



# Social Media Policy

**Approved by SLT on:**

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022

**Review Date:**

Spring Term 2026

# BARLEY LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### INCLUSION STATEMENT

We are a multicultural school where all children and adults are valued and respected as individuals, irrespective of:

- race
- religion
- belief
- gender
- ability
- disability
- social circumstances
- sexual orientation
- age
- part time contract or trade union memberships

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and the emotional wellbeing of staff so that every child and adult feels welcomed, fulfilled, safe, secure and confident. Children and adults must be aware of their responsibility to report incidents of inappropriate behaviour.

### Social Media

We, at Barley Lane Primary School, understand that social media is 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.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of staff, governors, parents and carers setting up personal websites and blogs and using social networking websites.

### Social Media Definitions

Barley Lane Primary School defines “social media” as any online platform that offers real-time interaction between the user and other individuals or groups including but not limited to:

- Online discussion forums, such as netmums.com.
- Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook.
- Media sharing services, such as YouTube.
- ‘Micro-blogging’ applications, such as Twitter.
- Virtual game worlds, such as Moshi Monsters, Club Penguin, Minecraft

Barley Lane Primary School defines “cyber bullying” as any use of social media or communication technology to bully an individual or group.

Barley Lane Primary School defines “members of the school community” as any teacher, member of support staff, pupil, parent/carer of pupil, governor or ex-pupil.

### Key Roles and Responsibilities

- The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Social Media Policy and procedures at Barley Lane Primary School.

- The Governing Body has responsibility for ensuring that the Social Media Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- The headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Social Media Policy and procedures of BLPS.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for following the Social Media Policy and for ensuring pupils do so also. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently in the classroom.
- Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the social media habits of their child/children at home.
- Parents and carers will be expected to promote safe social media behaviour.

## **Social Networking Sites**

The school expects all staff, governors and encourages parents and carers to:

- Ensure that they do not conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the school
- Take care not to allow their interaction on these websites to damage working relationships between members of staff and clients of the school.

School does not allow the use of age-restricted social network site by children. We would recommend to parents that they do not allow their child to use them and encourage them to close down any accounts that the children have. Adult social networking sites such as, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Pinterest, have a minimum age limit of 13 years old all other social media sites have age rating of 14+ and are blocked by the school filtering system.

Problems that may occur with social networking sites include:

- Cyber-bullying: people being victimised through malicious messages
- Children allowing private information to be visible to others
- Children viewing inappropriate content
- Identity Theft (Staff, governors, parents and carers should be aware that social networking websites are a public forum, particularly if they are part of a 'network'. Staff, governors, parents and carers should not assume that their entries on any website will remain private
- Staff, governors, parents and carers must also be security conscious and should take steps to protect themselves from identity theft, for example by restricting the amount of personal information that they give out
- Radicalisation and grooming.

## **Cyber bullying**

- At Barley Lane Primary School, cyber bullying is taken seriously.
- Incidents of cyber bullying will be dealt with and reported along the same chain as the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Staff members should never respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents.

Incidents should instead be reported as inappropriate, and support sought from their line manager or senior staff member. Evidence from the incident should be saved, including screen prints of messages or web pages, and the time and date of the incident.

- Where the perpetrator is a current pupil or colleague, most cases can be dealt with through the school's own disciplinary procedures.
- Where the perpetrator is an adult, in nearly all cases, a senior staff member should invite the victim to a meeting to address their concerns. Where appropriate, the perpetrator will be asked to remove the offensive content.
- If the perpetrator refuses to comply, it is up to the school to decide what to do next. This could include contacting the internet service provider in question through their reporting mechanisms, if the offensive content breaches their terms and conditions.
- If the material is threatening, abusive, sexist, of a sexual nature or constitutes a hate crime, the school should consider contacting the police.
- As part of our on-going commitment to the prevention of cyber bullying, regular education and discussion about online safety will take place as part of computing, PSHE, assemblies, etc.

## **Training of Staff**

We recognise that early intervention can protect pupils who may be at risk of cyber bullying or negative social media behaviour. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils.

Teachers and support staff will receive training on the Social Media Policy as part of their new starter induction.

Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

## **Pupil Expectations**

Pupils are responsible for following the school rules and will be expected to follow requests from teachers.

## **Social Media Use – Staff**

- Staff may not access social media during lesson time, unless it is part of a curriculum activity.
- Staff may use social media during their break times on their personal devices.
- Members of staff should avoid using social media in front of pupils.
- Members of staff must not “friend” or otherwise contact pupils or parents/carers through social media.
- If pupils or parents/carers attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact members of staff through social media, they should be reported to the headteacher.
- Members of staff should avoid identifying themselves as an employee of BLPS on social media.
- Members of staff must not post content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or pupils.
- Where teachers or members of staff use social media in a personal capacity, they should make it clear that their views are personal.
- Teachers or members of staff must not post any information which could identify a pupil, class or the school.

- Members of staff should not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.
- 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 should be aware that if their out-of-work activity brings Barley Lane Primary School into disrepute, disciplinary action will be taken
- Members of staff should regularly check their online presence for negative content via search engines.
- If inappropriate content is accessed online, must inform the ICT team
- Attempts to bully coerce or manipulate members of the school community, via social media, by teachers and members of staff will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.
- Members of staff should not leave a computer or other device logged in when away from their desk, or save passwords on a public computer

### **Social Media Use – Pupils and Parents/Carers**

- Pupils may not access social media during lesson time, unless it is part of a curriculum activity.
- Breaches of this policy by pupils will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content could lead to exclusion.
- Pupils and parents/carers must not attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact members of staff through social media. If attempts to contact members of staff through social media are made, they will be reported to the headteacher.
- If members of staff attempt to “friend” or otherwise contact pupils or parents/carers through social media, they should be reported to the headteacher.
- Pupils and parents/carers should not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.
- Pupils and parents/carers must not post content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or pupils.
- Pupils at BLPS must not sign up to social media sites that have an age restriction above the pupil’s age.
- If inappropriate content is accessed online on school premises, it must be reported to a teacher.