



# Social Media Code of Conduct for Parents/Carers

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## **Statement of intent**

Ralph Butterfield Primary School understands the benefits of using social media; however, if misused, the school community can be negatively affected, such as damage to the school's reputation.

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.

In sending a child to Ralph Butterfield Primary School, parents/carers are agreeing to adhere to the following code of conduct and ensure that they always act in accordance with the stipulations detailed below. This code of conduct works in conjunction with the Parent/Carer code of conduct.

## 1. 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 Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Photography Policy
- Home school agreement
- Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

## 2. Online safety and social media conduct

The school expects parents/carers and pupils 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, 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 or the school in general
- Posting images of any staff members or pupils without their prior consent

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 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/carers are instructed not to post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this code of conduct.

## 3. **[Updated]** Online messaging

**[Updated]** The school will expect parents to use messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, for purposes beneficial to themselves, other parents and the school, and will not accept any of the following behaviour:

- Sending abusive messages to fellow parents
- Sending abusive messages to members of staff
- Sending frequent messages to members of staff
- 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. The school does not, however, condone parents/carers sending frequent and unimportant messages to staff. Parents/carers should understand that staff should not be contacted outside of working hours. If parents/carers wish to talk to staff, parents/carers should arrange a meeting with the teacher by speaking to the school office.

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 unsolicited messages or posting defamatory content, occurs online.

The school's complaints procedure will be followed as normal if any members of the parent/carer teacher association or governing board cause any issues through their conduct whilst using online messaging.

The headteacher can, with the permission of the parent/carer, view messages sent between members of the Governing 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.

#### **4. Photography and images**

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

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 the school gate, 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.

More information can be found within the school's Photography Policy.

#### **5. 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 Pupil Code of Conduct.

## **6. Monitoring and review**

This document will be reviewed on a two-yearly basis by the headteacher and any changes made will be approved by governors communicated July 2026.

All parent/carers of existing pupils and new pupils will be provided with this code of conduct and parents/carers are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures and guidelines outlined.