



Social Media & X Policy

Status	Non-statutory
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Date of next review	September 2026
Headteacher	Mrs Wreford
Chair of Governors	Annabelle Hughes and Lisa Fairmaner
Published on website	No

Meadlands Primary School Social Media presence

Meadlands Primary School works on the principle that if we don't manage our social media reputation, someone else will.

Our Online Reputation Management (ORM) is about understanding and managing our digital footprint (everything that can be seen or read about the school online). Few parents will apply for a school place without first researching it online, and the Ofsted pre-inspection check includes monitoring what is being said online.

Negative coverage almost always causes some level of disruption. Up to half of all cases dealt with by the Professionals Online Safety Helpline (POSH: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk) involve schools' (and staff members') online reputation.

Accordingly, we manage and monitor our social media footprint with Mrs Gee being responsible for managing our X account.

Staff, children's' and parents' social media presence

Social media (including here all apps, sites and games that allow sharing and interaction between users) is a fact of modern life, and as a school, we accept that many parents, staff and pupils will use it. However, as stated in the acceptable use policies which all members of the school community sign, we expect everybody to behave in a positive manner, engaging respectfully with the school and each other on social media, in the same way as they would face to face.

This positive behaviour can be summarised as not making any posts which are or could be construed as bullying, aggressive, rude, insulting, illegal or otherwise inappropriate, or which might bring the school or (particularly for staff) teaching profession into disrepute. This applies both to public pages and to private posts, e.g. parent chats, pages or group **including class Whatsapp groups**.

If parents have a concern about the school, we would urge them to contact us directly and in private to resolve the matter. If an issue cannot be resolved in this way, the school complaints procedure should be followed. Sharing complaints on social media is unlikely to help resolve the matter, but can cause upset to staff, pupils and parents, also undermining staff morale and the reputation of the school (which is important for the pupils we serve).

Many social media platforms have a minimum age of 13 (note that WhatsApp is 16+) and the school deals with issues arising on social media with our children. We ask parents to respect age ratings on social media platforms wherever possible and not encourage or condone underage use. It is worth noting that online harms regulation is likely to require more stringent age verification measures over the coming years. If parents are unsure of age ratings please review our [Parental Online Safety page](#).

However, the school has to strike a difficult balance of not encouraging underage use at the same time as needing to acknowledge reality in order to best help our children to avoid or cope with issues if they arise. Online safety lessons will look at social media and other online behaviour, how to be a good friend online and how to report bullying, misuse, intimidation or abuse. However, children will often learn most from the models of behaviour they see and experience, which will often be from adults.

Parents can best support this by talking to their children about the apps, sites and games they use (you don't need to know them – ask your child to explain it to you), with whom, for how long, and when (late at night / in bedrooms is not helpful for a good night's sleep and productive teaching and learning at school the next day). You may wish to refer to the [Top Tips for Parents](#) poster along with relevant items from parentsafe.lgfl.net and introduce the [Children's Commission Digital 5 A Day](#).

The school has an official X account managed by Mrs Gee. We ask that parents/carers do not use this channel to communicate about their children.

The Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for:

- Monitoring followers and block any who appear to not be school focused
- To make links via the use of the @Xname of others, **after an event**, “excited about @Xname speaking to us”.
- Use of # to generate further links/wider communication only with consent of the Headteacher.
- Encourage staff to follow the school profile but to remove any link that they may have in their own profile to Meadlands School (e.g. Meadlands School Teacher). This is to protect their profile and reduce followers from the school community (see guidelines on Staff FB accounts). Staff are not to mention the school in tweets from their own account, this is also the case for status updates on FB.
- The school will not reply, via X, to any questions or comments made on X in response to any of the school’s tweets. Parents or members of the school community who have questions relating to school tweets are advised to contact the school in the usual way.
- In exceptional circumstances only the HT will respond to tweets, those which are deemed negative against the school community. Where possible such a tweet will be acknowledged and the author invited in to school to discuss the matter further. The original tweet will be deleted, therefore removing the negative response. The school community are expected to follow the GDPR policy, which has been shared with parents.

By endorsing X we may be encouraging children to use X so we will endeavour to reinforce the school’s e-safety rules and Data Protection Act 2018:

- We will obtain consent for use of images on an annual basis through our Student Update form. This form is valid for the period of time your child attends this school. Please write to the school if you wish to withdraw consent at any time.
- The images we take will be of activities that show the school and children in a positive light.
- Embarrassing or distressing images or text will not be used. The images will not be associated with negative or sensitive issues.
- We may use group or class photographs or footage with very general labels e.g. ‘science lesson’.
- We will only use images of pupils who are suitably dressed.
- We will make every effort to ensure that we do not allow images to be taken of any children for whom we do not have permission or who are ‘at risk’ or disallowed from having their photographs taken for legal or social reasons.
- We will take all reasonable measures to ensure the images are used solely for the purposes for which they are intended.

Where children for whom we don’t have parental consent are featured – such as whole class photos – faces of children will be covered so they cannot be identified.

Staff are reminded that they are obliged not to bring the school or profession into disrepute and the easiest way to avoid this is to have the strictest privacy settings and avoid inappropriate sharing and oversharing online. They should never discuss the school or its stakeholders on social media and be careful that their personal opinions might not be attributed to the school, trust or local authority, bringing the school into disrepute.

The serious consequences of inappropriate behaviour on social media are underlined by the fact that of the 66 Prohibition Orders issued to staff in 2018, 27 involved social media/technology.

All members of the school community are reminded that particularly in the context of social media, it is important to comply with the school policy on Digital Images and Video and permission is sought before uploading photographs, videos or any other information about other people. Parents should also note here that this is good practice when uploading images of their child to gain consent here. These images will be online forever and could cause embarrassment later in life.

The statements of the [Acceptable Use Policies](#) (AUPs) which all members of the school community have signed including parents are also relevant to social media activity, as is the school's Data Protection Policy.

Social media incidents

Breaches of this policy and of school AUPs (Acceptable Use Policies) will be dealt with in line with our behaviour policy (for pupils) or Code of Conduct (for staff).

Where an offending post has been made by a third party, the school may report it to the platform where it is hosted, and may contact the Professionals' Online Safety Helpline (run by the UK Safer Internet Centre) for support or help to accelerate this process. The police or other authorities may be involved where a post is potentially illegal or dangerous.

Extremism

The school has obligations relating to radicalisation and all forms of extremism under the Prevent Duty and this is stated in our safeguarding policy. Staff will not support or promote extremist organisations, messages or individuals, give them a voice or opportunity to visit the school, nor browse, download or send material that is considered offensive or of an extremist nature by the school. We ask for parents' support in this also, especially relating to social media, where extremism and hate speech can be widespread on certain platforms.

Further questions

If parents have further questions, they can contact Mrs Taunton-Johnson or Mrs Wreford at the school; the NSPCC has a parent online safety helpline ([0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000)) which can help with general issues that are not school specific or view our [parental online safety page](#) on our school website.

Staff should speak to Mrs Taunton-Johnson or Mrs Wreford in the first instance, who may then call on the expertise of local authority advisers LGfL DigiSafe or Professionals' Online-Safety Helpline (from UK SIC).