

At Claypool everyone is valued, inspired and nurtured on their individual journey of success.

Social Media Policy

Policy lead: A. Hulme

Last interim review by the Policy Lead	Autumn 2026
Last full review by the Policies Committee	Autumn 2026

Next interim review by the Policy Lead	Autumn 2029
Next full review by the Policies Committee	Autumn 2029

Scope and Purpose

This social media policy is for all members of the school community at Claypool Primary School, including staff, governors, volunteers, pupils and parents/carers. These members of our school community are required to read, understand and comply with this policy.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Encourage safe, respectful use of social media among our school community
- Set guidelines and rules on interacting with and using the school's social media channel
- Establish clear expectations for the way members of the school community engage with each other online
- Protect the reputation of the school and the wellbeing of our community
- Support the school's policies on data protection, online safety and safeguarding

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

It applies regardless of whether social media is accessed using:

- School IT facilities and equipment
- Equipment belonging to members of the school community
- Any other IT/Internet-enabled equipment

All members of the school community should bear in mind that information they share through social media, even if they are in private online 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 and online forums.

Use of official school social media channels

The school's official social media channels is Facebook and WhatsApp.

These accounts are managed by Ben Matthews, Candice Hyde and Amanda Hulme. All staff have authorisation to publish posts on Facebook.

If you have suggestions for something you'd like to appear on our school social media channel(s), please speak to Ben Matthews, Candice Hyde or Amanda Hulme.

2.1 Use of Facebook

The school will post on Facebook:

- 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 and procedures)
- Advertisements for school events or activities
- Job vacancies and 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

The school will seek individual consent before sharing any information that could identify an individual (e.g. names or photos), such as posts about staffing changes, achievements of pupils and staff, or school trips, events and activities, for example.

The school will not post on Facebook:

- Names and/or 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 account 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 which are unrelated to the school

If users are repeatedly abusive or inappropriate, they will be blocked.

Staff responsible for our social media account will also ensure that all content shared on this platform is relevant to the school community and the school's activities.

Concerns and complaints

If members of the school community have any concerns or complaints (either about the school or anything shared on the school's social media channel), they should raise these following the school's complaints policy. Concerns or complaints should not be raised through social media.

Following other social media users

The school:

- Will only 'like' or otherwise rate social media content with a non-commercial interest – being 'liked' or rated by us doesn't imply endorsement of any kind
- May follow other users relevant to the school's activities (e.g. an education project) – being followed by us doesn't imply endorsement of any kind

Roles and responsibilities

Everyone

All members of the school community are expected to conduct themselves professionally and respectfully online, particularly when engaging with the school's social media channel.

Staff managing the school's social media channels

The staff who manage the school's accounts on social media will:

- Act on comments posted on the school's social media that go against this policy
- Aim to respond to comments in a timely manner, where appropriate

- Always remain professional and polite
- Inform the Headteacher about anything inappropriate or likely to escalate

All staff (including trainee teachers), governors and volunteers

The school expects all staff, governors and volunteers to consider the safety of pupils and colleagues and the risks (reputational and financial) to the school when using social media channels, including when doing so in a personal capacity. Staff, governors and volunteers are also responsible for checking and maintaining appropriate privacy and security settings of their personal social media accounts.

Staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons, including use of social media, in front of pupils throughout the school day except where it is appropriate or necessary (e.g. to use multi-factor authentication).

Staff, governors and volunteers will report any safeguarding issues they become aware of to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in line with the school's child protection policy.

Staff should be aware of online security threats and be cautious when giving out personal information which may compromise their own personal safety and security, or that of another individual in the school community.

When using social media, staff, governors and volunteers **must not**:

- Use personal accounts to conduct school business
- Accept 'friend requests' from, or communicate with, pupils past under the age of 18 or present
- Give their personal social media information to parents/carers
- Complain about the school, individual pupils, colleagues or parents/carers
- Reference or share information about individual pupils, colleagues or parents/carers
- Post images of pupils
- 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 accounts during timetabled teaching time
- Publish any content which may result in action against the school, e.g. content which breaches data protection obligations
- Publish any content which may bring the school into disrepute, including material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature

Staff, governors and volunteers will report any communication received from current pupils (unless the pupils are family members) on any personal social media accounts to the DSL or a member of the senior leadership team immediately.

Staff, governors and volunteers should not have contact via personal accounts with past pupils under the age of 18. If ongoing communication is required, this should be done via official school channels.

Any concerns about staff member's use of social media will be dealt with in line with the Staff Conduct Policy and, where appropriate, disciplinary procedures.

Pupils

The school recognises that most social media platforms have a minimum age requirement of 13+. However, we are aware that many pupils under this minimum age still actively use social media. Therefore, the expectations and guidelines regarding safe and respectful online behaviour set out in this policy apply to all pupils, regardless of their age.

The school does not allow the use of mobile phones and other smart technology (e.g. smart watches) with similar functionality to mobile phones (including the ability to access social media) throughout the school day.

The school encourages pupils to be, at all times:

- Respectful towards and about members of staff, and the school, at all times
- Respectful to other pupils and parents/carers

Pupils **should not** use social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff
- Complain about the school. Where a pupil has a complaint or concern, they should share this with the school through the school's official channels, so it can be dealt with in line with the school's complaints policy
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other pupils, parents/carers, or other members of the school community
- Send or post abusive, harassing, misogynistic, or misandrist messages
- Send unwanted sexual comments and messages
- Create or spread rumours about members of staff, pupils, parents/carers, or other members of the school community
- Post images of members of the school community or individuals engaged in school activities without their permission
- Create or share consensual or non-consensual nudes and semi-nudes, including images or videos that are digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence (AI) (e.g. deepfakes)

The school takes a zero-tolerance approach to online abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Any concerns about a pupil's social media use will be dealt with in line with the school's behavior and motivation policy and child protection policy.

Parents/carers

The school expects parents/carers to help us model safe, responsible and appropriate social media use for our pupils.

When communicating with the school via official communication channels, or using private/independent channels to talk about the school, parents and carers should:

- Be respectful towards, and about, members of staff and the school at all times
- Be respectful of, and about, other parents/carers, other pupils and children, and members of the school community
- Direct any complaints or concerns through the school's official channels, so they can be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure

Parents/carers **should not** use social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff, other parents/carers or pupils
- Complain about the school
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other parents/carers, pupils, or members of the school community
- Draw attention to, or discuss, behaviour incidents
- Post images of pupils whilst engaged in school activities who are not their own
- Create or spread rumours about members of staff, pupils, parents/carers, or other members of the school community

We expect parents/carers to follow the above social media expectations when using unofficial class WhatsApp groups.

Monitoring and review

The school reserves 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.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the policy lead and every 3 years by the Policies Committee.

Related policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Behaviour and Motivation policy
- Staff Conduct policy
- Mobile phone and Smart Technology policy