

Social Networking and Social Media Policy



We want our children to be happy and healthy today, fulfilled in the future and bale to make their world an even better place.

<i>Written</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>To be reviewed</i>
<i>Rae Snape</i>	<i>05/2/2025</i>	<i>February 2027</i>

Social Networking and Social Media Policy

Rationale

The widespread availability and use of social media applications brings opportunities to engage, and communicate in new ways. As an inclusive school we want to ensure that our means of communication reach everyone in our desired audience of parents/carers. We recognise that some parents/carers will read the weekly newsletter regularly; others may appreciate the immediacy and familiarity of Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn.

It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for how we communicate with parents/carers as well as our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff at the school and have relevance for parents/carers and our wider community.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Ensure that parents/carers receive useful information in a variety of ways including social media
- Safeguard all children
- Ensure that the reputation of the school, its staff and governors is protected
- Protect the school from legal risks
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the school

Definitions and Scope

Milton Road Primary School's use of social networking applications is limited to Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram at this time.

All members of our community should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation.

They must also operate in line with the school's Equalities, Child Protection and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

Within this policy there is a distinction between use of school-sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes and personal use of social media:

Use of Social Media in practice

1. School Use of Social Media for Communication with Parents/Carers and wider community

When using social media for communication purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- The school has set up a distinct and dedicated social media site for educational and communication purposes. This is entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff, and will be linked to an official school email account / website.
- The content of our social media pages will be solely professional relating to the life of the school.
- The school will not publish photographs of children without the written consent of parents / carers.
- The school will not identify by name any children featured in photographs, or allow personally identifying information to be published on school social media accounts
- Care will be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe
- Comments have been switched off, and if parents/carers want to contact the school they can do it by phone or email

2. Personal use of Social Media

- School staff are not permitted to invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or children from the school community in any personal social media whilst in employment at Milton Road Primary School. Any exceptions due to family connections etc. must be approved by the Head teacher
- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated lead person for Child Protection (Rae Snape – Headteacher)
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, e.g. WattsApp these must immediately be reported as above
- All email communication between staff and members of the school community on school business must be made from the official school email account or SeeSaw
- Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with members of the school community on school business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Head teacher.
- Staff and parents are advised to avoid posts or comments on social media that refer to specific, individual matters related to the school and members of its community on any social media accounts

- Staff and parents are also advised to consider the reputation of the school in any posts or comments related to the school on any social media accounts
- Staff should not accept any current parent, pupil of any age or ex-pupil of the school under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account.

3. Inappropriate, defamatory, prejudicial, or offensive on-line comments

- If the school becomes aware of any inappropriate, defamatory, offensive comments posted online, for example (but not limited to) inappropriate children's peer to peer interactions including bullying, parent/carer interactions e.g. disrepute of school or other stakeholders on WhatsApp, defamation, misinformation or confidential information spread by colleagues, the school will intervene.
- Whilst the school recognises that it has limited powers beyond the school gate, it will intervene if people are being hurt, harmed, upset or discriminated against and will also act if members of the school community or the reputation of members of the school are being adversely affected.
- If parents/carers, or any member of the school community including colleagues are aware of inappropriate, false or upsetting content, they are encouraged to screen shot the information and bring it to the attention of the Headteacher, who will address the matter in line with her professional duties, including safeguarding.

GDPR Compliance

The social media posts will be provide generic information and will be used to inform parents/carers of

1. Events e.g. school fayre
2. Reminders of e.g. educational visits
3. Any staff vacancies

The social media posts page will not share

1. Any data subject identifiable such as names of staff or children
2. Photographs or videos of staff or children
3. Location data (including e.g. School trips)
4. Any other personal data listed below

The policy is in compliance with Chapter 2 - Article 9 | UK GDPR (uk-gdpr.org) – which recognises that processing of personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.

A Data Protection Impact Assessment has been completed in partnership with the School's Data Protection Officer and is available on request