend – Someone who you’ve decided to follow

# Hashtag – A hashtag is a way of identifying a tweet on a particular subject for example you may be writing about your school and use the hashtag #supplementaryeducation

**Quick tips**

* Give credit where it is due, if you retweet a comment add RT and @name of who originally tweeted it
* If someone mentions you (using @your name) thank them back, they are promoting you and this may result in you gaining more followers
* If you disagree with comments it’s ok to say you disagree but remember to be respectful and polite at all times. Don’t turn a disagreement into a public war.
* Don’t ignore new followers, tweet them with a hello including their “handle”
* Don’t use bad or offensive language

**Other Methods of engagement**



YouTube is incredibly popular, many people use YouTube as a search engine (much like google) except their results are short videos rather than a webpage. So consider making a short video about your school and uploading this to YouTube. I’m sure pupils at your school will be happy to help out. You can then link to the video from your Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn account. You can also share your school video and watch videos from other supplementary schools on the NRC YouTube page /NRCSupplementaryEd

http://www.youtube.com/user/NRCSupplementaryEd?feature=CAgQwRs%3D

**Summary**

So now you know about Social Media and how to join in, why not “like” the NRC page on Facebook and help to raise the profile of Supplementary Education. Let us know when you’ve created a page and we’ll “like” you back helping to raise your profile. Search for me Claire Arthur and Pascale Vassie on LinkedIn if we’ve visited your school we can write a short endorsement for you.

Once you’ve got set up you can even look at linking your accounts so that if you update on Twitter it updates you Page on Facebook, good luck and happy networking!

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