SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Our Vision:

We are committed to quality learning in a positive, happy and Christian atmosphere where everyone within the school community is valued as an individual. We expect everyone to, 'Treat others as you want them to treat you.' (Matthew 7:12-14). We have high expectations of all and strive to provide a safe, challenging, exciting and stimulating environment.

Our Values:

To prioritise the safety of children on-line, ensuring the highest standards of learning for all children, both at home and at school. These are met through our school values of:

- Respect – encourage and model the use of a range of technologies in a safe and respectful manner
- Compassion – use technologies with care and consideration for others.
- Creation – create regular and varied opportunities for children's learning to be enhanced, shared and supported through the use of technology.
- Perseverance – embrace and use a range of technological approaches that support all children on their learning journey through school and beyond.
- Service – providing children with the necessary skills that enable them to flourish in a world full of technology. Celebrate children's achievements with our school and wider community, whilst promoting school in a positive light.

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:

- X (formerly Twitter) account (@WillastonCE) (To be phased out from February 2025)
- Instagram account

These accounts are managed by the staff and Senior Leadership Team. 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 Mr Graham

2.1 X (formerly Twitter)

School has traditionally posted learning experiences on X/Twitter. However, due to a change in social media platforms from X to Instagram, our school X account will remain dormant from February 2025. In order to ensure that the platform remains safe and not compromised, this account will continue to be closely monitored by our Computing Lead and members of our Senior Leadership Team.

2.2 Instagram

The school will post on Instagram:

- Achievements of pupils and staff
- Photos or posts about school trips, events and activities
- Seasonal greetings and messages about religious festivals

The school will not post on Instagram:

- Names of individuals (staff and children)
- Photographs of children (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

2.3 Moderation

We have disabled opportunities for followers to comment on, or share, any images of school activities shared through our account.

Should any concerns arise, our staff responsible for our social media accounts will delete as soon as reasonably possible:

- Personal information, such as telephone numbers, address details, etc.
- Posts that advertise commercial activity or ask for donations
- Any other information deemed to be unsuitable on our account

Every reasonable effort will be taken to politely address concerns or behaviour of individual users, following the school's complaints policy. If users are repeatedly infringing on the high expectations that we set on social media, they will be blocked.

All staff responsible for our social media accounts will also ensure that all content shared on social media platforms is age appropriate for the school and wider community.

2.4 Following other social media users

The school:

- May follow other relevant and appropriate educational-based users if you follow us on Instagram – being followed by us doesn't imply endorsement of any kind

3. Personal use of social media by staff

Please note: while we recommend members of staff make their private social media profiles unidentifiable to pupils, we understand many staff will use sites such as X (formerly Twitter), Instagram or LinkedIn for professional purposes.

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.
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
- Accept 'friend requests' from, or communicate with, pupils or parents 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 [School X / Instagram account]

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 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

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 undergo a rigorous cycle of training appropriate to their roles within our school setting. This also includes the induction of new members of staff. Regular training opportunities, both online and face-to-face are accessed on a regular basis in-line with statutory and non-statutory expectations.

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, Senior Leadership Team and Computing Lead, 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 every year.

The Governing Body is responsible for [reviewing/approving] this policy.

Approved by Governors, March 2025



Signed Chair of Governors