

RAVENSCOTE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Social Media Policy

2025 - 2026



Date of Approval		Date of Review	
September 2025		September 2026	
Signed	Amy Wells Headteacher	Signed	Emily Gibson Chair of Governors



Ravenscote Junior School

Social Media Policy

Introduction to the Policy

In this policy, Social media is considered to include all technologies and internet based applications which allow users to collaborate, interact socially and share information (including photos and videos). This includes group messaging services such as WhatsApp.

The school recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation.

This policy and associated guidance is to protect staff and advise school leadership on how to deal with potential inappropriate use of social media platforms. For example, our use of social media platforms has implications for 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.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- That the school is not exposed to legal risks
- That the reputation of the school is not adversely affected
- That our users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of the school.
- Set guidelines and rules on the use of school's social media channels
- Establish clear expectations for the way members of the school community engage with each other online
- Support the school's policies on data protection, online safety and safeguarding

Scope

This policy is subject to the school's code of conduct and acceptable use agreements.

This policy:

- Applies to all staff and to all online communications which directly or indirectly, represent the school.
- Applies to such online communications posted at any time and from anywhere.
- Encourages the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education.
- Defines the monitoring of public social media activity pertaining to the school.

Applies to all staff regardless of whether the social media is accessed using:

- School IT facilities and equipment
- Equipment belonging to members of staff and pupils
- Any other IT/Internet-enabled equipment



The school respects privacy and understands that staff and children may use social media forums in their private lives. However, personal communications likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or the school's reputation are within the scope of this policy.

Professional communications are those made through official channels, posted on a school account or using the school/academy name. All professional communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications are those made via a personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with, or impacts on, the school/academy, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the school/academy with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy. Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the school/academy are outside the scope of this policy.

Staff are required to read, understand and comply with this social media policy.

All members of the school should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, may be subject to copyright, safeguarding and data protection legislation. Everyone must also operate in line with the school's equalities, harassment, child protection, safer recruitment, and online safety and ICT acceptable use policies.

Use of Social Media platforms in work time

Use of social media platforms in work time for personal use only is not permitted, unless permission has been given by the Head teacher.

School representatives must adhere to the following Terms of Use. The Terms of Use below apply to all uses of social media platforms by all school representatives. This includes, but is not limited to, public facing applications such as open discussion forums and internally-facing uses such as project blogs regardless of whether they are hosted on school network or not.

Where applications allow the posting of messages online, users must be mindful that the right to freedom of expression attaches only to lawful conduct. Ravenscote Junior School expects that users of social media platforms will always exercise the right of freedom of expression with due consideration for the rights of others and strictly in accordance with these Terms of Use.

Social Media platforms:

School Accounts

- School social media passwords not shared with any unauthorised members of persons
- Staff will ensure any posts are positive in nature and relevant to pupils, the work of staff, the school or any achievements.
- At all times staff will only share images of pupils where consent has been obtained from their parent / guardian.

Personal Accounts

- Must not be used to publish any content which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claim for damages. This includes



but is not limited to material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the school into disrepute.

- Must not be used in an abusive or hateful manner
- Must not be used for actions that would put school representatives in breach of school codes of conduct or policies relating to staff.
- Must not breach the school's misconduct, equal opportunities or bullying and harassment policies
- Must not be used to discuss or advise any matters relating to school matters, staff, pupils or parents
- No staff member should interact with a child or former child who attended the school under the age of 18.
- Employees should not identify themselves as a representative of the school
- References should not be made to any staff member, child of the school, parent or school activity / event unless prior permission has been obtained and agreed with the Head Teacher
- Staff should be aware that if their out-of-work activity causes potential embarrassment for the employer or detrimentally affects the employer's reputation then the employer is entitled to take disciplinary action.

Violation of this policy will be considered as gross misconduct and can result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee up to and including termination of employment.

Guidance/protection for staff on using social media:

- No member of staff should interact with any child in the school on social media-platforms
- No member of staff should interact with any children who previously attended the school or are currently in the school on social media platforms who is under the age of 18
- Where family and friends have pupils in school and there are legitimate family links, please inform the head teacher in writing. This applies specifically to children.
- It is illegal for an adult to use social media platforms, giving their age and status as a child
- If you have any evidence of pupils or adults using social media platforms in the working day, please contact the headteacher (Mrs Amy Wells) if you have a low level concern.

Guidance for pupils on using social media:

- No child under 13 should be accessing social media platforms.
- No child may access social media platforms during the school working day
- No child should attempt to interact with a member of staff, either past or present, on social media platforms. If a child attempts to do so, the member of staff is to inform the Head teacher. Parents will be informed if this happens
- No school computers are to be used to access social media platforms at any time of day.
- Any attempts to breach firewalls will result in a ban from using school ICT equipment other than with close supervision
- Please report any improper contact or cyberbullying to your class teacher in confidence as soon as it happens.
- We have a zero tolerance approach to cyber bullying



Cyber Bullying

By adopting the approach of no use of social media platforms on school premises, Ravenscote Junior School protects themselves from accusations of complicity in any cyber bullying through the provision of access.

Parents should be clearly aware of the school's policy of access to social media platforms. Where a disclosure of bullying is made, schools now have the duty to investigate and protect, even where the bullying originates outside the school. Ravenscote will follow the procedures outlined in the Anti-Bullying Policy.

This can be a complex area, and these examples might help:

- A child is receiving taunts on WhatsApp and text from an ex pupil who moved three months ago: This is not a school responsibility, though the school might contact the new school to broker a resolution.
- A child is receiving taunts from peers. It is all at weekends using WhatsApp. The pupils are in the school: The school has a duty of care to investigate and work with the families, as they attend the school.
- A child is receiving taunts from peers. It is all at weekends using WhatsApp. The pupils are in Y5: The school has a duty of care to investigate and work with the families, as they attend the school. However, they are also fully within their rights to warn all the parents (including the victim) that they are condoning the use of WhatsApp outside the terms and conditions of the site and that they are expected to ensure that use of the site stops
- Once disclosure is made, investigation will have to involve the families. This should be dealt with under the school's adopted anti bullying policy.
- If parent / carers refuse to engage and bullying continues, it can be referred to the police as harassment
- This guidance applies to all activity on social media platforms.

Monitoring:

We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to, social media postings and activities, for legitimate business purposes. This includes ascertaining and demonstrating that expected standards are being met by those using the systems, and for the detection and investigation of unauthorised use of the systems (including where this is necessary to prevent or detect crime).

The implantation of this policy will be reviewed regularly ensuring that it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the school.

