



St Alphege CE Infant School

Social Media Policy



Date of last review: November 2023

Date of next review: November 2024

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jacqui Spinks (Head of School)

Governor responsible for Safeguarding: Mrs Paula Trewin

This policy will be reviewed at least annually. It will also be revised following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

1. Policy aims and scope

- a. This policy has been written by St Alphege CE Infant School and Sunbeams Nursery, where appropriate, involving staff, learners and parents/carers, building on the Local Authorities social media policy template with specialist advice and input as required, taking into account the DfE statutory guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' 2021, [Early Years and Foundation Stage](#) 2021 '[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)' 2018 and the local [Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership](#) (KSCMP) procedures.
- b. The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all members of the school community when using social media.
 - i. St Alphege CE Infant School and Sunbeams Nursery, recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to ensure that all learners and staff are protected from potential harm when using social media.
 - ii. As outlined in our child protection policy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Jacqui Spinks, Head of School is recognised as having overall responsibility for online safety.
- c. 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 learners, 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
 - Child protection policy
 - Staff code of conduct
 - Confidentiality policy
 - Curriculum policies, such as: Computing, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
 - Data security and GDPR
 - Mobile and smart technology

- Online Safety

3. General social media expectations

- All members of the school community are expected to engage in social media in a positive and responsible manner.
- All members of the school community are advised not to post or share content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others on any social media service.
- We will control learner and staff access to social media whilst using school provided devices and systems on site, using appropriate filtering and monitoring systems installed on the schools Wi-Fi.
- Inappropriate or excessive use of social media during school hours or whilst using school devices may result in removal of internet access and/or disciplinary action.
- The use of social media or apps, for example as a formal remote learning platform will be robustly risk assessed by the DSL/ Head of School prior to use. Any use will take place in accordance with our Acceptable Use Policy.
- Concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of the school community on social media will be taken seriously. Concerns will be managed in accordance with the appropriate policies, including anti-bullying, allegations against staff, behaviour, home school-agreements, staff code of conduct, Acceptable Use Policies, and child protection.

4. Staff use of social media

- The use of social media during school hours for personal use is not permitted for staff, unless on their allocated breaktimes and away from the children. Staff will be expected to access social media sites safely and within the constraints of our AUPs at all times.
- 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 child protection and 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 school.
- Members of staff are encouraged not to identify themselves as employees of the 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 learners and their family members or colleagues, will not be shared or discussed on social media sites at any time.
- 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 learners and their families

- Staff will not use any personal social media accounts to contact learners or their family members.
- All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add any current or past learners or their family members, as 'friends' on any personal social media accounts.

- Any communication from learners and parents/carers received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the DSL (or deputy)
- Any pre-existing relationships or situations, which mean staff cannot comply with this requirement, will be discussed with the DSL.
- Decisions made and advice provided in these situations will be formally recorded to safeguard learners, members of staff and the setting.

5. Official use of social media

- St Alphege CE Infant School and Sunbeams Nursery, official social media channels are: <https://www.facebook.com/stalphege>
- The school also has a private YouTube channel to enable the sharing of unlisted videos to members of the school community for celebration or publicity purposes and to facilitate home learning. Links to the videos will be shared directly with parents/carers and will not be available to publicly view at any time.
- The official use of social media sites by St Alphege CE Infant School and Sunbeams Nursery only takes place with clear educational or community engagement objectives and with specific intended outcomes and the use has been formally risk assessed and approved by the Head of School and Executive Headteacher prior to use.
- Official social media sites are suitably protected and, where possible, run and linked to our website.
 - 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.
 - The Head of School/ DSL has overall management responsibility and access to account information and login details for our social media channels.
- Official social media use will be conducted in line with existing policies, including but not limited to anti-bullying, data protection, confidentiality and child protection.
- All communication on official social media platforms by staff on behalf of the school will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny. Public communications on behalf of the school will, where appropriate and possible, be read and agreed by at least one other colleague.
- Parents/carers and learners will be informed of any official social media use, along with expectations for safe use and action taken to safeguard the community.

- 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. All information posted via the school social media channels will also be included on the weekly newsletter which is sent to all members of the school community.
- 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.
 - 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 school, unless they are authorised to do so.
 - Not engage with any private or direct messaging with current or past learners or their family members.
 - Inform their line manager, the DSL (or deputy) and/or the Head of School/ Executive Headteacher of any concerns, such as criticism, inappropriate content or contact from learners.

6. Learners' use of social media

- The use of social media for personal use is not permitted for learners as they are all under the legal age of 13. The age of our children means that any access to this could potentially pose a safeguarding concerns and parents will be spoken to directly should concerns be raised in relation to children's access to social media accounts.
- 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.
- Learners will be specifically taught how to keep themselves safe online as outlined in our online safety policy.

- Concerns regarding learners use of social media will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate, particularly when concerning underage use of social media services and games.

7. Policy monitoring and review

- Technology evolves and changes rapidly. The 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 annual AUPs, training, signposting to relevant services and the dissemination of support and guidance.

8. 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.
- 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 learners 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.
- Learners, 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) will seek advice from the [Education People's Education Safeguarding Service](#) or other agency in accordance with our child protection policy.