

Purwell Primary School



Social Media and Facebook Use Policy

2026

Approved by the Governing Body, for immediate implementation, on 22nd June 2026

For review: June 2028

1. Purwell values and social media

At Purwell Primary School, our use of social media is guided by our values of friendship, honesty, perseverance, opportunity and equity. We recognise that social media can provide valuable opportunities to celebrate achievements, share information and strengthen connections within our school community. We expect all members of the community to communicate honestly, respectfully and responsibly online, reflecting the positive relationships we seek to build in school. By promoting fairness, inclusion and good digital citizenship, we aim to ensure that social media supports the wellbeing, reputation and success of the whole school community.

2. Policy statement

The purpose of this policy is to set out Purwell Primary School's expectations and requirements for the safe and appropriate use of social media by staff and other adults working with the school. It also sets out how the school manages its official Facebook page and the checks that must be completed before any photograph or video is published.

The school recognises the value of social media in celebrating learning, sharing school news and strengthening the school community. However, the publication of images and video must be managed carefully so that the school protects pupils, respects parental consent choices and fulfils its safeguarding and data protection duties.

3. Key principles

- Everyone at Purwell Primary School has a responsibility to protect pupils, staff, families and the reputation of the school.
- No photograph or video of a pupil may be published on the school's official Facebook page unless the school's office has double-checked that the pupil has current parental permission for image use on social media.
- Where a pupil does not have permission for social media use, their image must not be published. This includes situations where the pupil appears in the background of a wider group photograph or video.
- Social media content must be checked before publication through the approval process set out in this policy.
- The school will act promptly if concerns are raised about published content.

4. Definition and scope

This policy applies to all staff who work in the school, including teaching staff, support staff, office staff, volunteers, agency staff, governors and any other adults working on behalf of the school.

Social media includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn, blogs, online forums, media sharing services, online gaming environments and comment streams on public websites.

This policy covers:

- staff use of personal social media where this may affect the school community;
- use of the school's official Facebook page;
- publication of photographs and video by the school;
- expectations for parents and visitors when recording or sharing school events.

5. Staff guidelines in relation to personal social media

The following are not acceptable at Purwell Primary School:

- friending, following or engaging with pupils through personal social media accounts;
- inviting, accepting or engaging in communication with pupils or parents about school matters through personal social media accounts;

- disclosing confidential information about pupils, staff, families or others associated with the school;
- posting any communication or image that links the school to illegal, unsafe or inappropriate conduct;
- using the school's name or logo without authorisation;
- posting images of staff, pupils or anyone directly linked to the school while engaging in school activities, unless this is through an authorised school channel and the checks in this policy have been completed.

Staff should:

- set personal privacy settings to the highest appropriate level;
- avoid comments about staff, pupils, parents or governors which could be seen as bullying, harassment, discriminatory, defamatory or inappropriate;
- use social media responsibly so that neither their professional reputation nor the school's reputation is compromised.

6. Official Facebook use

Purpose of the school Facebook page

The school Facebook page may be used to share school news, celebrate learning, promote events and communicate positive updates about the work of pupils, staff, parents and governors. It is used alongside formal communication methods such as letters, email, School-Coms or other school systems. It does not replace direct communication with parents.

Control of content

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the school's official Facebook page. Staff may suggest or prepare content, but no pupil photograph or video may be published until the approval process in this policy has been followed.

The school office, usually through the School Business Manager (Alison Sharp) or a delegated member of the office team (Michelle Watson or Carmen Robson), will act as the checking gateway before photographs or videos are published. This check must include confirmation against the school's current parental consent records.

Use of personal devices

Where staff use a personal device to take photographs for school purposes, this must be authorised and must be for a clear school purpose. Images must be transferred to the agreed school system as soon as possible and then deleted from the personal device, including from deleted items or cloud backup where applicable. Staff must not retain pupil images on personal devices.

7. Photograph and video approval process

The following process must be followed before any photograph or video containing pupils is posted on the school's Facebook page or any other official public platform.

1. The member of staff preparing the post must review the image or video carefully and identify every pupil visible, including those in the background.
2. The staff member must send the proposed image, video and wording to the school office for checking before publication.
3. The School Business Manager (AS), or a delegated office staff member (MW or CR), must check the pupils shown against the school's current image permission records.
4. If every identifiable pupil has permission for social media use, the post may be approved for publication.
5. If any identifiable pupil does not have permission, the image or video must not be published unless it is amended so that the pupil cannot be identified.
6. Acceptable amendments may include cropping, blurring, covering the pupil's face or selecting a different image. The amendment must remove the pupil's identity effectively.
7. If there is any doubt about a pupil's identity or permission status, the image or video must not be posted until the doubt has been resolved.

8. The office check must be recorded, either by email approval, a shared log or another agreed school system.

This process applies to photographs and videos from assemblies, performances, sporting events, trips, classroom activities, fundraising events and any other school activity. Particular care must be taken with wide group shots, panning video footage and photographs taken at public events, as pupils without permission may appear in the background.

8. Images of pupils without social media permission

The school will maintain an up-to-date record of pupils whose parents or carers have not given permission for their image to be used on social media. This record will be available to relevant staff and will be checked before any publication.

Where a pupil does not have permission for social media publication:

- their image must not be included in school social media posts;
- they must not be shown in the background of a photograph or video where they can be identified;
- their image must be removed, cropped, blurred or otherwise obscured before publication;
- staff must choose an alternative image if the pupil cannot be securely removed from the content.

A pupil should be treated as identifiable if their face, name badge, clothing, voice, position in a group, or other contextual information could reasonably allow them to be recognised.

9. Parent and visitor recording at school events

The school may allow parents and visitors to take photographs or video at school events for personal use, unless the school has given a different instruction for a particular event. Personal use means keeping the image or video within the family or close personal circle. It does not mean uploading footage to a public or unrestricted social media account.

At events where parents or visitors may record, the school will remind attendees that images or videos containing other children should not be posted publicly on Facebook or other social media. This reminder may be given verbally, in writing, in the event programme, by signage or through a school message before the event.

If the school becomes aware that a parent or visitor has posted images or video showing pupils without appropriate permission, the school will ask for the content to be removed, made private or amended so that pupils cannot be identified.

10. Data protection and safeguarding

Photographs and video of pupils are personal data where pupils can be identified. The school will manage image use in line with its data protection responsibilities, safeguarding procedures and parental consent records.

The school will take particular care where there may be safeguarding reasons for a child's image not being published, including where a child is looked after, subject to specific protective arrangements, or where the family has requested additional caution.

The school will respond promptly to any concern that an image or video has been published in error. This may include removing the content immediately while the matter is checked.

11. Responding to concerns or breaches

Where a concern is raised about school social media content, the school will:

- review the content promptly;
- remove or hide the content while checks are completed if there is any reasonable concern;
- check the relevant consent records;

- inform the parent or carer of the action taken where appropriate;
- record the concern and the response;
- consider whether a data protection incident has occurred and whether advice is needed from the Data Protection Officer;
- review whether any procedural change is needed to reduce the risk of recurrence.

Repeated or serious concerns will be reported to the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Data Protection Officer as appropriate. The Governing Body will monitor whether the policy and approval process are being followed effectively.

12. Responsibility and accountability

Role	Responsibility
Headteacher	Has overall responsibility for the safe and appropriate use of official school social media and for ensuring concerns are addressed.
School Business Manager or delegated office staff	Checks proposed photographs and videos against current parental image permission records before publication.
Staff preparing posts	Review images and videos carefully, identify pupils shown, submit content for approval and do not publish until approval has been given.
Governors	Approve and review this policy and monitor that appropriate systems are in place.
Data Protection Officer	Provides advice where there is a data protection concern or possible breach.
Parents and visitors	Use images from school events responsibly and do not publish images or videos of other pupils on public social media without appropriate permission.

13. Inappropriate content and comments

Purwell Primary School welcomes positive engagement that celebrates the school community. The school may remove, hide, block or report content that includes:

- offensive language or remarks aimed at pupils, staff, parents, governors or others connected with the school;
- unsuitable images or content;
- images or text that infringe copyright;
- comments that undermine the school, its staff, parents, governors or others affiliated with the school;
- content that could be discriminatory, defamatory, threatening, misleading or unsafe.

The school will not enter into private discussions through Facebook Messenger or social media direct messaging about individual pupils or confidential school matters. Parents should contact the school through the usual communication channels.

14. Cyberbullying

Staff must never use social media to abuse, bully or otherwise comment inappropriately about colleagues, pupils, parents, governors or anyone associated with the school.

Staff who feel they are subject to social media bullying by another member of staff, a parent, carer or pupil should, where possible, save evidence such as screenshots or messages and report this to the Headteacher. Where the concern is about the Headteacher, it should be raised with the Chair of Governors.

15. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body at least every year, or sooner if there is a significant concern, change in platform use, change in guidance or a data protection issue that indicates the policy requires review.

Next review: June 2028