

Tow Law Millennium Primary School

Social Media Policy



Overview

Social networking sites such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram have changed the way people communicate and interact with each other. Facebook has 3.07 billion active users worldwide and X has an average of 611 million monthly active users. Both of these have an age restriction of 13 years old. These new and emerging technologies are giving Local Authorities and educational settings the opportunity to establish and maintain connections between schools and their client groups.

“**Social media**” is the term commonly given to websites and online tools which allow users to interact with each other in some way- by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. As the name implies, social media involves the building of communities or networks, encouraging participation and engagement.

Aims and Objectives

1. To display the school details
2. To enhance and maintain communication with parents and carers.
3. To promote events and community cohesion.
4. Flash announcements i.e. swimming today don't forget your kit! School is closed today!
5. Reminders of social events in school (school disco, summer fair)
6. Sharing and celebration of school events.

General social media use

Expectations regarding safe and responsible use of social media will apply to all members of Tow Law Millennium Primary School community and exist in order to safeguard both the school/ setting and the wider community, on and offline. Examples of social media may include blogs, wikis, social networking sites, forums, bulletin boards, multiplayer online gaming, apps, video/photo sharing sites, chatrooms, instant messenger and many others.

All members of Tow Law Millennium Primary School community will be encouraged to engage in social media in a positive, safe and responsible manner at all times.

Information about safe and responsible use of social media will be communicated clearly and regularly to all members of Tow Law Millennium Primary School community.

All members of Tow Law Millennium Primary School community are advised not to publish specific and detailed private thoughts, concerns, pictures or messages on

any social media services, especially content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others.

The school/setting will control pupil and staff access to social media and social networking sites when using school provided devices and systems.

Any concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of Tow Law Millennium Primary School community on social media sites should be reported to the leadership team and will be managed in accordance with policies, such as respectful relationships, allegations against staff, anti-bullying and safeguarding/ child protection.

Any breaches of school/setting policy may result in criminal, disciplinary or civil action being taken and this will depend upon the age of those involved and the circumstances of the wrong committed. Action taken will be in accordance with relevant policies such as respectful relationships, allegations against staff, anti-bullying and safeguarding/ child protection.

Official use of social media

Tow Law Millennium Primary School official social media channels are: Facebook.

Official use of social media sites by the school/setting will only take place with clear educational or community engagement objectives with specific intended outcomes e.g. increasing parental engagement. Official use of social media sites as communication tools will be risk assessed and formally approved by the Head Teacher and Governing Body. Official school/ setting social media channels will be set up as distinct and dedicated social media site or account for educational or engagement purposes. Staff will use school/setting provided email addresses to register for and manage any official approved social media channels.

All communication on official social media platforms will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny. Any online publication on official social media sites will comply with legal requirements including the Data Protection Act 1998, right to privacy conferred by the Human Rights Act 1998, or similar duty to protect private information and will not breach any common law duty of confidentiality, copyright etc.

Official social media use will be in line with existing policies including anti-bullying and child protection. Images or videos of children will only be shared on official social media sites/channels in accordance with the image use policy and if written consent has been obtained. Children will not be identified using their name on social media.

Information about safe and responsible use of social media channels will be communicated clearly and regularly to all members of the community, for example via letters and parent meetings. Official social media sites will be suitably protected (e.g. use of strong passwords)

Leadership staff must be aware of account information and relevant details for social media channels in case of emergency, such as staff absence.

Parents/Carers and pupils will be informed of any official social media use, along with expectations for safe use and action taken to safeguard the community. The school holds the rights to remove and comments that are believed to be abusive/inappropriate. The school has a system in place for dealing with inappropriate comments. The Page will be public and all parents will be made aware of this. There will be no messaging service or ability for parents to post new content onto the Page; parents will be advised to continue to contact the office. Parents will be able to “like” and comment on posts published by the school. Staff must not like or respond to posts on the school Facebook page.

Staff personnel use of social media.

The safe and responsible use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites will be discussed with all members of staff as part of staff induction and will be “revisited” and communicated via regular staff training opportunities. Safe and professional behaviour will be outlined for all members of staff (including volunteers) as part of the school/setting Acceptable Use Policy.

All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add as “friends” any current or past children/pupils or current or past pupils’ family members via any personal social media sites, applications or profiles. Any pre-existing relationships or exceptions that may compromise this will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the Head Teacher.

All communication between staff and members of the school community on school business will take place via official approved communication channels. Staff will not use personal social media accounts to make contact with pupils or parents. Any communication from pupils/parents received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the school’s designated safeguarding lead.

Information and content that staff members have access to as part of their employment, including photos and personal information about pupils and their family members, colleagues etc. will not be shared or discussed on personal social media sites. All members of staff are strongly advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media sites. This will include being aware of location sharing services, setting the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can, opting out of public listings on social networking sites, logging out of accounts after use and keeping strong passwords safe and confidential.

All staff members are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post online and to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance with school’s policies (safeguarding, confidentiality, data protection, privacy etc.) and the wider professional and legal framework. Members of staff will be encouraged to manage and control the content they share and post online. Advice will be provided to staff via staff training and by sharing appropriate guidance and resources on a regular basis. Members of staff will notify the Leadership/Management Team immediately if they consider that any content shared or posted via any information and

communications technology, including emails or social networking sites conflicts with their role in the school/setting.

Members of staff are encouraged not to identify themselves as employees of Tow Law Millennium Primary School on their personal social networking accounts. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school/setting and also to safeguard the privacy of staff members and the wider community. Members of staff will ensure that they do not represent their personal views as that of the school/setting on social media. School email addresses will not be used for setting up personal social media accounts.

Staff official use of social media

If members of staff are participating in online activity as part of their capacity as an employee of the school/setting, then they are requested to be professional at all times and to be aware that they are an ambassador for the school/setting. Staff using social media officially will be responsible, credible, fair and honest at all times and consider how the information being published could be perceived or shared. Staff using social media officially will always act within the legal frameworks they would adhere to within the workplace, including libel, defamation, confidentiality, copyright, data protection as well as equalities laws. Staff must ensure that any image posted on Facebook has appropriate written parental consent.

Staff using social media officially will inform their line manager, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the head teacher of any concerns such as criticism or inappropriate content posted online. Staff will not engage with any direct or private messaging with children or parents/ carers through social media and will communicate via official communication channels. Staff using social media officially will sign the school/setting social media Acceptable Use Policy.

Pupil use of social media

Safe and responsible use of social media sites will be outlined for children and their parents as part of the Acceptable Use Policy. Personal publishing on social media sites will be taught to pupils as part of an embedded and progressive education approach via age-appropriate sites which have been risk assessed and approved as suitable for educational purposes.

Pupils will be advised to consider the risks of sharing personal details of any kind on social media sites which may identify them and /or their location. Examples would include real/full name, address, mobile or landline phone numbers, school attended, Instant messenger contact details, email addresses, full names of friends/family, specific interests and clubs etc.

Pupils will be advised not to meet any online friends without a parent/carers or other responsible adult's permission and only when they can be present. Pupils will be advised on appropriate security on social media sites and will be encouraged to use safe/strong passwords, deny access to unknown individuals and be supported in learning how to block and report unwanted communications.

Pupils will be encouraged to approve and invite known friends only on social networking sites and to deny access to others by making profiles private/protected. Any concerns regarding pupils' use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites, both at home and at school, will be dealt with in accordance with existing school policies including anti-bullying and respectful relationships.

Any concerns regarding pupils' use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites, both at home and at school, will be raised with parents/carers, particularly concerning any underage use of social media sites.

Policy to be approved by Governors Summer 2025
Policy to be reviewed Summer 2026

Signed:

Lisa Jackson
Headteacher