Perryfields Enterprise Academy Trust

Social Media Policy

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SUMMARY OF CHANGES – September 2026	
Section	**Detail**
	No changes

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1. Purpose and scope

This policy aims to:

- Set guidelines and rules on the use of school's social media channels
- Establish clear expectations for the way members of the school community engage with each other online
- Support the school's policies on data protection, online safety and safeguarding

Staff, students and parents/carers are required to read, understand and comply with this social media policy.

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

It applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using:

- School IT facilities and equipment
- Equipment belonging to members of staff and pupils
- Any other IT/Internet-enabled equipment

All members of the school should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private 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, 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.

2. Use of official school social media

The school's official social media channels are as follows:

- School blogs accessed through school website

These accounts are managed by class teachers and the Headteacher. Staff members who have not been authorised by the senior leadership team to manage, or post to, the account, must not access, or attempt to access, these accounts.

If you have suggestions for something you'd like to appear on our school social media channel(s), please speak to the senior leadership team.

<u>School Blog/s</u>

The school will post on the school blogs:

- Reminders (e.g. approaching deadlines, events or class activities)
- Advertisements for school events or activities
- Achievements of pupils and staff
- Photos or posts about school trips, events, lessons and activities
- Seasonal greetings and messages about religious festivals

The school **will not** post on the school blogs:

- Names and photos of individuals together (unless they have given consent)
- 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

Staff responsible for our social media accounts will monitor school blog use and will endeavour to delete as soon as reasonably possible any violation of this policy.

3. Personal use of social media by staff

The school expects all staff (including governors and volunteers) to consider the safety of pupils and the risks (reputational and financial) to the school when using social media channels, including when doing so in a personal capacity. Staff are also responsible for checking and maintaining appropriate privacy and security settings of their personal social media accounts. We recommend that members of staff make their personal social media profiles as secure as possible and strive to keep them unidentifiable where possible e.g. using only their forename.

Staff members will report any safeguarding issues they become aware of.

When using social media, staff **must not**:

- Use personal accounts to conduct school business unless authorised to do so
- Accept 'friend requests' from, or communicate with, pupils past or present
- 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 social media during timetabled teaching time except in a professional capacity

Any concerns regarding a member of staff's personal use of social media will be dealt with in line with the staff behaviour policy.

Any communication received from current pupils (unless they are family members) on any personal social media accounts will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or member of the senior leadership team immediately.

Staff should not also do not have contact via personal accounts with past pupils (if ongoing communication is required, this should be using via official school channels).

4. Personal use of social media by pupils

The school encourages pupils to

- Be respectful to members of staff, and the school, at all times
- Be respectful to other pupils and parents/carers
- 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

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

- Complain about individual members of staff
- Complain about the school

- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other pupils or parents/carers
- Post images of other pupils without their permission

Parents should also ensure that their children are not using social networking/internet sites in an inappropriate manner. It is expected that parents/carers explain to their children what is acceptable to post online. Parents/carers are also expected to monitor their children's online activity, including in relation to their use of social media.

Any concerns about a pupil's social media use will be dealt with in line with the school's behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy.

5. Personal use of social media by 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 and other pupils and children
- 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 or pupils
- Draw attention to, or discuss, behaviour incidents
- Post images of children other than their own

<u>Procedure the school will follow if inappropriate use continues</u>

The school will always try to deal with concerns raised by parents in a professional and appropriate manner and understands that parents may not always realise when they have used social networking sites inappropriately. Therefore, as a first step, the school will usually discuss the matter with the parent to try and resolve the matter and to ask that the relevant information be removed from the social networking site in question. If the parent refuses to do this and continues to use social networking sites in a manner the School considers inappropriate, the school will consider taking the following action:

- Take legal advice and/or legal action where the information posted is defamatory in any way or if the circumstances warrant this;
- Set out the school's concerns to you in writing, giving you a warning and requesting that the material in question is removed;
- Contact the Police where the school feels it appropriate – for example, if it considers a crime (such as harassment) has been committed; or in cases where the posting has a racial element, is considered to be grossly obscene or is threatening violence;
- If the inappropriate comments have been made on a school website or online forum, the school may take action to block or restrict that individual's access to that website or forum;

- Contact the host/provider of the Social Networking site to complain about the content of the site and ask for removal of the information;

  Take other legal action against the individual.

  (Current laws such as the 1998 Malicious Communication Act, 1997 Protection From Harassment Act and 2003 Communication Act all can be used to protect people from malicious and threatening posts on the internet)

5.1 WhatsApp groups

We expect parents/carers to follow the above social media guidelines when using class WhatsApp groups.

6. Training and awareness

All staff will be aware of this policy and will be made aware of any changes made when reviewed. Staff members will be provided with additional training dependent on their role and requirements.

7. Monitoring and review

We reserve 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 headteacher 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.

The governing board is responsible for reviewing this policy.

8. Related policies

- Child protection policy
- ICT and internet acceptable use policies
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Staff behaviour policy
- Mobile phone use policy
- Online safety policy