



SOCIAL MEDIA – PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Gorsewood Primary School understands the benefits of using social media; however, if misused, the school community can be negatively affected, this can include individual pupils, groups or classes of pupils, staff, parents or indeed the reputation of the school.

This code of conduct sets out clear procedures for how we expect parents to conduct themselves on social media and when using messenger apps, with regard to the school and its reputation. We ask that parents read this document and ensure that they always act in accordance with the stipulations detailed below.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This document has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

This document operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedure
- Social Media Policy
- Data Protection Policy

ONLINE SAFETY AND SOCIAL MEDIA CONDUCT

- Our school expects parents to behave in a civilised nature online and will not tolerate any of the following online behaviour:
- Posting defamatory content about parents, pupils, the school or its employees
- Complaining about the school's values and methods on social media
- Posting content containing confidential information regarding the school or any members of its community, e.g. a complaint outcome
- Contacting school employees through social media, including requesting to 'follow' or 'friend' them, or sending them private messages
- Creating or joining private groups or chats that victimise or harass a member of staff, a pupil or groups of pupils or the school in general
- Posting images of any staff members or pupils without their prior consent

Parents' social media usage will be in accordance with the school's Social Media Policy. The school retains the right to request that any damaging material is removed from social media websites. If parents wish to raise a complaint, the school has a Complaints Procedures Policy in place.

Breaches of this code of conduct will be taken seriously by the school and, in the event of illegal, defamatory, or discriminatory content, breaches could lead to prosecution. Parents are instructed not to post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this code of conduct.

ONLINE MESSAGING

The school expects parents to use messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, for purposes beneficial to themselves and the school, and will not accept any of the following behaviour:

- Sending abusive messages to fellow parents
- Sending abusive messages about members of staff, parents, pupils or the school
- Sharing confidential or sensitive information about members of staff, parents, pupils or the school
- Bringing the school or its staff into disrepute

The school appreciates the simplicity and ease of instant messaging; keeping in contact outside of school can benefit the school community by keeping it closer.

Should any problems arise from contact over messaging apps, the school will act quickly by contacting parents directly, to stop any issues continuing. The school can request a meeting with parents if any misconduct, such as sending abusive messages or posting defamatory content, occurs online. The headteacher can, with the permission of the parent, view messages sent between members of the parental body to deal with problems quickly and effectively. The headteacher can request that 'group chats' are closed down should any problems continue between parents or parental bodies.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGES

Parents may be permitted to take photos of their children at certain school events, such as sports day or during a theatre production; however, parents are only able to take photos of their own children, and should only share photos of their own children on social media. Parents will be informed when they are ABLE to take photographs.

Parents must not take photos of other children, staff members or volunteers, nor post them on social media without the consent of those within the images or, where applicable, their parents.

RESPONSIBILITY

Parents are responsible for supporting the school by monitoring their own use of social media and online messaging. Parents must adhere to the Social Media Code of Conduct for Parents at all times. Parents are responsible for ensuring they support the school by monitoring their children's use of social media and online messaging.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The headteacher will review this code of conduct on an annual basis and will communicate any changes to all teachers and parents. The next scheduled review date for this document is August 2026.