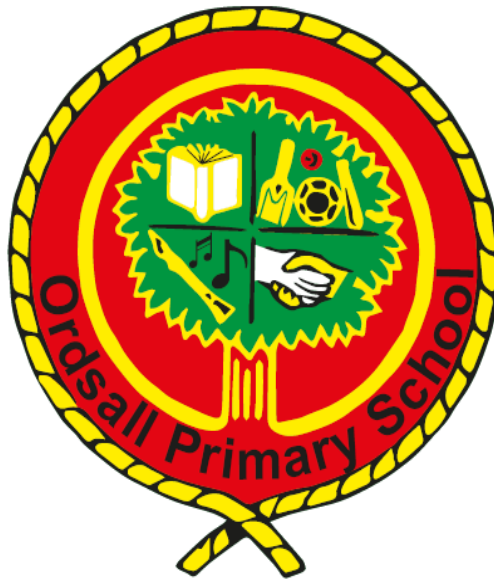




Play, Learn and Grow...Together!

Ordsall Primary School

Social Media Policy

Date reviewed: September 2026

Reviewed by: Karl Hopkinson (Headteacher)

Approved by: Governing Body

Next review: September 2027

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Statement of intent

Ordsall Primary School understands that social media, messaging services, livestreaming platforms, gaming platforms and other online communication tools are a growing part of life outside of school. We have a responsibility to safeguard our pupils against potential dangers when accessing the internet at school, and to educate our pupils about how to protect themselves online when outside of school.

We are committed to:

- Encouraging the responsible use of social media by all staff, parents/carers and pupils in support of the school's vision, values and objectives.
- Protecting our pupils from the dangers of social media.
- Preventing and avoiding damage to the reputation of the school through irresponsible use of social media.
- Protecting our staff from cyberbullying and potentially career-damaging behaviour.
- Informing parents/carers of ways to keep their child safe online.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2024) 'Data protection in schools'
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Computer Misuse Act 1990, amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE)'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Online Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Photography and Images Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body will be responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented by the school.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Ensuring the Designated Safeguarding Lead's (DSL) remit covers online safety.
- Ensuring their own knowledge of social media and online safety issues is up-to-date.
- Ensuring all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including against any of the protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy and ensuring that all staff, parents/carers and pupils are aware of their responsibilities in relation to social media use.
- Promoting safer working practices and standards with regards to the use of social media.
- Establishing clear expectations of behaviour for social media use.
- In conjunction with the governing body, handling complaints regarding this policy and its provisions in line with the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

- Implementing appropriate sanctions and disciplinary methods where there is a breach of this policy.
- Taking steps to minimise the amount of misplaced or malicious allegations in relation to social media use.
- Working alongside the DPO and ICT technicians to ensure appropriate security measures are implemented and compliance with UK GDPR and other data protection legislation.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- The school's approach to online safety.
- Dealing with concerns about social media use that are safeguarding concerns.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy and the Device and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement for Staff.
- Ensuring pupils adhere to the principles outlined in this policy and that it is implemented fairly and consistently in the classroom.
- Reporting any social media misuse by staff, pupils or parents/carers to the headteacher immediately.
- Attending any training on social media use offered by the school.

Parents/carers will be responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy.
- Taking appropriate responsibility for their use of social media and the influence on their children at home.
- Promoting safe social media behaviour for both themselves and their children.
- Attending meetings held by the school regarding social media use wherever possible.

Pupils will be responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy.
- Ensuring they understand how to use social media appropriately and stay safe online.
- Seeking help from school staff if they are concerned about something they or a peer have experienced on social media.
- Reporting incidents and concerns relating to social media in line with the procedures within this policy.
- Demonstrating the same high standards of behaviour as expected within the school.

ICT technicians will be responsible for:

- Providing technical support in the development and implementation of the school's social media accounts.
- Implementing appropriate security measures as directed by the headteacher.
- Ensuring that the school's filtering and monitoring systems are updated as appropriate.

3. School social media accounts

Social media accounts for the school will only be created by designated staff members, following approval from the headteacher. A school-based social media account will be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by staff members and will be linked to an official school email account.

When setting up a school social media account, consideration will be given to the following:

- The purpose of the account
- Whether the overall investment will achieve the aim of the account
- The level of interactive engagement with the site
- Whether pupils, staff, parents/carers or members of the public will be able to contribute content to the account
- How much time and effort staff members are willing to commit to the account
- How the success of the account will be evaluated

The headteacher will be responsible for authorising members of staff and any other individual to have admin access to school social media accounts. Only people authorised by the headteacher will be allowed to post on the school's accounts.

Passwords for the school's social media accounts are stored securely on the school's ICT network. The passwords are only shared with people authorised by the headteacher.

All posts made to school social media accounts will not breach copyright, data protection or freedom of information legislation.

The school's social media accounts will comply with the platform's rules. The headteacher will ensure anyone with authorisation to post on the school's social media accounts are provided with training on the platform and the rules around what can be posted.

School social media accounts will be moderated by designated members of staff.

Staff conduct

Only staff with authorisation from the headteacher will post on school accounts.

Staff will only post content that meets the school's social media objectives, including the following:

- Reminders about upcoming events
- Good news regarding the school's performance, attainment or reputation
- Good news regarding the achievements of staff and pupils
- Information that parents/carers should be aware of, e.g. school closure

Staff will ensure that their posts meet the following criteria:

- The post does not risk bringing the school into disrepute
- The post only expresses neutral opinions and does not include any personal views
- The post uses appropriate and school-friendly language

- The post is sensitive towards those who will read it, and uses particularly neutral and sensitive language when discussing something that may be controversial to some
- The post does not contain any wording or content that could be construed as offensive
- The post does not take a side in any political debate or express political opinions
- The post does not contain any illegal or unlawful content

4. Staff use of personal social media

Staff will not be prohibited from having personal social media accounts; however, it is important that staff protect their professional reputation by ensuring they use personal social media accounts in an appropriate manner.

Staff will be required to adhere to the following guidelines when using personal social media accounts:

- Staff members will not access personal social media platforms during school directed time.
- Staff members will not use any school-owned mobile devices to access personal accounts.
- Staff will not 'friend', 'follow' or otherwise contact pupils through their personal social media accounts. If pupils attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' a staff member, they will report this to the headteacher.
- Staff should avoid accepting or initiating personal social media connections with current parents unless there is a clear professional reason.
- Staff members will ensure the necessary privacy controls are applied to personal accounts and will avoid identifying themselves as an employee of the school on their personal social media accounts.
- Staff will ensure it is clear that views posted on personal accounts are personal and are not those of the school.
- Staff will not post any content online that is damaging to the school, its staff or pupils.
- Staff members will not post any information which could identify a pupil, class or the school – this includes any images, videos and personal information.
- Staff members will not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.
- Staff will not post comments about the school, pupils, parents/carers, staff or other members of the school community.
- Staff must not use AI-generated images, videos or text in a way that could misrepresent the school, identify pupils or disclose confidential information.

Breaches of this policy by members of staff will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content, could lead to prosecution, disciplinary action or dismissal. Members of staff will be aware that if their out-of-work activity brings the school into disrepute, disciplinary action will be taken.

Attempts to bully, coerce or manipulate members of the school community via social media by members of staff will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

5. Parent/carers social media use

The school recognises that social media provides parents/carers with valuable opportunities to celebrate their children's achievements, communicate with others and engage with the wider school community. We ask that parents/carers use social media responsibly and respectfully to help maintain a positive, safe and supportive environment for all members of the school community.

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Treat all members of the school community with courtesy and respect when using social media.
- Support the school's values by communicating responsibly and appropriately online.
- Respect the privacy of pupils, families and staff.
- Raise concerns directly with the school using the appropriate procedures, rather than through social media.

Parents/carers should not:

- Publish photographs, videos or personal information that identify other pupils without the appropriate permission.
- Post comments about individual pupils, parents/carers or members of staff that could be considered offensive, defamatory, discriminatory, threatening or harassing.
- Speculate about safeguarding matters, behaviour incidents or other confidential school issues.
- Share confidential or sensitive information relating to the school, its staff, pupils or families.
- Use social media to make complaints about the school instead of following the school's Complaints Policy.
- Encourage or participate in online behaviour that may undermine the reputation of the school or negatively affect the wellbeing of members of the school community.

Where concerns arise regarding a parent/carers' use of social media, the school will seek to resolve the matter informally wherever possible. Parents/carers may be invited to meet with the headteacher to discuss concerns and agree appropriate actions. Where social media activity is considered to be unlawful, abusive, defamatory, discriminatory, threatening or amounts to harassment, the school may involve the appropriate agencies, including the police where necessary.

Where appropriate, the school may remove or restrict the ability of individuals to comment on or interact with the school's social media accounts.

6. Parent/carers social media use

Pupils will be taught how to use social media safely and responsibly through the school's Computing, RSHE and Online Safety curriculum. Pupils are expected to follow the Behaviour Policy and Online Safety Policy when using digital technologies. Where concerns arise relating to pupils' use of social media outside school, these will be addressed where they impact on the safety, wellbeing or education of pupils or the wider school community.

7. Data protection principles

The school will obtain parental consent for the use of pupils' images and videos through the Arbor Parent App when a child starts at Ordsall Primary School. The school will only use images and videos in accordance with the permissions recorded on Arbor. Consent will remain in place for the duration of the pupil's time at the school unless it is changed by the parent/carer by contacting the school. Consent provided for the use of images and videos only applies to school accounts – staff, pupils and parents/carers are not permitted to post any imagery or videos on personal accounts.

Parents/carers may withdraw or amend their consent at any time by contacting the school. The school will update the pupil's consent record on Arbor and ensure that future use of images and videos reflects the revised permissions. Changes to consent will not affect images or videos that were published before the consent was amended. Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, the school will remove previously published content, for example from the school's social media accounts.

Consent can be provided for certain principles only, for example only images of a pupil are permitted to be posted, and not videos. The available consent options are recorded and managed through the school's Arbor system.

Only school-owned devices will be used to take images and videos of the school community, unless explicit permission is given by the headteacher. Only appropriate images and videos of pupils will be posted in which they are suitably dressed, e.g. it would not be suitable to display an image of a pupil in swimwear.

When posting on social media, the school will use group or class images or videos with general labels, e.g. 'sports day'.

When posting images and videos of pupils, the school will apply data minimisation techniques, such as anonymisation (blurring a photograph), to reduce the risk of a pupil being identified. The school will not post pupils' personal details on social media platforms and pupils' full names will never be used alongside any videos or images in which they are present.

Before posting on social media, staff will:

- Check the pupil's image consent permissions recorded on Arbor before publishing any image or video.
- Ensure that there is no additional identifying information relating to a pupil.

8. Safeguarding

Any disclosures made by pupils to staff about online abuse, harassment or exploitation, whether they are the victim or disclosing on behalf of another child, will be handled in line with the Child Protection Policy.

Staff should be professionally curious where concerning social media activity may indicate wider safeguarding concerns, including exploitation, bullying, radicalisation, self-harm or child-on-child abuse.

Concerns regarding a staff member's online behaviour will be reported to the headteacher, who will decide on the best course of action in line with the relevant policies. If the concern is about the headteacher, it will be reported to the chair of governors.

Concerns regarding a pupil's online behaviour will be reported to the DSL, who will investigate any concerns with relevant staff members, e.g. the headteacher and ICT technicians, and manage concerns in accordance with relevant policies depending on their nature, e.g. the Behaviour Policy and Child Protection Policy.

Staff should be aware that AI-generated content, manipulated images (deepfakes) and impersonation may present safeguarding risks and should report concerns to the DSL.

Where there is a concern that illegal activity has taken place, the headteacher will contact the police. The school will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils, e.g. calling the police, where criminal behaviour is thought to be inadvertent and as a result of ignorance or normal developmental curiosity, e.g. a pupil has taken and distributed indecent imagery of themselves. The DSL will decide in which cases this response is appropriate and will manage such cases in line with the Child Protection Policy.

As part of the usual communication with parents/carers, the school will reinforce the importance of pupils being safe online and inform parents/carers what systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use.

9. Cyberbullying

Any reports of cyberbullying on social media platforms by pupils will be handled in accordance with the Anti-bullying Policy.

Cyberbullying against pupils or staff is not tolerated under any circumstances. Incidents of cyberbullying are dealt with quickly and effectively wherever they occur in line with the Anti-bullying Policy.

10. Training

The school recognises that early intervention can protect pupils who may be at risk of cyberbullying or negative social media behaviour. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils. Staff will also receive updates where there are emerging online risks, new social media platforms or changes to statutory guidance.

Pupils will be educated about online safety and appropriate social media use on a termly basis through a variety of mediums, including assemblies, PSHE lessons and cross-curricular links. Pupils will be provided with material to reinforce their knowledge.

Training for all pupils, staff and parents/carers will be refreshed in light of any significant incidents or changes.

11. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher and governing body.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff, pupils and parents/carers.