

Believe • Persevere • Succeed

Social Media Policy

This policy is applicable to all Governors, Staff, Pupils, Parents

Statement of Intention

We are committed to fostering an environment that promotes **our vision** 'To continue to be recognised as a leading Prep School, providing unforgettable learning experiences which inspire our girls to **Believe** in themselves, to **Persevere** and **Succeed** in all they do'.

Our policies are designed to support the diverse needs of all our pupils, our staff, and our community. This policy and its procedures have been developed with due regard for our duties and obligations, for the safeguarding and wellbeing of all our pupils.

Principles of the policy

The safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, and the wider School community is paramount. Social media must never be used in a way that compromises safeguarding or child protection. All members of the School community are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and integrity when engaging with or referencing the School on social media.

Objectives of the policy

- To ensure that social media is used respectfully and responsibly. The School promotes open communication and accountability. Content shared must not bring the School into disrepute, breach confidentiality, or cause harm to others. Any concerns about inappropriate use of social media will be taken seriously and addressed in line with School policies and procedures.
- To provide clear guidance on acceptable and unacceptable use of social media, both within and outside of School settings
- To ensure that staff maintain appropriate professional boundaries and uphold the School's values in their online interactions
- To encourage positive communication between the School and families through appropriate and constructive use of social media platforms
- To align with relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including safeguarding, data protection, and staff conduct policies.



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Introduction

Social media is an integral part of modern communication and plays a significant role in how individuals and organisations interact, share information, and build community. At BPS, we recognise the potential of social media to celebrate events and achievements, strengthen relationships between School and parents and engage with the wider community.

However, with these opportunities come responsibilities. The use of social media must be carefully managed to protect the safety, privacy, and wellbeing of all members of our School community, and to uphold the reputation and values of the School.

This policy outlines the expectations and responsibilities for the appropriate use of social media by staff, pupils and parents. It aims to ensure that social media is used in a safe, respectful, and constructive manner that supports the School's mission and safeguarding commitments.

Social Media Statement

Social Media is any digital platform that enable users to create, share, or interact with content and to participate in social networking — including platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter/X and YouTube, LinkedIn and others. Environments such as multiplayer games (e.g. Roblox, Fortnite, Minecraft) or live-streaming/video platforms may also include social networking elements.

The School has a robust commitment to safe, responsible and positive use of social media across the School community.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, the School is committed to ensuring that pupils are protected from online risks including harmful content, harmful contact, harmful conduct, misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, grooming, bullying, harassment, and AI-generated or manipulated content.

The School implements robust filtering and monitoring systems, which are reviewed regularly, to reduce access to inappropriate or harmful social-media content. Staff receive training on identifying and responding to social-media-related safeguarding concerns, including child-on-child abuse that occurs online.

The School recognises that the School community benefits from a positive social media presence and staff and parents are encouraged to engage in positive, safe and creative use of these platforms.

The Social Media Policy is subject to the School's Codes of Conduct and Acceptable Use Agreements and this policy:

- Applies to all staff and any online communication that represents or impacts the School, posted at any time or from any location
- Promotes safe and responsible use of social media through training and education
- Covers monitoring of public social media activity relating to the School.

Professional and Personal Communication on Social Media

The School respects staff and parents' privacy; however, personal use of social media that risks professional standards or the School's reputation may result in further action.

Professional Communications

Communications via official School channels or accounts are covered by this policy in full.

Personal Communication

Personal use with no reference or impact on the School is referenced in the policy but is outside of the School's remit.

Staff Communication with Pupils

Staff must only communicate with pupils via School-managed platforms for educational purposes and must do so in line with safeguarding duties under KCSIE 2025.

Roles & Responsibilities - School Social Media Accounts

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Head of ICT and Innovation will oversee the posts on School social media platforms and will:

- Respect any request, noted on staff or pupil permission forms, not to be photographed or filmed for social media use
- Accept that pupil images must only be shared via official School channels
- Use good professional judgement
- Delete any image that could be misinterpreted immediately.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will:

- Provide training and guidance on safe, responsible use of social media
- Develop, implement, and review this policy in line with KCSIE 2025 and related legislation
- Assess and approve applications for new accounts
- Lead on investigating reported incidents, making initial assessments, and involving staff or external agencies as required.

Network Manager will:

- Create and securely store account details following SLT approval
- Support monitoring of School accounts
- Manage account closure or transfer when staff leave.

Staff will:

- Uphold the Staff Code of Conduct
- Maintain professional boundaries online at all times
 - avoid any online communication with pupils other than School-managed platforms for educational purposes and must do so in line with safeguarding duties

- Use social media professionally, respectfully and in line with School policies
- Attend training as required
- Ensure content on School accounts is accurate and appropriate
- Not use personal mobile phones during lesson time and/or whilst children are present.

Parents/Carers will:

- Be encouraged to monitor their child's use of any social media at home (noting the legal age to use such platforms)
- Maintain open communication with the School about any concerns
- Follow acceptable use guidelines on School platforms and encouraged to post positively about the School
- Be made aware that offensive posts about the School and its community will be addressed—initially by requesting removal, offering discussion and escalating if needed
- Understand that the School remains a no phone zone ensuring that any online posts do not include other children.

Pupils will:

- Be educated through the curriculum (including PSHE, RSHE and e-safety sessions) about safe, responsible, and lawful use of social media, digital resilience, and the risks associated with sharing personal information, images, or engaging with unknown individuals or groups
- Not access any social media accounts until they reach the legal age to do so
- Understand that inappropriate pupil posts will be addressed under the Behaviour Policy.

Process for Creating New Accounts

Any member of the School community may propose a new account where it supports educational or community aims. Proposals to SLT must include:

- Account purpose and intended audience
- Promotion strategy
- Named account managers (minimum two staff)
- Whether the account will be pupil or private status.

Accounts will only be approved once SLT is satisfied that managers (including volunteers/parents) have read this policy and completed appropriate training.

Tone

Content should be engaging, conversational, informative and professional

Monitoring and Behaviour

- School accounts must be checked regularly, including weekends and holidays, to address concerns regarding online bullying, safeguarding concerns or inappropriate behaviour
- Responses will follow a clear, consistent process to ensure issues are addressed appropriately

- Comments, queries or complaints should be acknowledged within 24 hours (next working day at weekends/holidays)
- Confidential or sensitive information must never be shared
- School accounts must not be used for personal gain

Legal Considerations

Staff will always respect copyright and seek permission before sharing content. Staff and parents should not post material that breaches data protection or confidentiality laws.

Handling Abuse

- Harmful or offensive comments must be dealt with quickly and sensitively
- If a discussion becomes abusive, block/report/delete the post
- Any abuse involving staff or pupils must be reported through School safeguarding and /or complaints policies.

Staff guidance - managing personal use of social media:

Staff should:

- Understand that social media is not truly private and can blur the lines between professional and private life
- Not use the School logo and/or branding on personal accounts
- Check settings regularly and test privacy to ensure that personal information is private
- Monitor digital footprint and online presence
- Regularly review online connections
- Monitor and control the use of their image
- Know how to report a problem or concern
- Understand that personal use of social media at work is allowed, but excessive use or anything that impacts duties may lead to disciplinary action
- Take note that personal use of social media that risks professional standards or the School's reputation may result further action. Illegal activity will be reported to the police or relevant agencies.

Related policies and titles

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Anti Bullying

Positive Behaviour

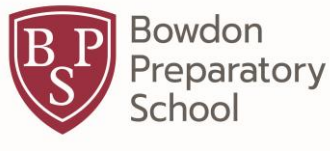
Acceptable Use Agreements

Online Safety

Data Protection

Exclusion

Staff Code of Conduct



Home School Agreement

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE 2025)

Policy Review and Dissemination

All members of staff and governors will receive a copy of this policy (via TEAMS link).

The policy will be available for parents on our website. A paper copy can be requested via the School Office office@bowdonprep.org.uk

SLT member responsible	SHughes
Governor / Board Responsible	Ed Co
Date of review	March 2026
Date of next review	March 2028

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