

Offham Primary School



Social Media Policy

Date: September 2025

Date Review: July 2026

1. Policy aims and scope

This policy has been written by Offham Primary School, involving staff, building on 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 '[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 Offham Primary School community when using social media. The school recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to ensure that all children and staff are protected from potential harm when using social media.

As outlined in our Safeguarding Policy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) 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 children/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 Policy
 - Image use policy
 - Safeguarding policy

- Staff Code of conduct
- GDPR and Data Protection Policy
- Mobile and Smart Technology Policy
- Online Safety

Social media expectations in our community (staff/parents/children/governors)

- Offham 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 (this includes staff/parents/children/governors) are expected to engage in social media in a positive and responsible manner.
- All members of our community (this includes staff/parents/children/governors) are advised not to post or share content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others/school on any social media service.
- Only the Office Administrator, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher (Lead DSL) have access to school the school social media sites.
- Concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of the school community (this includes staff/parents/children/governors) on social media will be taken seriously. Concerns will be managed in accordance with the appropriate policies,

Staff use of social media

- The use of social media during school hours for personal use is permitted only on staff personal devices, when not in their directed hours of work. It should not be in the presence of any children.
- 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 Managing 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 schools
- Members of staff are encouraged not to identify themselves as employees of Offham 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 children 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 children/pupils/students and their families

- Staff will not use any personal social media accounts to contact children/parents/carers or their family members.
- All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add any current or past children/parents/carers or their family members, as 'friends' on any personal social media accounts.
- Any communication from children and parents/carers received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the DSL/Headteacher
- Any pre-existing relationships or situations, which mean staff cannot comply with this requirement, will be discussed with the Lead DSL/Headteacher. Decisions

made and advice provided in these situations will be formally recorded to safeguard children, members of staff and the setting.

3. Official use of social media

- Offham Primary School official social media channels are Instagram and Facebook.
- The official use of social media sites by Offham Primary School 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
 - Official social media channels have been set up as distinct and dedicated accounts for official educational or engagement purposes only.
 - Staff use setting provided email addresses to register for and manage official social media channels.
 - Only the Office Manager, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher (Lead DSL) have access to account information and login details
- All communication on official 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 at least one other colleague.
- Parents/carers will be informed of any official social media use, along with expectations for safe use and action taken to safeguard the community.
- Official social media use will be conducted in line with existing policies.
- Parents and carers will be informed of any official social media and written parental consent will be obtained for their child's image to be posted on it.
- We will ensure that any official 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 professional accounts where possible, to avoid blurring professional boundaries.
- If members of staff are managing and/or participating in online social media activity as part of their capacity as an employee of the setting, they will:
 - Read and understand our Acceptable Use Policy.

- Where they are running official accounts, sign our social media Acceptable Use Policy.
- Be aware they are an ambassador for the school/setting.
- Be professional, responsible, credible, fair and honest, and consider how the information being published could be perceived or shared.
- Always act within the legal frameworks they would adhere to within the workplace, including libel, defamation, confidentiality, copyright, data protection and equalities laws.
- Follow our image use policy at all times; for example, ensuring that appropriate consent has been given before sharing images.
- Not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of the setting, unless they are authorised to do so.
- Not engage with any private or direct messaging with current or past children/pupils/students or their family members.
- Inform their line manager, the DSL (or deputy) and/or the headteacher/manager of any concerns, such as criticism, inappropriate content or contact from children/pupils/students.

4. **Children/pupils/students use of social media**

- The use of social media during school hours for personal use is not permitted for children.
- 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 child
 - could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school,
 - if/when a child is identifiable as a member of the school,
 - if the behaviour could adversely affect the reputation of the school

Action will be taken in line with our school safeguarding policies.

- Offham Primary School will empower our children 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 children as part of an embedded and progressive safeguarding education approach using age-appropriate sites and resources.
- 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 children under the required age as outlined in the services terms and conditions.

- Children 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 children use of social media will be dealt with in accordance with appropriate existing policies.
- 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 children as appropriate, in line with our school policies. Civil or legal action may be taken if necessary.
- Concerns regarding children use of social media will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate, particularly when concerning underage use of social media services and games.

5. Policy monitoring and review

- Technology evolves and changes rapidly. Offham 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, through training, AUP and Code of Conduct.

6. 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. This includes logging child concerns on CPOMS and reporting Low Level concerns around staff to the Headteacher.
- 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 children 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.
- 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.