Whingate Primary School
Social Media Policy

SEPTEMBER 2026

Our Social Media Policy is in place to safeguard all children from Nursery to Year 6, staff, parents and visitors.

Review date: September 2027

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1. Scope and purpose

This social media policy is for all members of the school community at Whingate Primary including staff, governors, volunteers, pupils and parents/carers. These members of our school community are required to read, understand and comply with this policy.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Encourage safe, respectful use of social media among our school community
- Establish clear expectations for the way members of the school community engage with each other online
- Protect the reputation of the school and the wellbeing of our community
- Support the school's policies on data protection, online safety and safeguarding

This policy applies to the use of social media for both personal and school purposes, whether during school/working hours or otherwise.

It applies regardless of whether social media is accessed using:

- Equipment belonging to members of the school community
- Any other IT/Internet-enabled equipment

All members of the school community should bear in mind that information they share through social media, even if they are in private online spaces, may be subject to copyright, safeguarding and data protection legislation.

Everyone must also operate in line with the School's Equalities, Harassment, Child Protection, Safer Recruitment, Coode of Conduct and Online Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

1.1 Definition of social media

For the purposes of this document, 'social media' is considered to include all technologies that allow individuals to communicate and share information (including photos and video). This includes group messaging services such as WhatsApp and online forums.

2. Use of official school social media channels

The school's official social media channel is:

- ClassDojo
- This account is managed by the Senior Leader Team, but staff members are authorised to manage their year groups and add to whole school posts. .

2.1 Use of ClassDojo

The school will post on ClassDojo:

- Alerts about changes to procedures, PE, celebrations, severe weather. Classes will post their Knowledge Organisers, PE expectations, work carries out etc
- Reminders (e.g. approaching deadlines, events, class/school activities, reminders about policy/procedure
- Advertisements for school events or activities
- Job vacancies
- Links to newsletters, guidance and factsheets for parents/carers
- Achievements of pupils and staff
- Photos or posts about school trips, events and activities
- Seasonal and cultural greetings

The school will seek individual consent before sharing any information that could identify an individual (e.g. names or photos), such as posts about staffing changes, achievements of pupils and staff, or school trips, events and activities, for example.

The school **will not** post on ClassDojo

- Names and/or photos of individuals unless consent has been given
- Harmful or abusive comments
- Messages to specific people
- Political statements
- Advertisements for businesses unless directly related to the school
- Links to staff members' personal accounts

2.3 Moderation

Staff responsible for the ClassDojo account will delete as soon as reasonably possible:

- Abusive, racist, sexist, homophobic or inflammatory comments
- Comments we consider to be spam
- Personal information, such as telephone numbers, address details, etc.
- Posts that advertise commercial activity or ask for donations which are unrelated to the school

If users are repeatedly abusive or inappropriate, they will be blocked.

Staff responsible for the ClassDojo account will also ensure that all content shared on these platforms is relevant to the school community and the school's activities.

2.4 Concerns and complaints

If members of the school community have any concerns or complaints (either about the school or anything shared on the school's ClassDojo account), they should raise these following the school's complaints policy found on the website and paper copies on request from the main office. Concerns or complaints should not be raised through social media.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Everyone

All members of the school community are expected to conduct themselves professionally and respectfully online, particularly when engaging with the school's ClassDojo.

3.2 Staff managing the school's social media channels

The staff who manage the school's accounts on social media will:

- Act on comments posted on the school's that go against this policy (please see section 2 above)
- Aim to respond to comments in a timely manner, where appropriate
- Always remain professional and polite
- Inform the Co-Headteachers about anything inappropriate or likely to escalate

3.3 All staff (including trainee teachers), governors and volunteers

The school expects all staff, governors and volunteers to consider the safety of pupils and colleagues and the risks (reputational and financial) to the school when using social media channels, including when doing so in a personal capacity. Staff, governors and volunteers are also responsible for checking and maintaining appropriate privacy and security settings of their personal social media accounts.

Staff should not use their own mobile phone/SMART watch for personal reasons, including use of social media, in front of pupils throughout the school day except where it is appropriate or necessary (e.g. to set homework, or use multi-factor authentication).

Staff, governors and volunteers will report any safeguarding issues they become aware of to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in line with the school's child protection policy.

Staff should be aware of online security threats and be cautious when giving out personal information which may compromise their own personal safety and security, or that of another individual in the school community.

When using social media, staff, governors and volunteers **must not**:

- Use personal accounts to conduct school business
- Accept 'friend requests' from, or communicate with, pupils past or present
- Give their personal social media information to parents/carers
- Complain about the school, individual pupils, colleagues or parents/carers
- Reference or share information about individual pupils, colleagues or parents/carers
- Post images of pupils
- Express personal views or opinions that could be interpreted as those of the school
- Link their social media profile to their work email account
- Use personal accounts during timetabled teaching time except in a professional capacity (multi-factor authentication)
- Publish any content which may result in action against the school, e.g. content which breaches data protection obligations
- Publish any content which may bring the school into disrepute, including material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature

Staff, governors and volunteers will report any communication received from current pupils (unless the pupils are family members) on any personal social media accounts to the DSL or a member of the senior leadership team immediately.

Staff, governors and volunteers should not have contact via personal accounts with past pupils. If ongoing communication is required, this should be done via official school channels. If there are any concerns this will be dealt with in line with the Code of Conduct and there may be disciplinary procedures.

3.4 Pupils

The school recognises that most social media platforms have a minimum age requirement of 13+. However, we are aware that many pupils under this minimum age still actively use social media. Therefore, the

expectations and guidelines regarding safe and respectful online behaviour set out in this policy apply to all pupils, regardless of their age.

The school does not allow the use of mobile phones and other smart technology (e.g. smart watches) with similar functionality to mobile phones (including the ability to access social media) throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

The school encourages pupils to be, at all times:

- Respectful towards and about members of staff, and the school, at all times
- Respectful to other pupils and parents/carers

Pupils **should not** use social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff
- Complain about the school. Where a pupil has a complaint or concern, they should share this with the school through the school's official channels, so it can be dealt with in line with the school's complaints policy
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other pupils, parents/carers, or other members of the school community
- Send or post abusive, harassing, misogynistic, or misandrist messages
- Send unwanted sexual comments and messages
- Create or spread rumours about members of staff, pupils, parents/carers, or other members of the school community
- Post images of members of the school community or individuals engaged in school activities without their permission
- Create or share consensual or non-consensual nudes and semi-nudes, including images or videos that are digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence (AI) (e.g. deepfakes)

The school takes a zero-tolerance approach to online abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Any concerns about a pupil's social media use will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy, ICT Acceptable Use and Child Protection Policy.

3.5 Parents/carers

The school expects parents/carers to help us model safe, responsible and appropriate social media use for our pupils.

When communicating with the school via official communication channels, or using private/independent channels to talk about the school, parents and carers should:

- Be respectful towards, and about, members of staff and the school at all times
- Be respectful of, and about, other parents/carers, other pupils and children, and members of the school community
- Direct any complaints or concerns through the school's official channels, so they can be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure

Parents/carers **should not** use social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff, other parents/carers or pupils
- Complain about the school
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other parents/carers, pupils, or members of the school community
- Draw attention to, or discuss, behaviour incidents

- Post images of pupils whilst engaged in school activities who are not their own
- Create or spread rumours about members of staff, pupils, parents/carers, or other members of the school community

We expect parents/carers to follow the above social media expectations when using ClassDojo

4. Training and awareness

All staff are expected to the read and sign that they have read, understand and agreed the ICT Policy and Acceptable Use and the Children Protection Policy.

At induction new starters are expected to complete the Online Safety Training as well as reading the ICT Policy and Sign the Acceptable Use as well as the Children Protection Policy.

Through the weekly briefing points of action and reminders are given to staff through minute guides, quizzes, questions and relevant information throughout the year.

5. Monitoring and review

The school reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, for legitimate business purposes. This includes ascertaining and demonstrating that expected standards are being met by those using the systems, and for the detection and investigation of unauthorised use of the systems (including where this is necessary to prevent or detect crime).

The Co-Headteachers will monitor the implementation of this policy, including making sure that it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the school.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

6. Related policies

- Child Protection Policy
- ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Mobile phone use policy
- E-Safety guidance