St James' CE Primary School

Social Media Policy

Key Details

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Sarah Greenfield, Assistant Headteacher and KS1 phase leader

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

John Tutt, Headteacher

Lucy Hayward, Deputy Headteacher

Penny Wardell, Assistant Headteacher and SENCO

Kate Jones, Lower KS2 Phase Leader

Lucy Coward, EYFS Phase Leader

Named Governor with lead responsibility: Nina Skomorowski-Brown

Date written/updated: September 2026

Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body: 23rd September 2026

Date of next review: September 2027

This policy will be reviewed **at least** annually. It will also be revised following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

1. Policy aims and scope

- This policy has been written by St James' CE Primary School, involving staff, pupils and parents/carers, Kent County Councils LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service Social Media policy template, with specialist advice and input as required.
- It takes into account the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE, Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'(WTSC) and non-statutory DfE 'Behaviour in Schools Advice for headteachers and school staff' and 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and the local Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership (KSCMP) procedures.
- The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all members of St James' CE Primary School community when using social media.
    - St James' CE Primary School recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to ensure that all pupils and staff are protected from potential harm when using social media.
    - As outlined in our child protection policy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Sarah Greenfield, is recognised as having overall responsibility for online safety.
- The policy applies to all use of social media; the term social media includes, but is not limited to, blogs, wikis, social networking sites, forums, bulletin boards, online gaming, apps, video/photo sharing sites, chatrooms and instant messenger apps or other online communication services.
- This policy applies to pupils, parents/carers and all staff, including the governing body, leadership team, teachers, support staff, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of the setting (collectively referred to as "staff" in this policy).

2. Links with other policies

- This policy links with several other policies, practices and action plans, including but not limited to:
    - Anti-bullying policy
    - Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
    - Behaviour and discipline policy, including searching, screening and confiscation
    - Cameras and image use policy
    - Child protection policy
    - Staff code of conduct
    - Confidentiality policy
    - Curriculum policies, such as: Computing, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

- Data security
- Mobile and smart technology

3. General social media expectations

- St James' CE Primary School believes everyone should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity. Even though online spaces may differ in many ways, the same standards of behaviour are expected online as offline, and all members of our community are expected to engage in social media in a positive and responsible manner.
- All members of our community are advised not to post or share content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others on any social media service.
- We will control learner and staff access to social media via our filtering and monitoring systems which are applied to all school provided devices and systems; further information on how this is achieved in addressed in our child protection policy.
- Inappropriate or excessive use of social media during school hours or whilst using school devices may result in removal of internet access and/or disciplinary action.
- The use of social media or apps, for example as a formal remote learning platform or education tool will be robustly risk assessed by the DSL and/or headteacher prior to use with learners. Any use will take place in accordance with our existing policies, for example, child protection, staff/pupil acceptable use policies, remote learning Acceptable Use Policy.
- Concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of St James' CE Primary School community on social media will be taken seriously. Concerns will be managed in accordance with the appropriate policies, including anti-bullying, allegations against staff, behaviour, home school-agreements, staff code of conduct, Acceptable Use Policies, and child protection.

4. Staff use of social media

- The use of social media during school hours for personal use is permitted for staff when not in the presence of any pupils.
- Safe and professional online behaviour is outlined for all members of staff, including volunteers, as part of our code of conduct and acceptable use of technology policy.
- The safe and responsible use of social media sites will be discussed with all members of staff as part of staff induction. Advice will be provided and updated via staff training and additional guidance and resources will be shared with staff as required on a regular basis.
- Any complaint about staff misuse of social media or policy breaches will be taken seriously in line with our child protection and allegations against staff policy.

4.1 Reputation

- All members of staff are advised that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the school. Civil, legal or disciplinary action may

be taken if staff are found to bring the profession or institution into disrepute, or if something is felt to have undermined confidence in their professional abilities.

- All members of staff are advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media. This may include, but is not limited to:
  - Setting appropriate privacy levels on their personal accounts/sites.
  - Being aware of the implications of using location sharing services.
  - Opting out of public listings on social networking sites.
  - Logging out of accounts after use.
  - Using strong passwords.
  - Ensuring staff do not represent their personal views as being that of the school.
- Members of staff are encouraged not to identify themselves as employees of St James' CE Primary School on their personal social networking accounts; this is to prevent information being linked with the setting and to safeguard the privacy of staff members.
- All staff are expected to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance our policies and the wider professional reputation and legal framework. All members of staff are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post on social media.
- Information and content that staff members have access to as part of their employment, including photos and personal information about pupils and their family members or colleagues, will not be shared or discussed on social media sites.
- Members of staff will notify the leadership team immediately if they consider that any content shared on social media sites conflicts with their role.

4.2 Communicating with pupils and their families

- Staff will not use any personal social media accounts to contact pupils or their family members.
- All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add any current or past pupils or their family members, as 'friends' on any personal social media accounts.
- Any communication from pupils and parents/carers received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the DSL (or deputy) and the headteacher.
- Any pre-existing relationships or situations, which mean staff cannot comply with this requirement, will be discussed with the DSL and the headteacher. Decisions made and advice provided in these situations will be formally recorded to safeguard pupils, members of staff and the setting.
- If ongoing contact with pupils is required once they have left the setting, members of staff will be expected to use existing alumni networks, or use official setting provided communication tools.

5. Official use of social media

- St James' CE Primary School has no official social media channels however the PTA have a Facebook Page, Parent Rep Facebook Groups, Instagram and Twitter.

- The use of social media sites by St James' CE Primary School PTA only takes place with clear educational or community engagement objectives and with specific intended outcomes and once the use has been formally risk assessed and approved by the headteacher prior to use.
- Official social media sites are suitably protected and, where possible, linked to our website.
    - PTA social media channels have been set up as distinct and dedicated accounts for official educational or engagement purposes only.
    - Leadership staff do not have access to account information and login details for the PTA social media channels, however they do check the content periodically.
- PTA social media use will be conducted in line with existing policies, including but not limited to anti-bullying, image/camera use, data protection, confidentiality and child protection.
- All communication on PTA social media platforms by staff on behalf of the setting will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny. Public communications on behalf of the setting will, where appropriate and possible, be read and agreed by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.
- Parents/carers and pupils will be informed of any PTA social media use, along with expectations for safe use and action taken to safeguard the community.
- Parents and carers will be informed of any PTA social media use with pupils; any PTA social media activity involving pupils will be moderated if possible and written parental consent will be obtained as required.
- The PTA will ensure that any PTA social media use does not exclude members of the community who are unable or unwilling to use social media channels.
- Members of staff who follow and/or like our official social media channels will be advised to use dedicated professionals accounts where possible, to avoid blurring professional boundaries.
- No members of staff are managing and/or participating in online social media activity as part of their capacity as an employee of the setting.

6. Pupils use of social media

- The use of social media during school hours for personal use is not permitted for pupils.
- Many online behaviour incidents amongst children occur on social media outside the school day and off the school premises. Parents/carers are responsible for this behaviour; however, where online behaviour online poses a threat or causes harm to a pupil, could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school if/when a pupil is identifiable as a member of the school, or if the behaviour could adversely affect the reputation of the school, action will be taken in line with our behaviour and child protection policies.
- St James' CE Primary School will empower our pupils to acquire the knowledge needed to use social media in a safe, considered and respectful way, and develop their resilience so they can manage and respond to online risks. Safe and appropriate use of social media will be taught to pupils as part of an embedded and progressive safeguarding education

approach using age-appropriate sites and resources. Further information is contained within our child protection and relevant specific curriculum policies e.g. RSE, PSHE and Computing.

- We are aware that many popular social media sites are not permitted for use by children under the age of 13, or in some cases higher. As such, we will not create accounts for pupils under the required age as outlined in the services terms and conditions.
- Pupils will be advised:
    - to consider the benefits and risks of sharing personal details or information on social media sites which could identify them and/or their location.
    - to only approve and invite known friends on social media sites and to deny access to others, for example by making profiles private.
    - not to meet any online friends without a parent/carer or other appropriate adults' permission, and to only do so when a trusted adult is present.
    - to use safe passwords.
    - to use social media sites which are appropriate for their age and abilities.
    - how to block and report unwanted communications.
    - how to report concerns on social media, both within the setting and externally.
- Any concerns regarding pupils' use of social media will be dealt with in accordance with appropriate existing policies, including anti-bullying, child protection and behaviour.
- The DSL (or deputy) will respond to social media concerns involving safeguarding or child protection risks in line with our child protection policy.
- Sanctions and/or pastoral/welfare support will be implemented and offered to pupils as appropriate, in line with our child protection and behaviour policy. Civil or legal action may be taken if necessary.
- Concerns regarding pupils' use of social media will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate, particularly when concerning underage use of social media services and games.

7. Policy monitoring and review

- Technology evolves and changes rapidly. St James' CE Primary School will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local concerns and/or any changes to our technical infrastructure.
- We will regularly monitor internet use taking place via our provided devices and systems and evaluate online safety mechanisms to ensure that this policy is consistently applied. Any issues identified will be incorporated into our action planning.
- All members of the community will be made aware of how the school will monitor policy compliance: e.g. Acceptable Use Policies, staff training, classroom management etc.

8. Responding to policy breaches

- All members of the community are informed of the need to report policy breaches or concerns in line with existing school policies and procedures. e.g. our child protection and

behaviour policies. This includes: breeches of filtering, child on child abuse, including cyberbullying and youth produced sexual imagery (sexting), online sexual violence and harassment, online abuse and exploitation and illegal content.

- After any investigations are completed, leadership staff will debrief, identify lessons learnt and implement any policy or curriculum changes, as required.
- We require staff, parents/carers and pupils to work in partnership with us to resolve issues.
- All members of the community will respect confidentiality and the need to follow the official procedures for reporting concerns.
- Pupils, parents and staff will be informed of our complaints procedure and staff will be made aware of the whistleblowing procedure.
- If we are unsure how to proceed with an incident or concern, the DSL (or a deputy) or headteacher will seek advice from the local authority or other agencies, as appropriate, in accordance with our child protection policy.