Nether Green Junior School

Social Media Policy

Approved by:	Chair of Governors, Attendance & Behaviour Governor and Headteacher
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1. PURPOSE & SCOPE

This policy sets out how everyone in the Nether Green Junior School community is expected to use social media, both on the school's own accounts and in a personal capacity. It applies to staff, governors, volunteers, pupils and parents/carers.

It applies in and out of school hours, and whatever device is used, whether school equipment or personal.

What We Mean by Social Media

Social media includes any website or app that lets people share information, comments, photos or video. This includes messaging services such as WhatsApp and online forums.

Our Aims

- Keep pupils safe online and support our safeguarding, data protection and online safety arrangements.
- Set clear expectations for how members of our community talk to and about each other online.
- Protect the wellbeing of pupils, staff and families, and the reputation of the school.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside our:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy for All School Employees
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy

2. THE SCHOOL'S FACEBOOK PAGE

The school's official social media account is our school Facebook page. It is managed by the PE Lead and the Headteacher. Only staff authorised by the Headteacher may post on, or access, the account.

What We Will Post on Facebook

Our Facebook page is used to share information and news that need to reach people beyond our school community, such as:

- Open evenings and information for families thinking of joining the school
- Job vacancies
- Celebrating the school's successes, such as sporting achievements, events and the work of our pupils

Some of these posts, particularly our successes, will also be of interest to our own families, but they are shared on Facebook so that the wider community can see them too.

Day-to-day information for our families is shared through our weekly newsletter, sports newsletter, emails, messages and the school website, not through Facebook.

We will not show pupils' faces or use the names of pupils or staff in any post unless consent has been given.

What We Will Not Post on Facebook

- Names or photos of anyone without consent
- Political statements

- Messages to individual people
- Advertising for businesses not connected to the school
- Links to staff members' personal accounts

Keeping the Page Secure

- The page will always have at least two admins, so the school never loses access to it.
- Admins use strong passwords and two-factor authentication on the accounts linked to the page.
- Anyone who leaves the school or no longer manages the page will have their access removed straight away.

Unofficial Pages and Groups

Our Facebook page is the school's only official social media account. Any other page, group or account using the school's name or logo is not run by the school. Please report any you come across to the school office.

Comments and Moderation

Staff managing our Facebook page will remove abusive, discriminatory or inflammatory comments, spam, and any personal information such as phone numbers or addresses. Anyone who is repeatedly abusive or inappropriate will be blocked.

Social media is not the place to raise a concern or complaint. Please contact the school directly, or follow our Complaints Policy.

3. STAFF, GOVERNORS & VOLUNTEERS

Everyone who works or volunteers in school is expected to think about the safety of pupils and colleagues, and the reputation of the school, whenever they use social media, including in a personal capacity. You are responsible for keeping the privacy and security settings on your personal accounts up to date.

Professional networking sites such as LinkedIn are fine to use, but the expectations below still apply. Use of phones and social media during the school day is covered by our Mobile Phone Policy.

You Must Not

- Accept friend or follow requests from, or communicate with, current or past pupils
- Give your personal social media details to parents/carers
- Use personal accounts to carry out school business
- Post photos of pupils, or share school business or any other information about the school, its pupils, families or colleagues
- Complain about the school, pupils, colleagues or parents/carers
- Express personal views in a way that could be taken as the view of the school
- Link a personal social media account to your school email address
- Post anything that could breach data protection or bring the school into disrepute, including illegal, sexual or offensive material

Friends and Family in the School Community

We recognise that some staff are parents at the school, or are friends with parents outside work. Where this is the case, keep school matters out of your online contact with them, including in any class or parent WhatsApp groups you belong to.

If You Are Criticised or Targeted Online

If you are criticised, abused or targeted online because of your work at the school:

- Do not respond or engage with the post or message.

- Take screenshots or save a copy, including the date and who posted it.
- Tell the Headteacher, or a member of the senior leadership team, as soon as possible.

The school will support you. Depending on what has happened, this may include asking for the content to be removed, reporting it to the platform, speaking to the person responsible, and seeking advice from the Professionals Online Safety Helpline or the local authority. Where content may be a criminal offence, the school will support you in reporting it to the police.

Reporting

If a current or past pupil contacts you on a personal account (unless they are a family member), tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) straight away, or a Deputy DSL if the DSL is not available. Do not reply. Report any safeguarding concern you become aware of online to the DSL, in line with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

If Concerns Arise

Concerns about a member of staff's use of social media will be dealt with by the Headteacher under the Code of Conduct Policy for All School Employees and, where appropriate, the school's disciplinary procedures. Any concern that suggests a risk to children will be handled under our procedures for managing allegations against staff.

4. PUPILS

Children of primary school age should not be using social media. Most social media platforms have a minimum age of 13, so all of our pupils are too young to have an account.

These age limits are there to protect children. Underage use can expose children to harmful or upsetting content, contact from people they do not know, online bullying, and pressures they are not ready to manage. The safety features on these platforms are not designed for children of this age.

Despite this, we are aware that some children of primary school age do use social media, as well as messaging apps and online games where they can chat with others.

Through Computing and PSHE/Life Skills, we teach pupils how to stay safe and be kind online, and to tell a trusted adult if anything they see or receive online worries them.

Pupils do not use mobile phones or smartwatches in school. This is set out in our Mobile Phone Policy.

Online Behaviour Outside School

Where a pupil does use social media, messaging apps or online games, they must not use them to:

- Send or post unkind, abusive or threatening messages
- Make unkind comments or spread rumours about pupils, staff or families
- Create or share nude or semi-nude images, including images made or altered using artificial intelligence (AI)

Concerns about a pupil's use of social media, including incidents outside school that affect pupils in school, will be dealt with under our Relationships and Behaviour Policy and, where needed, our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

5. PARENTS & CARERS

We ask parents and carers to help us model safe and respectful social media use for our children. Whether you are commenting on the school's Facebook page or talking about the school elsewhere online, please be respectful about staff, pupils and other families.

Please Do Not Use Social Media To

- Criticise individual members of staff, pupils or other families

- Discuss behaviour incidents or other children
- Post photos from school events that include children other than your own
- Create or spread rumours about anyone in the school community

If you have a concern, please speak to us directly so we can help. Our Complaints Policy sets out how to raise a formal complaint.

Your Child and Social Media

We strongly ask parents and carers not to let their child have social media accounts before the minimum age of 13. If your child uses apps or online games where they can chat with others, please check the privacy settings, talk to them about who they are in contact with, and keep an eye on what they are doing online.

If you are worried about something your child has seen or experienced online, please speak to us. We will help where we can.

Class and Parent WhatsApp Groups

These groups are run by parents, not the school, and we do not monitor them. We ask that the same expectations apply in them. They are not the place to raise concerns about staff or other children.

6. TRAINING, MONITORING & REVIEW

Staff will be made aware of this policy at induction and through regular safeguarding training. Parents and carers will be reminded of it through our newsletter and website.

The school may monitor the use of its own IT systems and communications, including social media activity on school accounts and equipment, to make sure expected standards are met and to detect misuse. Any monitoring will be carried out within the law.

The Headteacher is responsible for making sure this policy is followed. It will be reviewed every year, and approved by the governing body.