Haynes Lower School & Nursery

Social Media Policy

Policy Review:

This Policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Reviewed	**February 2026**
Next Review	**February 2028**

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Purpose and scope

This policy aims to:

- Set guidelines and rules on the use of school's social media channels
- Establish clear expectations for the way members of the school community engage with each other online
- Support the school's policies on data protection, online safety and safeguarding

Staff, students, parents/carers and volunteers are required to read, understand and comply with this social media policy.

This policy applies to all School staff regardless of their employment status. 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 applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during school/working hours or otherwise.

It applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using:

- School IT facilities and equipment
- Equipment belonging to members of staff and pupils
- Any other IT/Internet-enabled equipment

All members of the school should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, may be subject to copyright, safeguarding and data protection legislation. Everyone must also operate in line with the school's equalities, harassment, child protection, safer recruitment, and online safety and ICT acceptable use policies.

Definition of social media

For the purposes of this document, 'social media' is considered to include all technologies that allow individuals to communicate and share information (including photos and video), create and share content or to participate in social networking. Social networking sites and tools include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp. It also includes forums and discussion boards such as Yahoo! Groups or Google Groups, online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, and any other web sites that allow individual users or organisations to use simple publishing tools.

Use of official school social media

The school's official social media channels are as follows:

- Facebook – 'Haynes Lower'
- Instagram – Haynes_lower2020

These accounts are managed by the Head Teacher. Staff members who have not been authorised by the Head Teacher to manage, or post to, the account, must not access, or attempt to access, these accounts.

If you have suggestions for something you'd like to appear on our school social media channel(s), please speak to the Head Teacher.

Facebook and Instagram

The school will post on Facebook and Instagram:

- Advertisements for school events or activities
- Alerts about severe weather updates/emergency school closures
- 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
- Information about courses and events held by external agencies that may interest our school community

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

Moderation

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

- Abusive, racist, sexist, homophobic or inflammatory comments
- Comments we consider to be spam
- 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 'like' Facebook / Instagram pages with a non-commercial interest – being 'liked' by us doesn't imply endorsement of any kind

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
- 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

Staff are **strongly advised** not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts.

Staff should review and adjust their privacy setting to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.

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.

Staff should also not have contact via personal accounts with past pupils (if ongoing communication is required, this should be using via official school channels).

Staff are **advised** to change their name to protect their identity and not name their place of work.

Personal use of social media by pupils

The school is aware that there are many social media sites that state that they are not for under the age of 13 including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp. Facebook is targeted at older teenagers and adults. They have a no under-13 registration policy and recommend parental guidance for 13 to 16 year olds.

No pupil may access social networking sites during the school working day.

The school encourages pupils to

- Be respectful to members of staff, and the school, at all times
- Be respectful to other pupils and parents/carers
- 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

Pupils **should not** use social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff
- Complain about the school
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other pupils or parents/carers
- Post images of other pupils without their permission

Any concerns about a pupil's social media use will be dealt with in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Personal use of social media by parents/carers

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 or videos of children other than their own where these have been taken at a school event

WhatsApp groups & SeeSaw

We expect parents/carers to follow the above social media guidelines when using class WhatsApp groups and SeeSaw.

Training and awareness

As part of Safeguarding training, staff undertake training in cyber security and online safety.

Monitoring and review

We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, for legitimate business purposes. This includes ascertaining and demonstrating that expected standards are being met by those using the systems, and for the detection and investigation of unauthorised use of the systems (including where this is necessary to prevent or detect crime).

The Head Teacher will monitor the implementation of this policy, including making sure that it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the school.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

The governing board is responsible for approving this policy.

Related policies

- Safeguarding policy
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff behaviour policy
- Mobile phone use policy
- Online safety policy
- ICT Code of Conduct