

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Chiswick
"Living and learning, inspired by our faith"

SOCIAL MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS/CARERS



February 2023

DHR Sankar

Chair of Governors

Next Review Date: August 2025

Statement of Intent

St Mary's Primary School understands the benefits of using social media; however, if misused, the school community can be negatively affected, such as by damaging the School's reputation. This code of conduct sets out clear procedures for how we expect parents/carers to conduct themselves on social media and when using messenger apps, such as WhatsApp.

1. Legal Framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Defamation Act 2013
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (as amended)

2. E-Safety and Social Media Conduct

2.1. St Mary's Primary School expects parents/carers to behave in a civilised nature online and will not tolerate any of the following behaviour online:

- Posting defamatory statements about fellow parents, pupils, the School or its employees
- Complaining about the School's values and methods on social media

2.2. The School has a Complaints Policy in place, to avoid parents/carers broadcasting grievances online.

2.3. Parents/carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking and their conduct online. A copy of this Code will be made available to families before they sign the Home School Agreement.

2.4. Breaches of this code of conduct will be taken seriously by the School and, in the event of illegal, defamatory, or discriminatory content, breaches could lead to prosecution.

2.5. Parents/carers will not attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' any member of staff on social media.

2.6. Parents/carers are instructed not to post anonymously or under an alias in order to evade the guidance given in this code of conduct.

2.7. St Mary's Primary School retains the right to request any damaging material

to be removed from social media websites.

3. Online messaging

3.1. St Mary's Primary School expects parents/carers to use messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, for purposes beneficial to themselves and the School, and will not accept any of the following behaviour:

- Sending abusive messages to fellow parents/carers
- Sending abusive messages about members of staff, parents/carers or the School
- Sending abusive messages to members of staff

3.2. The School appreciates the simplicity and ease of instant messaging online; keeping in contact outside of school can benefit the school community by keeping the school community closer.

3.3. Should any problems arise from contact over messaging apps, the School will act quickly by contacting parents/carers directly, to stop any issues continuing.

3.4. St Mary's Primary School can request a meeting with parents/carers if any misconduct, such as sending abusive messages or posting defamatory statuses, occurs online.

3.5. The School's complaints procedure will be followed as normal if any members of the parent teacher association or governing body cause any discrepancies through their conduct whilst using online messaging.

3.6. The headteacher can, with the permission of the parent/carer, view messages sent between members of the parental body in order to deal with problems quickly and effectively.

3.7. The headteacher can request that 'group chats' are closed down should any problems continue between parents /carers or parental bodies.

4. Monitoring and review

4.1. The headteacher will review this code of conduct on an annual basis and will communicate any changes to all teachers and parents/carers.

