



Social Media Policy

Preface

Social media use is increasing worldwide, particularly in the younger generations. We believe it is our duty as a school to harness the opportunity we have to lead from the front and educate our children on best practice and how to stay safe online.

We foster the mentality that everything should be open, transparent and public. Despite many social networks having the option to become private channels, we're fully aware that nothing online is truly private and we strive to educate our children on this viewpoint.

Our school channels are all public channels. We don't believe in closed or private groups, as this fosters the mentality of it being okay to have private conversations online, which goes against what we teach our children with regard to online safety and talking to strangers.

Our Aims

We have three core aims for using social media within school and every action we take should be to support one or more of these aims. They are:

- To increase engagement between the school and parents/carers.
- To lead from the front and educate our children on best practice when using social media.
- To share and promote our school in a positive light to prospective parents and the wider community and world.

Social Networks We Use in School

There are many different social networks, each with a different mission, potential audience and uses. It is unrealistic to assume that we should use every single social network as a school – it would be too time consuming and difficult to manage – but we have considered each platform and actively use those that are most suitable for us and our circumstances.

We believe in having a presence on many social networks regardless of whether we actively use them, since this discourages others from creating accounts which mimic or falsely represent our school.

The school will have a presence on Twitter and YouTube. Where possible, the accounts will be listed as a business or company under the school name, rather than as a personal or individual. It is important for us, as a school, to maintain a presence on these platforms to discourage others from creating a derogatory account in our school name.

Our Accounts

- Twitter: **@ValewoodPrimary**
- Instagram: **@ValewoodPrimary**
- YouTube: **Valewoodprimarieschool**
- Class Dojo: Each class has an individual page. Teachers and parents/carers can contact each other via the Class Dojo messaging service.
- See Saw: Reception use See Saw for individual children's EYFS profile.
Subject Leaders also use See Saw to share examples of curriculum practice from Reception to Team 6.

Usage and Best Practice

To ensure we meet our aims, we have detailed what we consider best practice when using social media within our school. We expect all our employees, pupils and parents to adhere to the statements contained in this policy.

Taking Photographs and Videos

- All children must be made aware a photo/video is being taken prior to doing so.
- There must not be any media taken of a single, identifiable child.
- There must not be any media taken which contains a child with identifiable features, such as name badges, drawers with names on etc.
- Audio contained within a video must not contain identifiable children's names.
- Employees must not produce media in which children are inappropriately dressed, or contain nudity or profanity.
- When possible, children should be shown the photo or video after it is taken, before it is published online.
- Photos should either contain no children or groups of 3-6 children, avoiding taking individual children where possible.
- Employees should be aware that photos posted online may be resized by the platform they are uploaded to and so should consider what their photo would appear like if it is cropped either at the sides or the bottom.
- Employees should also ensure they consider the backdrop of the photo or video they are taking, ensuring it is tidy, respectable and shows the school in a positive light.
- Employees should remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable.

Posting to Social Media

- All school related content must be posted to official school accounts only. For reference, a list is contained in this document.
- Employees must not post school related content on any of their personal accounts.
- Posts must not contain any identifiable information within the text or media.
- All posts must be considered public, regardless of where they are posted, and be treated as such.
- Employees must only upload media that they themselves have created and own the IP (intellectual property) to.
- The school must keep a list of children who do not have parental consent to be online. This must be cross referenced before every post which contains media.
- Employees must not post anything which may bring the school into disrepute or portray the school in a negative light.
- Children must not be tagged in photographs.
- There should not be any content posted by the school to a private page or closed group.
- Employees should not post about any school related matters on their own personal account.
- Employees should ensure that content is checked by another member of the team before posting to ensure the content abides by the rules contained within this policy.
- Employees may like, share, favourite, comment (or similar) on school related content that has been published via official school accounts.

Engaging with Parents and Pupils

- Employees must ensure they do not interact or post comments on social networks which may bring themselves or the school into disrepute.
- Employees should not connect or engage with any pupils on the current school roll via social media.
- Employees should only engage with parents, pupils (where applicable) and the public with regard to school matters via official school accounts.
- Employees may connect with parents/carers of a pupil currently on roll if they are known on a personal level.
- Employees may engage and reply where possible via the official school accounts to increase engagement with others.
- Employees may share the content posted to official school accounts on their own accounts if they wish to.

Passwords and Security

- Passwords to school social media accounts must remain safe and secure at all times.
- Passwords must not be shared between employees.
- Employees may want to set up two factor authentication on their social media accounts for added security, where possible.

Managing School Accounts

- Content for social media must come from, at the very least, all of the class teachers within the school. Ideally, content would come from all members of the school team.
- Each class should create at least one post per day to upload to official school accounts.
- Social networks should be managed either through a single person or via a social media management solution in which all users will have their own log in and password.
- All employees, whether they are teaching staff or not, may contribute to the school's bank of social media content if they wish.

Intellectual Property (IP)

- All media posted must be owned by the person uploading, or the organisation they work for, before it is uploaded.
- Unless stated otherwise in an employment contract, all media and IP (intellectual property) remains the property of the person who created it. By posting it to a school account, employees give the school permission to share (copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format) and adapt (remix, transform, and build upon the material) the media.

Personal Accounts on Social Networks

- Employees must not attempt to impersonate the school through an unofficial or spoof account.
- Employees should always treat their personal account posts as public, even if an account has privacy settings enabled which state otherwise.
- Employees may have personal accounts on any social networks they choose.

Using Personal Devices in School

- Personal devices are not for school use.
- Any personal devices, approved by the Headteacher to be used, in exceptional circumstances, to hold content from school must be secured with a password or pin.
- Any school content kept on a personal device must only be kept for the minimum amount of time feasible, up to a maximum of a day.
- Employees may use their own devices to create content for social media if they so wish e.g. for posting messages and posts on School/Class Dojo.

- The Headteacher has a designated school mobile phone, from which she manages the school's Twitter and Instagram accounts. This phone is secured with face I.D and a secure pin number.

Parental Responsibilities

- Parents must treat all interactions with an official school account as public.
- In line with our zero tag approach, parents must not tag children or other parents in photographs, or knowingly publicly identify a child.
- Parents should always keep in mind that their posts and interactions are public.
- Parents should choose the most appropriate method of communication with the school depending on the matter in which they wish to discuss.
- Parents should not expect a response from questions or comments posted on social media accounts.
- Parents may interact, comment and share content posted on school official accounts as often as they wish.
- Parents may invite others to like, follow, or equivalent, any of the school official accounts.

Pupil Responsibilities

- Pupils must not tag themselves or others in school photos.
- Pupils should only have accounts on social networks if they comply with the sites age restriction.
- Pupils should not post anything on an official school account which may portray the school in a negative light.
- Pupils may interact with official school accounts via their own accounts.

Non-Compliance

- Any breach of this policy, particular attention is drawn to those statements which are outlined as being 'required', may lead to disciplinary action being taken against those involved, in line with the school's disciplinary procedures.
- The school will act as immediately as possible on any incidents where the safety of children, employees or parents is at risk.
- The school reserves the right to remove, ban and block any user, comment or photo shared by another person to our official school accounts if it is offensive or inappropriate.

Misuse and Complaints

If you feel that this policy is not being followed in some way, please let us know by contacting the Headteacher immediately.

Revised: Spring Term 2023

To be reviewed: Autumn Term 2024