



Together we make a difference!

Co-Head Teachers: Mr M Dodson & Mrs H Weston

Roe Farm Primary School

Social Media & Online Policy



Version Control				
No:	Date of Amendment:	Author:	Summary of Changes:	Date Shared with GB:
1.0	17.4.26	SBM	Head Teacher amended to Co-Head Teachers. DPO updated Facebook administrators and users approved for posting updated	22.4.26

Approved By:	Pay/Personnel Committee
Date:	22.4.26
Review Due Date:	12 Months

Introduction

Roe Farm Primary School recognises the educational and professional benefits of social media, whilst also acknowledging the potential risks it may present to the school community and to individuals. For the purposes of this policy, *social media* is defined as websites and applications that enable users to create, share, and engage with content, or to participate in social networking activities. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Reddit, Pinterest, YouTube, WordPress, Tumblr, Ask.fm, WhatsApp and Messenger. This policy also applies to online gaming platforms and massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs), such as *World of Warcraft*.

The School recognises that an increasing number of educational professionals and organisations make effective use of online discussion groups, forums, and bulletin boards to share good practice, professional dialogue, and educational resources. Engagement in online platforms related to professional practice and continuing professional development is supported. However, staff are reminded that they act as representatives of the School, and accordingly, all online interactions must reflect the highest standards of professional conduct.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's HR advice and guidance.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all use of social media by staff, Governors and volunteers. It covers personal and professional use, whether during or outside of working hours, on or off site, using the school's network or any other network, and whether accessing social media via school-owned or personal devices. It applies equally to official school social media accounts and platforms, and to personal accounts where use may impact the school.

All staff are expected to comply with this policy. Leaders and managers are responsible for ensuring that members of their teams have read, understood and adhere to the requirements set out within this procedure.

Official School Social Media Platforms

For a social media account or platform to be classified as an official school platform or account, the following criteria must be met:

- The school retains master access and control over permissions.
- The school has full editorial oversight of all content published.
- Administrative rights are limited to those staff members strictly necessary.

The school accepts no liability for content posted on unauthorised accounts that include the school's name or branding but do not meet the definition of an official school platform.

All authorised accounts must be recorded in the Privacy Notice. Personal information, including images, must not be shared without appropriate consent and oversight. All authorised social media accounts remain the property of the school and may be amended or deleted at the school's discretion.

Data Protection Support

The School Data Protection Officer (DPO) can provide advice and guidance regarding the use of social media in relation to data protection:

- **Name:** John Walker
- **Email:** info@phplaw.co.uk
- **Telephone:** 03003034360
- **Address:** The Brutus Centre, Station Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5RW

Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action. Where comments or posts are potentially defamatory or libellous, the school may seek legal advice.

Recognised School Channels

Business Use of Social Media

The school community is encouraged to consider whether a social media presence would support educational or community engagement objectives (for example, a subject department account or a Friends of the School Facebook page).

Any individual wishing to establish a social media account on behalf of the school must submit a business case to the Co-Head Teachers outlining:

- The purpose and aims of the account
- The intended audience
- How the account will be promoted
- The names of at least two staff members responsible for managing the account
- Whether the account will be open or closed/private

Following review, the Co-Head Teachers will approve or reject the application. Approval will only be granted where the Co-Head Teachers are satisfied that all individuals managing the account have read and understood this policy and have received appropriate training. This requirement also applies to volunteers, parents, or individuals not directly employed by the school.

Any member of staff whose role requires them to speak publicly on behalf of the school via social media must seek prior approval from the Co-Head Teachers. Training may be required, and conditions or restrictions may be applied.

Staff contacted by external parties for comment about the school, whether online or offline, must refer such requests to the Co-Head Teachers and must not respond without written authorisation.

A list of approved school social media channels is maintained in Appendix 1.

Guidelines for Official Social Media Use

Official school social media accounts must comply with the following principles:

- Use is restricted to educational and community engagement purposes.
- All accounts must be risk assessed and approved by the Co-Head Teachers.
- Login details must be stored securely and centrally.

- Privacy and security settings must be appropriate and regularly reviewed.
- Use must comply with all existing school policies, including safeguarding, data protection, confidentiality and anti-bullying.
- Content involving pupils must be moderated as appropriate.
- Parental/carers consent must be obtained for publishing children's names or images.
- Social media must complement, not replace, other communication methods to ensure inclusivity.

Social Media Standards

Roe Farm Primary School expects that online conduct - whether via official school accounts or personal accounts - does not undermine the reputation, integrity or values of the school.

In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, the school may conduct online searches, including social media checks, as part of safeguarding and recruitment processes. Outcomes of such checks will be recorded.

All use of social media that may affect the school must adhere to the following standards:

- Show respect for others.
- Be honest and transparent.
- Act sensitively and professionally.
- Protect confidentiality and privacy.
- Uphold professional standards at all times.
- If in doubt, do not post.

Social Media Rules

Be Kind

- Use courteous and respectful language.
- Consider the impact of your words and content.
- Ensure all communications are responsible, fair and credible.

Be Honest

- Be clear about your role when representing the school.
- Only post information that is accurate and appropriate to share.
- Do not share others' content or images without permission or proper attribution.

Be Sensitive

- Do not engage in discussions with parents or colleagues via social media.
- Do not share inappropriate images, memes, links or material.
- Do not post content that is discriminatory, offensive, threatening, misleading or harassing.
- Avoid posting on controversial or inflammatory topics.

- Do not disclose confidential or unpublished information.
- During incidents, only official school channels should be used for updates.
- Maintain professional boundaries when communicating with former pupils.
- Report any inappropriate contact from pupils to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

Protect Privacy and Confidentiality

- Do not disclose confidential information about others or yourself.
- Follow the Data Protection Policy at all times.
- Ensure appropriate consent before sharing any images or personal data.
- Apply and routinely review privacy and security settings.
- Remain alert to phishing attempts and online scams.
- Users must regularly check and update the privacy and security settings on their personal accounts to prevent personal information being publicly available.

Maintain Professional Standards

- Parents and pupils are not allowed to be 'friends' with or make a friend request to any staff, governor, volunteer and contractors or otherwise communicate via social media.
- Do not initiate or accept online contact with pupils or their families unless there is a legitimate and authorised reason. Exceptions may be made, e.g. for pre-existing family links, but these must be approved by the Co-Head Teachers.
- Parents and pupils are discouraged from 'following' staff, governor, volunteer or contractor public accounts (e.g. following a staff member that has a public Instagram account). However, we accept that this can be hard to control, which highlights the need for staff to remain professional in their private lives). In the reverse situation, staff must not follow such public parent or pupil accounts.
- Seek Co-Head Teacher approval before engaging with former pupils online.
- Ensure a clear distinction between personal and professional conduct.
- Never post content that may bring the school into disrepute.

If in Doubt, Don't Post

- Content cannot be fully withdrawn once published.
- Deleted content may already have been shared or saved.
- Privacy settings cannot guarantee confidentiality.

Personal Use of Social Media at Work

Personal use of social media is permitted only outside working time (e.g. during lunch breaks or before/after work) and must not remain active during working hours. Staff should refer to the Staff Code of Conduct policy for further guidance.

Online Safety Concerns

All staff will be informed of procedures for reporting online safety concerns, including cyberbullying, illegal content, youth-produced sexual imagery, filtering breaches and radicalisation. Staff should refer to *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, particularly sections relating to online safety.

Inappropriate References to the School or Staff

Staff who become aware of inappropriate content posted about themselves or the school should request its removal and, where necessary, report it to the platform themselves or to the school, who will then report to the platform. The Co-Head Teachers should be informed if the issue may affect the school's reputation.

Where staff are subject to abuse or threats online, platform reporting tools should be used and evidence (screenshots) retained. Staff must not attempt to resolve such matters personally.

Complaints

Complaints or grievances raised via social media that reference staff, pupils, Governors or the school should be reported to the Co-Head Teachers immediately. While freedom of expression is protected under the Human Rights Act 1998, this does not extend to causing harm or distress.

Relevant Legislation

This policy is informed by, but not limited to, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Communications Act 2003
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Defamation Act 2013
- Equality Act 2010
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Appendix 1

Roe Farm Primary Schools official social media channels:

Platform	Account/Page Name	Master Administration Role	Approved Users for posting
Facebook	Roe Farm Primary School	Matt Davenport – Assistant Head Sam Miller – Assistant Head	Helen Weston – Co Head Teacher Matt Dodson – Co Head Teacher/Inclusion Lead Sam Miller – Assistant Head Matt Davenport Assistant Head Natasha Thompson – Inclusion Lead