Social Media Policy

(GDPR)

2026 – 2027

(Reviewed September 2025)

Introduction

This policy applies to all School staff regardless of their employment status. It is to be read in conjunction with the School's Electronic Communications Policy. This policy does not form part of the terms and conditions of employee's employment with the School and is not intended to have contractual effect. It does however set out the School's current practices and required standards of conduct and all staff are required to comply with its contents. Breach of the provisions of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence which may result in disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

This Policy may be amended from time to time and staff will be notified of any changes no later than one month from the date those changes are intended to take effect.

Purpose of this Policy

The School recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs and Wikipedia. However, staff use of social media can pose risks to the School's confidential and proprietary information, its reputation and it can jeopardise our compliance with our legal obligations.

To minimise these risks, avoid loss of productivity and to ensure that our IT resources and communications systems are used only for appropriate work related purposes, all School staff are required to comply with the provisions in this policy.

Palfrey Junior School has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work. This policy is supplementary to support our Code of Conduct and has been written to set out the key principles that we expect of all members of staff with respect to their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites.

Social networking activities conducted online outside work, such as blogging (writing personal journals to publicly accessible internet pages), involvement in social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Myspace or Bebo and posting material, images or comments on sites such as You Tube can have a negative effect on our organisation's reputation or image.

We publish information about our school and communicate with parents / carers in many ways:

- Marvellous Me
- parents' evenings
- informal meetings
- newsletters
- email and text messages
- our own website
- social media
- Display screens within the school
- Display/notice boards within the school

We welcome anyone who is interested in the life of our school to follow us and connect with us on the various social media sites that we use. At the moment this is Facebook, Twitter and our website. These sites allow us to communicate much more about day-to-day life in school; the kind of detail that wouldn't normally be enough for a newsletter or a meeting. Only the Head teacher can post on these media sites.

It's important for everybody's safety that we are clear about how we use these sites and what is acceptable behaviour from the people who choose to follow us. We use our social media sites to publish information that is of general interest. We do not believe it is an appropriate place to discuss personal matters that are specific to individual members of our community, whether that be children, parents or staff.

Key Principles

- Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members of staff and it is essential that everyone at Palfrey Junior considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites out of school. Anyone working in the school either as a paid employee or volunteer must not communicate with children via social networking.
- Everyone at Palfrey Junior School has a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the school, and to treat colleagues and members of the school with professionalism and respect.
- It is important to protect everyone at Palfrey Junior School from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.
- We will not tolerate any form of bullying on our social media accounts
- This policy relates to social networking outside work and from mobile devices.
- Staff accessing social networking sites at work or blogging for personal use, using school equipment is strictly not permitted.
- If the occasion arises where children need to access a networking site in school, then they will be monitored by appropriate teaching staff.
- Children are taught about internet safety in school, however Palfrey Junior School expects parents to monitor children outside of school hours if they access the internet or social network sites via home computing systems or mobile phones.

Who is covered by this policy?

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades within the School, including senior managers, officers, governors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as **Staff** in this policy).

Third parties who have access to our electronic communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with this policy.

Scope and Purpose of this Policy

This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Wikipedia, all other social networking sites, and all other internet postings, including blogs.

It applies to the use of social media for both work and personal purposes, whether during work hours or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours and regardless of whether the School's equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

Staff may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

Personnel responsible for implementing the policy

The Board of Governors have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy, but have delegated day-to-day responsibility for its operation to the Headteachers.

Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks also lies with the Headteachers.

All senior School Staff have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below its requirements.

All School Staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Headteachers in the first instance. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed by email to Baljit Kaur-Sahota on postbox@palfrey-j.walsall.sch.uk

Compliance with related policies and agreements

Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies. If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, employees are prohibited from using social media to:

a) Breach our Electronic information and communications systems policy;

b) Breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;

c) Breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality;

d) Breach our Disciplinary Rules;

e) Defame or disparage the School, its Staff, its pupils or parents, its affiliates, partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders;

f) Harass or bully other Staff in any way or breach our Anti-harassment and bullying policy;

g) Unlawfully discriminate against other Staff or third parties or breach our Equal opportunities policy;

h) Breach our Data protection policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague online);

i) Breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).

Staff should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the School and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.

Staff who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Personal use of social media

Personal use of social media is never permitted during working time or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems.

Staff should not use a work email address to sign up to any social media and any personal social media page should not make reference to their employment with the School (excluding LinkedIn, where prior permission is sought from the Head teachers).

Staff must not take photos or posts from social media that belongs to the School for their own personal use.

Monitoring

The contents of our IT resources and communications systems are the School's property. Therefore, staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post conversation or message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems.

The School reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, Staff members activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your acknowledgement of this policy and your use of such resources and systems. This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, log-ins, recordings and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network monitoring technologies.

The School may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time after they are created, and may delete such copies from time to time without notice.

All Staff are advised not to use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that he or she wishes to be kept private or confidential from the School.

If you are contacted for comments about the School for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, you must direct the inquiry to the Headteachers and must not respond without advanced written approval.

Responsible use of social media

The following sections of the policy provide staff with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.

Photographs for use of Social Media

Any photos for social media posts may only be taken using school cameras/devices. All photos must be deleted immediately from the device, once the photos have been uploaded to a device belonging to the School.

Staff Protocol for use of Social Media

Where any post is going to be made on the School's own social media the following steps must be taken:

1. Ensure that permission from the child's parent has been sought before information is used on social media (via Parent Social Media Agreement and Photograph Agreement).
2. Ensure that there is no identifying information relating to a child/children in the post - for example any certificates in photos are blank/without names or the child's name cannot be seen on the piece of work.
3. The post must be a positive and relevant post relating to the children, the good work of staff, the School or any achievements.
4. Social Media can also be used to issue updates or reminders to parents/guardians and James Pearce will have overall responsibility for this. Should you wish for any reminders to be issued you should contact James Pearce to ensure that any post can be issued.
5. Only James Pearce is permitted to post information, but all staff have responsibility to ensure that the Social Media Policy has been adhered to.

Protecting our business reputation

Staff must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:

i. The School;

ii. Current, past or prospective Staff as defined in this policy

iii. Current, past or prospective pupils

iv. Parents, carers or families of (iii)

v. The School's suppliers and services providers; and

vi. Other affiliates and stakeholders.

Staff should also avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the School's reputation, even indirectly.

If Staff are using social media they should make it clear in any social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. Staff should write in the first person and use a personal rather than School e-mail address when communicating via social media.

Staff are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media. Staff should remember that what they publish might be available to be read by the masses (including the School itself, future employers and social acquaintances) for a long time. Staff should keep this in mind before they post content.

If Staff disclose whether directly or indirectly their affiliation to the School as a member of Staff whether past, current or prospective, they must also state that their views do not represent those of the School.

Staff must ensure that their profile and any content posted are consistent with the professional image they are required to present to colleagues, pupils and parents.

Staff must avoid posting comments about confidential or sensitive School related topics. Even if Staff make it clear that their views on such topics do not represent those of the School, such comments could still damage the School's reputation and incur potential liability.

If a member of Staff is uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, he or she should refrain from making the communication until he or she has discussed it with his Line Manager.

If a member of Staff sees content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the School, it's Staff, pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders, he or she is required to report this in the first instance to the Headteachers without unreasonable delay. All staff are responsible for protecting the School's reputation.

Respecting intellectual property and confidential information

Staff should not do anything to jeopardise School confidential information and intellectual property through the use of social media.

In addition, Staff should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property of other Schools, organisations, companies and individuals, which can create liability for the School, as well as the individual author.

Staff must not use the School's logos, brand names, slogans or other trademarks, or post any of our confidential or proprietary information without express prior written permission from the Headteachers.

To protect yourself and the School against liability for copyright infringement, where appropriate, reference sources of particular information you post or upload and cite them accurately. If you have any questions about whether a particular post or upload might violate anyone's copyright or trademark, ask the Headteachers in the first instance before making the communication.

Respecting colleagues, pupils, parents, clients, service providers and stakeholders

Staff must not post anything that their colleagues, the School's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders may find offensive, including discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity.

Staff must not post anything related to colleagues, the School's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders without their advanced written permission.

Monitoring and review of this policy

Baljit Kaur-Sahota together with the Headteachers shall be responsible for reviewing this policy from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice. The Board of Governors has responsibility for approving any amendments prior to implementation.

The Headteachers has responsibility for ensuring that any person who may be involved with administration or investigations carried out under this policy receives regular and appropriate training to assist them with these duties.

If Staff have any questions about this policy or suggestions for additions that they would like to be considered on review, they may do so by emailing Baljit Kaur-Sahota in the first instance.

Signed: **Print:** **Date:** **Head teacher**	**Signed:** **Print:** **Date:** **Chair of Governors**

(Appendix A – Parent Letter)

Social Media Consent (GDPR)

Dear Parents,

As you are already aware we use Facebook and Twitter to communicate school news, photos, videos and upcoming events. This is a key means of not only promoting the many wonderful things that we do at the school but also as a way of engaging you in your children's daily activities more effectively.

We hope by using social media we will further improve communications between the school and the community and we would love to be able to share more photos with you to show what the children are getting up to at school and on trips.

In order to do, under the GDPR regulations we need to obtain your permission to use your child's image on Facebook and Twitter in the same way that we do on the school's website. Lots of other schools share events and activities regularly through social media and it is important that we embrace this development.

Please can you complete and return the consent form attached. Whilst we respect your right to decline permission, I would ask that you please consider your decision carefully so that we avoid a situation whereby it becomes too time consuming and complicated to manage who can and cannot appear in photos.

Please note that only senior leaders will be posting/tweeting pictures on the above sites and have been trained regarding what is appropriate content.

We would remind all parents that social networking sites are not an appropriate place to discuss any concerns you may have and we request that parents continue to raise any questions by arranging an appointment with the class teacher, Head teacher or Home Link Worker. If you change your mind at any time, you can let us know by reporting at the school office or by emailing: postbox@palfrey-j.walsall.sch.uk

---

Social Media (child) – Parental Consent Form

Childs name: **Class No:**

Please tick the relevant box(es) below and return this form to school.

- ☐ I am happy for the school to post photographs of my child on Facebook and Twitter

- ☐ I am NOT happy for the school to post photographs of my child on Facebook and Twitter .

Parent or Carers Signature: **Date:**

(Appendix B - Adult Letter)

Social Media Consent (GDPR)

School Photography (adult) – Letter

At Palfrey Junior School we occasionally take photographs or video footage of Staff, volunteers, parents and governors. In order to comply with the GDPR Act 2018, we are required to seek the permission of those adults whose photographs might be used by the school for displays or in school publications. If adults could give their consent in advance, the whole process would be made more manageable.

Below are listed the types of photographs/images which we make take:

- Individual/group photographs for classroom display
- Individual/group photographs for evidence profiles
- general photographs of adults and children working in classrooms or around the school
- photographs of school events (eg class productions, sports day, choir, football
- matches etc)
- awards ceremonies (eg Praise assemblies)
- photographs of external events (eg sports events)
- educational visits
- photographs/videos of school productions (pantomimes etc)

Generally these pictures are either used in pupil books or records or displayed around school in classrooms, corridors or in the school halls. However, on some occasions, we may submit photographs for publication in the school newsletter, local or national newspapers. We also have a school website which we like to be up to date and reflect the work of the school. This website may include pictures of some adults and children taking part in daily activities.

School Photography (staff/volunteer/student/governor) – Consent Form

Name:

Please tick the relevant box(es) below and return this form to school.

- ☐ I am happy for the school to take photographs of me.
- ☐ I am happy for photos of me to be used on the school website.
- ☐ I am happy for photos of me to be used in the school newsletter.
- ☐ I am happy for photos of me to be used in internal displays.
- ☐ I am NOT happy for the school to take or use photos of me.

If you change your mind at any time, you can let us know by reporting at the school office or Emailing: postbox@palfrey-j.walsall.sch.uk

If you have any other questions, please get in touch.

Sign: Print name:

Date: