



Social Media Code of Conduct for Parents/Carers Policy



Approved by governors on: 18.11.25

Signed by Chair of Governors:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. P. Hill', is written over the line for the Chair of Governors.

Head Teacher: Elizabeth Hopewell

Date for review: November 2026

Vision Statement

We aim to create a safe, happy and nurturing environment for all our children!

Mission Statement

The Orchard School strives to provide the best quality teaching and learning with an inclusive and personalised curriculum, where all achievements are celebrated.

1. Statement of Intent

The Orchard 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 or indeed the reputation of the school.

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

2. 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
- General Data Protection Policy (GDPR)

3. Online Safety and Social Media Conduct

Our school expects parents/carers to behave in a civilised nature online and will not tolerate any of the following online behaviour:

- Posting defamatory content about parents/carers, 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
- 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 student or groups of pupils or the school in general
- Identifying any staff members or pupils, either by name or using images, without their prior consent
- If pupils are communicating with each other on social media, parents/carers should not join the conversation or communicate with the student. Parents/carers should only become involved if it is to support your child in blocking another student.

Parents'/carers' 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/carers wish to raise a complaint, the school has a Complaints 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/carers are instructed not to post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this code of conduct.

This policy also applies to use of the school's social media and the school reserves the right to remove any comments/messages posted to these accounts that do not follow this policy.

4. Online Messaging

The school expects parents/carers 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/carers
- Sending abusive messages about members of staff, parents/carers, pupils or the school
- Sharing confidential or sensitive information about members of staff, parents/carers, pupils or the school
- Bringing the school or its staff into disrepute
- Communicating on behalf of the school

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. The school does not, however, condone parents/carers sending messages about school as though a voice of authority.

Should any problems arise from contact over messaging apps, the school will act quickly by contacting parents/carers directly, to stop any issues continuing.

The school can request a meeting with parents/carers if any misconduct, such as sending abusive messages or posting defamatory content, occurs online. The headteacher can, with the permission of the parent/carer, 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/carers or parental bodies.

5. Photography and Images

Parents/carers 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/carers. During events outside of school, such as dropping children off at school, or whilst visiting the school, parents/carers must not take photos of any members of the school community, nor share these photos on social media.

6. Responsibility

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