Social Media Policy

Date policy created: September 2026

Date of last review:

Date of next review: September 2028

Created by: Mrs B Readey

1. Introduction

Ashton Primary School recognises that social media can be a valuable tool for celebrating school life, communicating with families, promoting events and achievements, and strengthening links between the school and the wider community.

The school is committed to using social media positively, professionally and safely. The safeguarding, privacy and wellbeing of pupils will always take priority over the promotion of school activities.

This policy sets out expectations for the management and use of the school's official social media accounts and should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy, Data Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Mobile Phone Policy.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- ensure that the school's social media accounts are used safely, appropriately and professionally;
- protect pupils, staff and the wider school community;
- ensure that photographs and videos of pupils are only shared where appropriate consent has been obtained;
- establish clear responsibility for managing and contributing to official school accounts;
- ensure that published content reflects the values and ethos of Ashton Primary School;
- reduce the risk of inappropriate disclosure of personal or confidential information;
- establish expectations regarding comments, messages and interaction with members of the public; and
- ensure that social media use complies with safeguarding, data protection and online safety requirements.

3. Official School Social Media Accounts

Ashton Primary School currently operates official accounts on:

- Facebook;
- Instagram; and
- TikTok.

The school may introduce, discontinue or change its use of social media platforms where appropriate.

Official school social media accounts must only be created with the approval of the Headteacher. Login information and administrative access must be appropriately controlled and must not be shared with unauthorised individuals.

4. Administration and Responsibility

Overall responsibility for the school's official social media presence rests with the Headteacher.

At the date of this policy, administrative responsibilities are as follows:

Facebook

- Laura Butterworth – Headteacher
- Bryony Readey – Assistant Headteacher

Instagram

- Lisa Smith – Class Teacher

Social Media Video Content

- Sarah Palmer – HLTA

Sarah Palmer supports the school by creating video content for its social media channels. Content must only be published through, or with the agreement of, staff authorised to manage the relevant school account.

Administrative access should be reviewed regularly and removed promptly when a member of staff changes role, leaves the school or no longer requires access.

Staff must not share account passwords or login information with unauthorised individuals.

5. Standards for Published Content

All content published through an official Ashton Primary School account must:

- reflect the positive ethos and values of the school;
- be appropriate for a primary school audience;
- maintain professional standards;
- respect the dignity and privacy of pupils, families and staff;
- not disclose confidential or sensitive information;
- not identify pupils unnecessarily;
- comply with the school's safeguarding and data protection responsibilities;
- use appropriate language, images, music and other media; and

- be checked carefully before publication.

Social media content should celebrate learning, achievement, events and wider school life without compromising the privacy or safety of pupils.

The school will avoid publishing information that could unnecessarily identify a child's routines, personal circumstances or other sensitive information.

6. Parental Consent for Photographs and Videos

At the beginning of each academic year, Ashton Primary School seeks permission from parents and carers regarding the use of images and videos of their children on the school's social media accounts.

Consent is separated into:

- photograph permission; and
- video permission.

This distinction must be respected when preparing and publishing content.

Before any photograph or video containing identifiable pupils is published, staff must ensure that appropriate consent is in place for every identifiable child appearing in the content.

A pupil with photograph permission but without video permission must not appear in video content. Equally, a pupil without the relevant photograph permission must not appear in photographs published on the school's social media accounts.

Staff responsible for creating or uploading content must have access to an accurate and up-to-date record of consent.

Where there is any uncertainty about whether consent has been provided, the photograph or video must not be published until this has been confirmed.

Parents and carers may change or withdraw their consent. The school will act upon changes to consent as soon as reasonably practicable.

7. TikTok

Ashton Primary School operates a TikTok account for appropriate school promotional and community content.

Children must not appear on the school's TikTok account.

This applies regardless of whether parental photograph or video consent has been provided.

Content produced for TikTok must therefore be planned and filmed in a way that ensures pupils are not identifiable or visible within the content.

Staff must take particular care when filming within the school environment to ensure children do not inadvertently appear in the foreground, background, reflections or other parts of a recording.

Appropriate TikTok content may include staff-led content, displays, resources, empty learning environments, school facilities, event promotion or other material that does not feature pupils.

8. Safeguarding Pupils Online

Safeguarding considerations must take priority when deciding whether content is appropriate for publication.

Staff must not publish content that:

- identifies a pupil alongside unnecessary personal information;
- reveals confidential, medical, safeguarding or SEND information;
- discloses a child's home address or other private information;
- could cause embarrassment, distress or harm to a pupil;
- portrays pupils in an undignified or inappropriate manner;
- could reasonably increase a child's vulnerability; or
- otherwise conflicts with the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

Particular consideration should be given to children who are looked after, previously looked after, subject to safeguarding arrangements or whose circumstances mean that publishing their image could present an additional risk.

Where necessary, the DSL should be consulted before content is published.

9. Naming Pupils

The school will minimise the amount of personally identifiable information accompanying photographs and videos.

Names should not routinely be published alongside identifiable photographs or videos of pupils.

Where celebrating an individual achievement requires a pupil to be named, staff should consider whether this is necessary and appropriate and ensure that the relevant permissions are in place.

10. Staff Appearing on Social Media

Staff may appear in photographs and videos published through official school accounts where they are comfortable doing so and the content is appropriate and professional.

Staff should not be expected to participate in promotional social media content where they do not wish to do so.

Staff appearing in school social media content remain subject to the school's professional standards and Staff Code of Conduct.

11. Creating Photographs and Videos

Photographs and videos intended for school social media must be captured using school-approved methods and handled securely.

Staff should check the surrounding environment before taking photographs or recording video. Particular care must be taken to avoid inadvertently capturing:

- pupils without the appropriate consent;
- confidential paperwork;
- pupil information displayed on screens or boards;
- safeguarding information;
- personal information;
- vehicle registration numbers or other unnecessary identifying information; or
- anything else which would be inappropriate to publish publicly.

Content should be reviewed before it is uploaded.

12. Personal Social Media Accounts

Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries when using their personal social media accounts.

Staff must not use personal social media accounts to publish photographs, videos or information about pupils obtained through their employment at Ashton Primary School.

Staff must not disclose confidential school information through personal social media accounts.

Staff should be mindful that their online conduct may affect public confidence in their professional role and in the school.

Staff must follow the expectations contained within the Staff Code of Conduct and other relevant school policies when using social media.

13. Communication with Pupils and Families

Staff must not use personal social media accounts to communicate privately with pupils or parents.

Official school accounts should not be used as a substitute for established school communication and safeguarding procedures.

Where parents contact the school through social media regarding an individual pupil, complaint, safeguarding concern or other confidential matter, they should normally be directed to an appropriate private school communication channel.

Staff should not discuss individual pupils or confidential school matters publicly through comments or replies.

14. Comments and Moderation

The school welcomes positive and respectful engagement with its social media content.

However, the school reserves the right to hide, delete or report comments that:

- contain abusive, threatening, discriminatory or offensive language;
- identify or discuss individual pupils inappropriately;
- make allegations about individual pupils, staff or families;
- contain confidential or sensitive information;
- constitute bullying or harassment;
- contain spam or inappropriate advertising; or
- otherwise present a safeguarding or reputational concern.

Where necessary, users may be blocked from interacting with school accounts.

Threatening, abusive or potentially criminal communications may be retained as evidence and reported to the appropriate authorities.

15. Class Dojo

Ashton Primary School also uses Class Dojo to communicate with parents and carers.

Class Dojo differs from the school's public social media accounts because content posted within classes is restricted to parents and carers of children attending the school who have been given appropriate access.

Class Dojo may be used to:

- share information about classroom learning;
- celebrate children's achievements and experiences;
- provide reminders and announcements;
- communicate information about school and class events; and

- strengthen communication between home and school.

Although Class Dojo is a restricted platform, staff must continue to follow appropriate safeguarding, professional and data protection expectations when posting content.

Access to Class Dojo does not give parents or carers permission to copy, download or redistribute photographs or videos containing other people's children onto public social media platforms.

16. Parents and Carers Sharing School Content

Parents and carers are encouraged to engage positively with the school's social media content.

Where the school publishes content publicly, parents may use the platform's normal sharing functions where appropriate.

However, parents and carers must not take photographs or videos obtained through restricted school platforms, including Class Dojo, and publish them elsewhere where those images contain children other than their own.

Any concerns regarding content published by the school should be raised directly with the school rather than through public social media discussion.

17. Copyright, Music and Third-Party Content

Staff creating social media content must be mindful of copyright and intellectual property requirements.

Images, videos, music, graphics and other third-party content should only be used where the school has appropriate permission or where use is otherwise lawful.

Particular care should be taken when using music or audio within video content. Staff should use audio that is appropriately licensed for use on the relevant platform and school account.

18. Security of Social Media Accounts

Administrative access to school social media accounts must be appropriately secured.

Where available, strong passwords and multi-factor authentication should be used.

Passwords must not be displayed, stored insecurely or shared unnecessarily.

Staff must immediately report any suspected unauthorised access, compromised password, inappropriate post or other security incident to the Headteacher.

If inappropriate content is accidentally published, it should be removed as quickly as possible and the Headteacher and, where appropriate, DSL informed.

19. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

If a social media interaction, comment, message, photograph or other online content raises a safeguarding concern, staff must follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures.

Staff should not attempt to investigate safeguarding concerns through social media themselves.

Relevant evidence should be preserved where appropriate and the concern reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy DSL.

20. Breaches of this Policy

Any suspected breach of this policy should be reported to the Headteacher.

Breaches involving safeguarding must also be reported in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Where a breach involves the conduct of a member of staff, it may be considered under the school's Staff Code of Conduct and relevant disciplinary procedures.

Accidental breaches should be reported promptly so that appropriate action can be taken to minimise any potential risk.

21. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will oversee the implementation of this policy and ensure that the school's social media arrangements remain appropriate.

The school will periodically review:

- who has administrative access to each account;
- security arrangements;
- parental consent records;
- the platforms used by the school;
- safeguarding and data protection implications; and
- relevant national guidance.

This policy will normally be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, safeguarding guidance, technology or the school's use of social media.