



Social Media Policy

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1. Statement of Intent

Furze Platt Senior School understands that social media is a growing part of life outside of school. We have a responsibility to safeguard our students against potential dangers when accessing the internet at school, and to educate our students about how to protect themselves online when outside of school. We are committed to:

- Encouraging the responsible use of social media by all staff, parents and students in support of the school's mission, values and objectives
- Protecting our students from the dangers of social media
- Preventing and avoiding damage to the reputation of the school through irresponsible use of social media
- Protecting our staff from cyber bullying and potentially career damaging behaviour
- Providing e-safety information for parents

2. Legal Framework

2.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- DfE (2018) 'Data protection: a tool kit for schools'
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990, amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- DfE (2023) 'Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges'
- DfE (2021) 'Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes'

2.2. This policy will be used in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Cyber-bullying Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Relationships & Sex Education Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable ICT Use Agreement
- Mobile Phone Policy

3. Roles & Responsibilities

3.1. The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy and ensuring that all staff, parents and students are aware of their responsibilities in relation to social media use.
- Promoting safer working practices and standards with regards to the use of social media.
- Establishing clear expectations of behaviour for social media use.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- In conjunction with the governing body, handling complaints regarding this policy and its provisions in line with the school's Complaints Policy.
- Implementing appropriate sanctions and disciplinary methods where there is a breach of this policy.
- Taking steps to minimise the amount of misplaced or malicious allegations in relation to social media use.
- Working alongside the DSL, IT Strategy Manager and data protection officer (DPO) to ensure appropriate security measures are implemented and compliance with the GDPR.

3.2. The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring the DSL's remit covers online safety.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Ensuring their own knowledge of online safety issues is up-to-date.
- Ensuring all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction.

3.3. The DSL is responsible for:

- Acting as the named point of contact within the school on all online safeguarding issues.
- Undertaking training so they understand the risks associated with online safety and can recognise additional risks that students with SEND face online.
- Staying up-to-date with current research, legislation and online trends.
- Working with the IT Strategy Manager to review this policy on an ongoing basis.
- Ensuring effective filtering and monitoring procedures are in place for school networks.
- Ensuring that all safeguarding training given to staff includes an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring systems at the school.
- Ensure that all safeguarding training given to staff includes elements of online safety, including how the internet and social media can facilitate abuse and exploitation.
- Where a concern is raised which is safeguarding in nature the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.
- Where a concern is raised which is criminal in nature, the Police will be contacted.

3.4. IT Strategy Manager is responsible for:

- Providing technical support in the development and implementation of the school's social media policies and procedures.
- Implementing appropriate security measures as directed by the DSL.
- Implementing appropriate filtering and monitoring measures as directed by the DSL
- Working with the DSL to monitor this policy on an ongoing basis.

3.5. All staff members are responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy and the Acceptable Use Agreement.
- Ensuring students adhere to the principles outlined in this policy and that it is implemented fairly and consistently in the classroom.
- Reporting any social media misuse by staff, students or parents to the Headteacher or DSL immediately.

3.6. Parents are responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy.
- Taking appropriate responsibility for their use of social media and the influence on their children at home.
- Promoting safe social media behaviour for both them and their children

3.7. Students are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy, the Acceptable Use Agreement and other relevant policies.
- Ensuring they understand how to use social media appropriately and stay safe online.
- Reporting online safety incidents and concerns in line with the procedures within this policy.
- Seeking help from school staff if they are concerned about something they or a peer have experienced online.
- Reporting online safety incidents and concerns in line with the procedures within this policy.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines “social media” as any online platform that offers real-time interaction between the user and other individuals or groups including, but not limited to, the following:
- Blogs
 - Online discussion forums, such as netmums.com
 - Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook
 - Media-sharing devices, such as YouTube
 - ‘Micro-blogging’ applications, such as X
- 4.2. For the purpose of this policy, “**cyber bullying**” is defined as any social media or communication technology intentionally used to bully an individual or group, including the posting or sharing of messages, images or videos.
- 4.3. For the purpose of this policy, “**members of the school community**” are defined as any teacher, member of support staff, student, parent of a student, governor or ex-student.

5. Data Protection Principles

- 5.1. When posting on social media, data is processed in accordance with the data protection policy.
- 5.2. The school will only post images and videos of students for whom consent has been received.
- 5.3. Only school-owned devices will be used to take images and videos of the school community, which have been pre-approved by the Marketing Manager for use.
- 5.4. The school will not post students’ personal details on social media platforms.
- 5.5. Only appropriate images and videos of students will be posted in which they are suitably dressed, i.e. it would not be suitable to display an image of a student in swimwear, unless at a swimming competition.
- 5.6. When posting on social media, the school will use group or class images or videos with general labels, e.g. ‘sports day’.
- 5.7. Before posting on social media, staff will:
- Refer to the consent record log to ensure consent has been received for that student and for the exact processing activities required.
 - Ensure that there is no additional identifying information relating to a student.
- 5.8. Consent provided for the use of images and videos only applies to school accounts – staff, students and parents are not permitted to post any imagery or videos on personal accounts.

6. Social Media Use – Staff

School Accounts:

- 6.1. School social media passwords are kept with the Marketing Manager, Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers – these are not shared with any unauthorised persons, including students, unless otherwise permitted by the Headteacher.

- 6.2. Staff will ensure any posts are positive in nature and relevant to students, the work of staff, the school or any achievements.
- 6.3. Staff will ensure the Marketing Manager, Senior Leadership Team or Head of Department has checked the content before anything is posted on social media.
- 6.4. Staff will adhere to the data protection principles outlined in this policy at all times.
- 6.5. Staff will not post any content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or students.

Personal Accounts:

- 6.6. Staff members will not access personal social media platforms during lesson times
- 6.7. Staff will avoid using social media in front of students.
- 6.8. Staff will not “friend” or otherwise contact students or parents through their personal social media accounts.
- 6.9. If students or parents attempt to “friend” a staff member they will report this to the DSL.
- 6.10. Staff members will not provide their home address, phone number, mobile number, social networking details or email addresses to students or parents – any contact with students or parents will be done through authorised school contact channels.
- 6.11. Staff members will ensure the necessary privacy controls are applied to personal accounts.
- 6.12. No staff member will post any content online that is damaging to the school or any of its staff or students.
- 6.13. Where staff members use social media in a personal capacity, they will ensure it is clear that views are personal and are not that of Furze Platt Senior School.
- 6.14. Staff members will not post any information which could identify a student, class or the school – this includes any images, videos and personal information.
- 6.15. Staff will not take any posts, images or videos from social media that belong to the school for their own personal use.
- 6.16. Staff members will not post anonymously or under an alias for the express purpose of evading the guidance given in this policy.
- 6.17. Breaches of this policy by members of staff will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content, could lead to prosecution, disciplinary action or dismissal.
- 6.18. Any out-of-work activity by a member of staff that brings the school into disrepute will result in disciplinary action being taken.

7. Social Media Use – Students and Parents

- 7.1. Students will not access social media during school hours.
- 7.2. Students and parents will not attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact members of staff through their personal social media accounts. Students and parents are only permitted to be affiliates of school social media accounts.
- 7.3. Where a student or parent attempts to “friend” a staff member on their personal account, it will be reported to the DSL.
- 7.4. Students and parents will not post anonymously or under an alias for the express purpose of evading the guidance given in this policy.
- 7.5. Students and parents will not post any content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or students.
- 7.6. Students are instructed not to sign up to any social media sites that have an age restriction above the student’s age.

- 7.7. Year 7 – 11 Students are not permitted to use the school's Wi-Fi network to access any social media platforms, 6th Form students are granted (restricted) internet access. Students will abide by the Mobile Phone policy as applicable to their year group. This will include use of a Yondr Pouch, for those in Year 7-11.
- 7.8. Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content could lead to prosecution, or exclusion.
- 7.9. Parents will be asked not to share any photos or personal details of students when commenting on school social media sites, nor post comments concerning other students or staff members.
- 7.10. Students should be aware that any platforms accessed via the school network are subject to the school filtering and monitoring systems.

8. Cyber-Bullying

- 8.1. Cyber-bullying incidents are taken seriously. Any reports of cyber-bullying on social media platforms by students will be handled in accordance with the Cyber-Bullying Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.
- 8.2. Allegations of cyber bullying from staff members will be handled in accordance with the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.
- 8.3. Cyberbullying against students or staff is not tolerated under any circumstances. Incidents of cyberbullying are dealt with quickly and effectively wherever they occur, in line with the Anti-bullying and/or Cyber-bullying Policy.

9. Training

- 9.1. We recognise that early intervention can protect students who may be at risk of cyberbullying or negative social media behaviour. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk students.
- 9.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on the Social Media Policy as part of their new starter induction. This is within the annual Safeguarding Training.
- 9.3. Teachers and support staff will receive annual and ongoing training as part of their development.
- 9.4. Students will be educated about e-safety and appropriate social media use on a termly basis through a variety of mediums, including assemblies, PSHE lessons and cross curricular links.
- 9.5 Parents are directed to the Furze Platt e-Safety hub, which provides information on key online safety materials. This can be used to keep their children safe online.
furzeplatt.onlinesafetyhub.uk
- 9.6 Training for all students, staff and parents will be refreshed in light of any significant incidents or changes.

10. Monitoring & Review

- 10.1. The school recognises that the online world is constantly changing; therefore, the DSL and IT Strategy Manager regularly review this policy to evaluate its effectiveness.
- 10.2. Senior Leadership Team and the Pupils & Parents Committee will evaluate and review this Social Media Policy every two years, taking into account the latest developments in ICT and the feedback from staff/students.
- 10.3. The policy will be reviewed immediately in the event of any significant social media incidents.