Willoughton Primary School

The Cliff Federation
Social Media Policy

Policy Information			
Status:	Recommended with Safeguarding	**Reviewed by:**	Full Governing Board
Cycle of Review:	Annually	**Policy Ratified**	March 2026
Signed as accepted:			

Social Media Policy (Updated for UK Compliance 2026)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safe, responsible and appropriate use of social media by staff, pupils, parents/carers and governors, while safeguarding children and protecting the reputation of the school.

This policy applies to all members of the school community.

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2. Legal Framework

This policy is written in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003

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3. Definition of Social Media

Social media includes any online platform that allows users to create, share or exchange information, images or messages. This includes, but is not limited to: - Social networking sites (e.g. X, Facebook) - Messaging platforms (e.g. WhatsApp) - Content sharing platforms (e.g. YouTube)

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4. Use of Official School Social Media

The school will operate official social media accounts which are managed by authorised staff.

Content may include: - School updates and announcements - Educational activities and achievements - Events and celebrations

The school will ensure that: - Content is appropriate, accurate and respectful - Personal data is only shared where lawful and appropriate - Consent is obtained before publishing identifiable images of pupils

The school will not post: - Personal or sensitive information - Inappropriate or offensive content - Political statements

he schools' official social media channels are as follows:

X (formerly Twitter) @WilloughtonSch

Class Dojo (Hemswell Cliff Primary school and Willoughton Primary School)

These accounts are managed by the Senior Leadership Team. Classroom staff also have authorisation to post to photos, videos and communication.

Class Dojo

The school will post on Class Dojo:

- Alerts about changes (e.g. changes to procedures, severe weather updates)
- Reminders (e.g. approaching deadlines, events or class activities, reminders about policies/procedures)
- Advertisements for school events or activities
- Job vacancies or requests for volunteers
- Links to newsletters, guidance and factsheets for parents and carers
- 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 not** post on Facebook:

- Names and 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

X (formerly Twitter)

The school posts on X:

- Achievements of pupils and staff
- Photos or posts about school trips, events and activities

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5. Moderation and Monitoring

The school will monitor its social media platforms and will remove content that is: - Abusive, discriminatory or offensive - Misleading or harmful - In breach of confidentiality or privacy

Users who repeatedly breach expectations may be blocked and further action taken where necessary.

Staff responsible for our social media accounts will delete as soon as reasonably possible:

- Abusive, racist, sexist, homophobic or inflammatory comments
- Personal information, such as telephone numbers, address details, etc.
- Posts that advertise commercial activity or ask for donations

Every reasonable effort will be taken to politely address concerns or behaviour of individual users, following the school's complaints policy. If users are repeatedly abusive or inappropriate, they will be blocked.

Staff responsible for our social media accounts will also ensure that all content shared on social media platforms is age appropriate for the school community.

Following other social media users

The school:

- Will only 'follow' or 'like' X pages with a non-commercial interest – being 'liked' by us doesn't imply endorsement of any kind.

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Personal use of social media by staff

- The school expects all staff (including governors and volunteers) to consider the safety of pupils and the risks (reputational and financial) to the school when using social media channels, including when doing so in a personal capacity. Staff are also responsible for checking and maintaining appropriate privacy and security settings of their personal social media accounts.
- Staff members will report any safeguarding issues they become aware of.
- When using social media, staff must not:
- Use personal accounts to conduct school business

Accept 'friend requests' from, or communicate with, pupils past or present (unless they are family members)

- 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 social media during timetabled teaching time
- Any concerns regarding a member of staff's personal use of social media will be dealt with in line with the staff behaviour policy.
- Any communication received from current pupils (unless they are family members) on any personal social media accounts will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or member of the senior leadership team immediately.

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6. Data Protection and Privacy

All use of social media must comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The school will: - Ensure a lawful basis for processing personal data - Obtain appropriate consent for images and personal information - Store and handle data securely - Report data breaches in line with statutory requirements

Staff must not share personal data relating to pupils, staff or families via social media.

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7. Safeguarding Responsibilities

All staff must adhere to safeguarding requirements in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff must: - Report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Not communicate with pupils via personal social media accounts - Maintain professional boundaries at all times

Any inappropriate contact or online concern must be reported immediately.

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8. Personal Use of Social Media by Staff

Staff are expected to maintain high professional standards when using social media in a personal capacity.

Staff must not: - Communicate with current or former pupils via personal accounts (unless family members) - Share confidential or sensitive information - Post images of pupils - Make comments that could damage the reputation of the school - Represent personal views as those of the school

Staff must: - Maintain appropriate privacy settings - Act in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct

Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

- The school expects all staff (including governors and volunteers) to consider the safety of pupils and the risks (reputational and financial) to the school when using social media channels, including when doing so in a personal capacity. Staff are also responsible for checking and maintaining appropriate privacy and security settings of their personal social media accounts.
- Staff members will report any safeguarding issues they become aware of.
- When using social media, staff must not:
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9. Use of Messaging Applications

Messaging platforms (e.g. WhatsApp) must not be used for official school communication unless formally authorised and risk assessed.

Where approved: - Communication must remain professional - No personal data should be shared inappropriately - Safeguarding and data protection requirements must be followed

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10. Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are expected to use social media responsibly.

They must not: - Post defamatory or abusive comments about the school or individuals - Share images of other children without consent - Use social media to raise complaints

Concerns should be raised through the school's formal complaints procedure.

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 and other pupils and children
- 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 or pupils
- Draw attention to, or discuss, behaviour incidents

- Post images of children other than their own

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11. Online Safety

The school recognises its responsibilities under the Online Safety Act 2023 and will take reasonable steps to: - Protect pupils from harmful online content - Promote safe online behaviour - Educate pupils about responsible social media use

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12. Monitoring and Enforcement

The Headteacher will monitor compliance with this policy.

Any breaches will be addressed in line with relevant school policies, including the staff disciplinary policy and safeguarding procedures.

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13. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated in line with legislative or organisational changes.

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14. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Data Protection Policy

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15. Conclusion

The school is committed to ensuring that social media is used safely, responsibly and in a way that protects all members of the school community and complies with current UK legislation.