

CATCOTT PRIMARY



SOCIAL MEDIA FOR STAFF POLICY

'...where learning takes you to greater heights...'

Approved by:

Date:

September 2024

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:

September 2025

Purpose and scope

This policy aims to:

- 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

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

This policy applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during school/working hours or otherwise.

It applies 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

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.

Definition of social media

For the purposes of this document, 'social media' is considered to include all technologies that allow individuals to communicate and share information (including photos and video). This includes group messaging services such as WhatsApp.

Use of official school social media

The school's official social media channels are as follows:

- Class Dojo (this is an invitation only platform for staff and families)
- Facebook
- Instagram
- X

These accounts are managed by Headteacher and Office Manager. Staff members who have not been authorised by Headteacher or Office Manager to manage, or post to, the account, must not access, or attempt to access, these accounts.

If you have suggestions for something you'd like to appear on our school social media channel(s), please speak your line manager.

Class Dojo

The school will post on Class Dojo:

- Alerts about changes (e.g. changes to procedures, severe weather updates, staffing changes).
- Reminders (e.g. approaching deadlines, events or class activities, reminders about policies/procedures).
- Advertisements for school events or activities.
- Job vacancies or requests for volunteers.
- Achievements of pupils and staff.
- Photos or posts about school trips, events and activities.
- Seasonal greetings and messages about religious festivals.
- Invitations to provide feedback.

Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter)

The school will post on Facebook:

- Advertisements for school events or activities
- Job vacancies or requests for volunteers
- Photos or posts about school trips, events and activities
- Seasonal greetings and messages about religious festivals
- Invitations to provide feedback

The school **will not** post :

- Names and photos of individuals (unless they have given consent)
- Harmful or abusive comments
- Messages to specific people
- Political statements
- Advertisements for businesses unless directly related to the school
- Links to staff members' personal accounts

Moderation

Staff responsible for our social media accounts will delete as soon as reasonably possible:

- Abusive, racist, sexist, homophobic or inflammatory comments
- Comments we consider to be spam
- Personal information, such as telephone numbers, address details, etc.
- Posts that advertise commercial activity or ask for donations

Every reasonable effort will be taken to politely address concerns or behaviour of individual users, following the school's complaints policy. If users are repeatedly abusive or inappropriate, they will be blocked.

Staff responsible for our social media accounts will also ensure that all content shared on social media platforms is age appropriate for the school community.

Personal use of social media by staff

Catcott School acknowledges that the personal use of ICT including emails and social media sites provide a positive way for staff to keep in touch with other parents, friends and colleagues and can be used to exchange ideas and thoughts on common interests, both personal and work related.

However, staff also need to be aware that no matter what the privacy settings on their social media site information can still end up in the public domain and therefore should not be considered as private.

Whether this takes place during and/or outside of work, and regardless of the privacy settings that limit the spread of (what staff might consider to be private) information the use of social media sites by staff would be deemed to be unacceptable conduct where for example:

- their work performance is affected
- they have potentially broken the law,
- they have breached confidentiality,
- they have published comments, videos, or photographs which reveal some form of work-related misbehaviour, for example feigning illness or avoiding work,
- they have blurred professional boundaries,
- they have expressed a personal view (in some cases referring to Catcott School) that the school would not want to be associated with, and which may well bring the school into disrepute,
- they have disclosed data or information about the school, colleagues and partner organisations, clients or service users that could breach the Data Protection Act 1998,
- they have not complied with school's Standards of Conduct resulting in an inappropriate reference to people working at or for the school, or people receiving services from the school,
- they have abused people working at or for the school or people receiving services from the school.

Employees whose conduct is deemed to be unacceptable will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the school's Disciplinary Procedure, not excluding dismissal.

Staff members will report any safeguarding issues they become aware of.

When using social media, staff **must not**:

- Use personal accounts to conduct school business
- Accept 'friend requests' from, or communicate with, pupils past or present
- Complain about the school, individual pupils, colleagues or families
- Reference or share information about individual pupils, colleagues or families unless permission has been granted by family members
- Post images of children unless permission has been granted by family members
- Express personal views or opinions that could be interpreted as those of the school
- Link their social media profile to their work email account
- Use personal social media during timetabled teaching time

Any communication received from current pupils (unless they are family members) on any personal social media accounts will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or member of the senior leadership team immediately.

Staff should not have contact via personal accounts with past pupils (if ongoing communication is required, this should be using via official school channels).

Monitoring and review

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 headteacher will monitor the implementation of this policy, including making sure that it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the school.

The governing board is responsible for reviewing and approving this policy annually.

Related policies

- Child protection policy
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff behaviour policy