



United Through Jesus in Faith, Love and Learning

Date of Adoption:	NOVEMBER 2025	Date of Review:	RECOMMENDED ANNUALLY
Author:	HT	Committee responsible for Review:	CCC
Version:		Date approved:	26.11.2025
TRACKED CHANGES:	NEW policy		

Office use only:

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

United Through Jesus in Faith, Love and Learning

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy provides comprehensive guidance on the appropriate use of social media by St Paul's Catholic Primary School staff, both in professional and personal contexts. It encompasses our school's official social media presence and establishes expectations rooted in Catholic Social Teaching and our Gospel values.

1.2 Catholic Foundation

Our approach to social media is grounded in Catholic Social Teaching principles: - **Human Dignity**: Every person is created in God's image and deserves respect in all communications - **Common Good**: Our digital presence should build up the school community and serve all stakeholders - **Solidarity**: We use social media to strengthen bonds within our community and witness our faith - **Subsidiarity**: Decisions about content are made at appropriate levels with proper oversight

1.3 School Social Media Presence

St Paul's Catholic Primary School maintains an official Facebook account managed by designated school staff. This account serves to: - Celebrate pupil achievements and school events - Share important information with our community - Promote the Catholic life and ethos of our school - Strengthen home-school partnerships

2.0 Scope and Application

2.1 Coverage

This policy applies to all school employees, governors, volunteers, and anyone representing St Paul's Catholic Primary School in any capacity.

2.2 Platforms

Social media platforms include but are not limited to: - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X - LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok - WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal - Blogs, online forums, and discussion boards - Any emerging digital communication platforms

3.0 Gospel Values and Digital Citizenship

3.1 Living Our Values Online

All social media activity connected to St Paul's must reflect our school mission of being "United Through Jesus in Faith, Love and Learning" by: - Demonstrating Christian charity in all interactions - Promoting truth and avoiding gossip or speculation - Building community rather than division - Protecting the vulnerable, especially children

3.2 Digital Discipleship

Staff are called to be witnesses to Gospel values in digital spaces, modelling appropriate online behaviour that reflects our Catholic identity.

4.0 Official School Social Media Management

4.1 Authorised Accounts

Only social media accounts approved by the Headteacher may represent St Paul's Catholic Primary School. Current official accounts are listed in Appendix A and managed according to our **Social Media Expectations & Safeguarding Guidelines** document.

4.2 Account Administration

- Access restricted to designated trained staff members
- Two-factor authentication required where available
- Regular password updates and security reviews
- Immediate removal of access when staff leave or change roles

4.3 Content Standards

All official posts must: - Align with Gospel values and Catholic teaching - Receive approval from the Headteacher or designated senior leader - Comply with safeguarding requirements - Respect intellectual property and copyright - Maintain professional tone and presentation

5.0 Safeguarding in Social Media

5.1 Child Protection Paramount

The safety and wellbeing of our pupils is paramount. Staff must adhere to the comprehensive safeguarding measures outlined in our **Social Media Expectations & Safeguarding Guidelines**, including:

5.2 Essential Safeguarding Rules

Mandatory Requirements: - Only post images/videos of children with confirmed parental consent - Use first names only or anonymised references - Focus on group shots rather than individual children - Ensure appropriate dress and settings - Never post children in vulnerable situations

Prohibited Actions: - Sharing personal information (full names, addresses, dates of birth)
- Tagging or linking to personal accounts - Posting without verified consent - Allowing unmoderated comments

5.3 Monitoring and Response

- Regular monitoring during school hours
 - Immediate reporting of concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Documentation of inappropriate interactions
 - Following Child Protection Policy for any safeguarding concerns
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6.0 Staff Personal Social Media Use

6.1 Professional Boundaries

Staff must maintain clear professional boundaries on personal social media: - Do not accept friend requests from current pupils - Exercise caution with parent connections - Avoid identifying the school as your employer - Consider the impact of your online presence on professional reputation

6.2 Code of Conduct

The school's Code of Conduct extends to social media use. Staff conduct online must be such that no justifiable complaint can be made by parents, pupils, colleagues, governors, or community members.

6.3 Protected Characteristics

In accordance with Catholic Social Teaching and equality legislation, staff must not post content that discriminates against or shows prejudice toward any protected characteristic or group.

7.0 Communication Guidelines

7.1 Parent and Community Engagement

- Direct concerns to official school channels (email, phone)
- No public disputes or complaint discussions on social media
- Professional, courteous responses to all interactions
- Clear signposting to appropriate communication channels

7.2 Educational Platforms

When using educational platforms: Spelling Shed, TTRS, Bug club etc Follow platform-specific guidelines - Maintain professional communication - Respect working hours and boundaries - Ensure age-appropriate content

8.0 Legal and Regulatory Compliance

8.1 Data Protection

All social media activity must comply with: - Data Protection Act 2018 - UK GDPR requirements - School Data Protection Policy - Privacy notice provisions

8.2 Copyright and Intellectual Property

- Respect copyright in all shared content
 - Properly attribute sources
 - Obtain permissions for third-party content
 - Protect school intellectual property
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9.0 Disciplinary Matters

9.1 Gross Misconduct

The following social media activities constitute gross misconduct: - Inappropriate relationships or communication with pupils - Bringing the school into disrepute - Breach of confidentiality or data protection - Defamatory statements about the school, staff, pupils, or community - Serious breach of safeguarding procedures

9.2 Disciplinary Process

Violations of this policy will be addressed through the School's Disciplinary Procedure, with consequences proportionate to the severity and impact of the breach.

10.0 Support and Guidance

10.1 Designated Support

Staff should seek guidance from the Senior Leadership Team regarding: - Appropriate social media use - Concerns about online content - Reporting inappropriate behaviour - Security or privacy issues

10.2 Training and Development

The school will provide: - Regular safeguarding and social media training - Updates on policy changes - Guidance on emerging platforms - Support for digital wellbeing

11.0 Implementation and Review

11.1 Policy Implementation

- All staff to receive policy during induction
- Annual reminder and training for existing staff
- Regular monitoring of compliance
- Clear reporting procedures

11.2 Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed: - Annually by the Senior Leadership Team - When significant incidents occur - Following changes to legislation or guidance - In response to emerging technologies

Appendix A: Official School Social Media Accounts

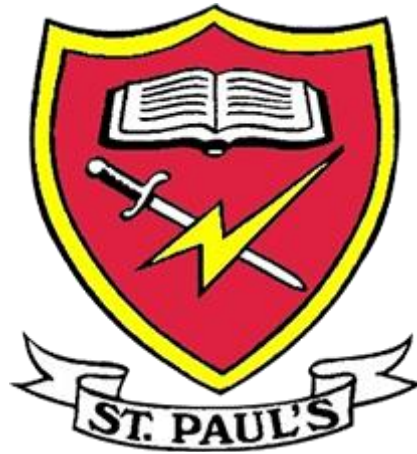
Facebook: St Paul's Catholic Primary School, Reading

Managed by Michael Robinson

Purpose: School news, celebrations, and community engagement

[Additional accounts to be listed as established]

Appendix B: Social Media Expectations and Safeguarding



St Paul's Social Media Expectations & Safeguarding Guidelines

Purpose:

This document outlines the expectations, responsibilities, and safeguarding measures for the official use of St Paul's social media accounts. Our goal is to promote our school's achievements, share key information with our community and celebrate pupils' successes, all while maintaining the highest safeguarding standards.

1. General Principles

- Social media accounts must reflect the school's Gospel Values of faith, love and learning.
 - Only designated staff members may access and post on the school's official accounts.
 - All content must be age-appropriate, inclusive and in line with our school's safeguarding policy.
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2. Safeguarding & Child Protection

To protect our pupils, the following safeguarding rules are **non-negotiable**:

Do:

- Use only images/videos of children with **parental consent** via photo permission
- Ensure pupils are **appropriately dressed** (e.g., school uniform or suitable clothing).
- Focus on **group shots** rather than individual children where possible.
- Use **first names only** or anonymised references (e.g., "Year 3 pupils").

- Maintain **privacy settings** on accounts to limit access to followers only where appropriate.

Do Not:

- Post any images or videos of children **without confirmed consent**.
 - Disclose any **personal information** (e.g., full names, addresses, dates of birth).
 - Tag or link to **personal accounts** of staff, pupils, or parents.
 - Share images of children in **vulnerable situations** (e.g., upset, injured or crying)
 - Allow **comments** on posts unless they are actively moderated.
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3. Content Approval

- Posts must be approved by the **Headteacher** or **Designated Senior Leader** before publishing.
 - Sensitive content (e.g., about safeguarding initiatives, mental health or family support) must be vetted carefully to ensure tone and language are appropriate.
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4. Account Access & Security

- Access should be restricted to a **small number of trained staff**.
 - All users must log in using **secure passwords** and enable **two-factor authentication** where possible.
 - If a staff member leaves or changes roles, access must be removed immediately.
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5. Monitoring & Moderation

- Social media accounts must be **monitored regularly** during the school week.
 - Any concerning messages, comments, or follower activity should be reported to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** immediately.
 - Screenshots should be taken of any inappropriate or abusive interaction and stored securely.
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6. Responding to Issues

- Do not engage in public disputes or complaints via social media.
- Direct concerned parties to contact the school via official channels (e.g., email or phone).
- In the event of a safeguarding concern, follow the school's internal **Child Protection Policy** immediately.

7. Legal & Policy Compliance

- Posts must comply with the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK GDPR**.
- All activity must align with the school's **Safeguarding Policy** and **Acceptable Use Agreements**.

8. Review and Updates

This document will be reviewed **annually** or more frequently if guidance or circumstances change.