



PUBLIC ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Table of contents

1.	Purpose
2.	Scope
3.	Policy Statement
4.	Roles and Responsibilities
5.	Creation of Public Online Accounts
6.	Monitoring and Moderation
7.	Professional Standards
8.	Use of Images and Media
9.	Handling Complaints and Abuse
10.	Training and Awareness
11.	Review and Continuous Improvement
12.	Related School Policies and Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out how the school manages public online communications in order to reduce risk, promote safeguarding and online safety, celebrate success and communicate effectively with the wider school community.

Public online communications include the school website, newsletters, learning platforms, public messaging systems and official social media accounts.

This policy supports the **Online Safety, Filtering and Monitoring, Technical Security, Cyber Security** and **Data Protection** policies and reflects [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE), UKSIC guidance [Best Practices for Managing Images and Videos on School Websites](#), DfE statutory publication requirements.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff and governors
- All public online communications representing the school
- Official school accounts and platforms
- Personal accounts where they directly reference or represent the school

- School content published at any time, from any location or online platform

3. Policy Statement

The school will ensure that:

- Public online communications are accurate, lawful and appropriate
- Safeguarding considerations are prioritised
- Personal data is protected in line with the Data Security Policy
- Images and video are published only in line with consent procedures
- Copyright and intellectual property are respected
- Communications reflect professional standards
- Public references to the school are monitored appropriately

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- Governors provide strategic oversight and ensure compliance with statutory publication requirements.
- Senior leaders approve official accounts and oversee monitoring and moderation processes.
- Account administrators maintain secure access, monitor content regularly and ensure policy compliance.
- All staff must follow this policy, maintain professional standards and report concerns.

5. Creation of Public Online Accounts

- New public online accounts may only be created following approval by senior leadership.
- Proposals must define purpose, audience, responsible staff members and monitoring arrangements.
- At least two authorised staff members must have access to any official public account.

6. Monitoring and Moderation

The school will ensure that:

- Public communications are monitored regularly
- Comments are reviewed and moderated appropriately
- Harmful or inappropriate content is removed
- Serious incidents are recorded and escalated where necessary

7. Professional Standards

All public communications must:

- Be respectful and professional
- Avoid discriminatory, offensive or defamatory content
- Protect confidentiality

- Avoid internal grievance discussions
- Avoid disclosure of sensitive information

8. Use of Images and Media

The school will ensure that:

- Appropriate consent is obtained
- Images are appropriate and dignified
- Learners are not identified unnecessarily
- Images are removed where consent is withdrawn
- To reduce the risk of illegal manipulation of publicly available images of staff and learners, the school has procedures in place to control how those images are shared online. (n.b., UKSIC guidance [Best Practices for Managing Images and Videos on School Websites](#))

9. Personal Use and Association with the School

Staff may use personal social media accounts; however:

- Where referencing the school, appropriate disclaimers must be used
- Personal use must not impact professional standards nor school reputation
- Staff must not engage with current learners via personal accounts
- Excessive or inappropriate use during working hours may result in disciplinary action

10. Handling Complaints and Abuse

Where negative comments are made online:

- The school will respond proportionately
- Abusive content should be challenged and removed
- Parents' /carers' complaints should be directed to formal complaints procedures
- Serious matters may be escalated to senior leaders or external agencies

11. Training and Awareness

The school will ensure that:

- Staff responsible for public accounts receive guidance and training
- Governors understand oversight responsibilities
- The wider community is informed of expected standards

12. Review and Continuous Improvement

This is a **non-statutory policy** and will be reviewed bi-annually and updated in response to legislative changes, national guidance or emerging risks.

13. Related School Policies and Procedures

- **Safeguarding Policy**
- **Online Safety Policy**
- **Complaints Procedure**

- **Staff Code of Conduct**

Version control table

Version	Date	Changes	Approval
1	2026	New Policy	SO