



Garswood Primary School Social Media and Networking Policy

in association with Instagram



Policy Statement:

What is Social Media?

For the purpose of this policy, social media is the term commonly used for websites which allow people to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. Social networking websites such as **Facebook, Instagram, Bebo and MySpace** are perhaps the most well-known examples of social media but the term also covers other web based services such as blogs, video and audio podcasts, wikis, message boards, photo document and video sharing websites such as **YouTube and micro blogging services such as X**. This definition of social media is not exhaustive as technology develops with new ways of communicating advancing every day.

For the purpose of this document the terminology Social Media is not exhaustive and also applies to the use of communication technologies such as **smart phones, cameras, iPads, PSPs, Nintendo Switch, iPhones** or other handheld devices and any other emerging forms of communications technologies.

What are the implications of social networking for Schools?

The widespread availability and use of **social networking applications** bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with our audiences in new and exciting ways. It is important that , at Garswood, we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our School Community and children, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation and Schools of the 21st Century, whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members as defined by School representatives.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- To provide clear guidelines for the responsible use of Instagram by staff, parents, and the school community.
- Ensure the protection of students' safety, privacy, and well-being.
- Promote positive, respectful, and educational use of Instagram for school communication.
- That Garswood Primary School, its leaders/governors are not exposed to legal risks
- That the reputation of Garwood Primary School, staff and governors at the school are not adversely affected
- **All children are safeguarded**
- That any users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of **Garswood Primary School**.
- Assist schools' staff, working with children to work safely and responsibly with the internet and other communication technologies and to monitor their own standards and practice
- Set clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to social networking for educational, personal or recreational use
- Give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken
- Support safer working practice
- Minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with pupils
- Reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused

Audience

- School staff (teachers, administrators, school representatives)
- Parents and guardians
- School community members
- **Students are not an intended audience**

This policy covers the use of **social networking applications** by School Employees. These groups are referred to collectively as 'School representatives' for the purpose of this policy.

They must also be considered where School representatives are contributing in an official capacity to **social networking applications** provided by external organisations.



Guidelines for Staff Use:

- **Professional Accounts Only:** Staff members using Instagram for school purposes must use school-authorized accounts, not personal accounts, for posting any school-related content. Garswood school's authorized account is **#garswoodprimaryschool**, there are no other official accounts.
- **Content Approval:** All content related to children (photos, videos, or information) must be approved by the school administration before posting. *The school administrator is Pam Potter - headteacher*
- **Privacy of Students:**
 - No identifiable images of students should be posted without parental consent.
 - Do not tag in children or use their full names in posts.
- **Educational Focus:** Posts should be limited to school events, achievements, classroom activities, and educational content.
- **Engagement with Followers:** Staff should engage respectfully with followers and avoid any controversial topics (politics, religion, etc.) in comments and interactions.
- **No Direct Messaging with Students:** Direct communication between staff and students through Instagram's private messaging feature is strictly prohibited.
- **No Direct Messaging with Parents and Carers:** Direct communication between staff and parents and carers through Instagram's private messaging feature is strictly prohibited. Staff, Parents and Carers all have access to **Seesaw** for direct messaging and communication in relation to information and guidance for their child at Garswood Primary school.



Guidelines for Parents and Guardians:

- **Consent for Photos and Videos:** Parents must provide written consent for any images or videos of their children to be shared on Instagram.
- **No Posting of School Content Without Permission:** Parents should refrain from posting photos or videos of other children taken at school events unless they have the permission of those children's parents.
- **Respectful Interactions:** Parents engaging with Garswood school's Instagram account should do so respectfully. Any inappropriate comments or behaviours will result in being blocked from the account.
- **Messaging directly:** Parents who message directly on Garswood's Instagram account will not be responded to. Parents and carers will be redirected to the Garswood email address and their personal SeeSaw account.



Principles:

Adults who work with pupils are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

Staff in schools should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.

Staff in schools should continually monitor and review their practice in terms of the continually evolving world of **social networking** and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.



Garswood Primary School's Non Negotiables:

All School representatives should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the School and Local Authority Equality and Safeguarding Policies.

School staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with children from the school community on any personal social networking sites while in employment at Garswood Primary School.

School staff are strongly advised not to invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or carers from the school community on any personal social networking sites while in employment at Garswood Primary School. In any instance where a member of staff does not abide by the advice they do so at their own risk and will not receive any support from the Governing Body as a result of their action. Governors do not accept any liability for any resulting actions from staff using social networking sites.

Any communication received from children to School Representatives must be immediately reported to the Head Teacher, Pam Potter, – Designated Child Protection Officer and procedures for safeguarding followed and recorded on CPOMs

If a School Representative is made aware of any other inappropriate communications involving any child and social networking. These must be reported immediately as above.

School Online Safety Policy and the appropriate age group 'Online Safety Agreement' must be used at all times when children use devices/hardware and access the internet in school.




Safer Online Behaviour:

- Managing personal information effectively makes it far less likely that information will be misused.
- In their own interests, staff need to be aware of the dangers of putting personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers. This will avoid the potential for pupils or their families or friends having access to staff outside of the school environment. It also reduces the potential for identity theft by third parties.
- All staff, particularly new staff, should review their social networking sites when they join the school to ensure that information available publicly about them is accurate and appropriate. This includes any photographs that may cause embarrassment to themselves and the school if they are published.
- Staff should never ‘friend’ a pupil at the school where they are working onto their social networking site.
- Staff should never accept an invitation to ‘friend’ a pupil.
- Confidentiality needs to be considered at all times. Social networking sites have the potential to discuss inappropriate information and employees need to ensure that they do not put any confidential information on their site about themselves, their employer, their colleagues, pupils or members of the public.



Garswood School’s Communication Use:

App or site	URL Link	Audience	Purpose
Instagram		Parents, carers and Staff	To provide parents and carers with an insight to events at Garswood school, including classroom learning, trips, celebrations, staff communication
School website		Parents, carers, staff, pupils, external parties e.g. prospective parents, Ofsted etc...	To celebrate achievements and provide information about Garswood School to all parties including policies, results, dates, uniform etc...
SeeSaw messaging		Parents, carers, staff	To enable parents and carers to message school staff directly about information they need to share or questions they need to ask about their child.
SeeSaw profile		Staff and Pupils	To enable staff to set activities to share with children and... To enable children to complete lessons and create content for computing, PE

			and Music lessons to share with each other within school and for school staff to journal.
Microsoft Teams		Staff and external agencies	To enable staff to communicate with staff in other schools and external agencies about school related matters.



Enforcement:

Any breach of the terms set out below could result in the application or offending content being removed in accordance with the published complaints procedure and the publishing rights of the responsible School representative being suspended in accordance with Garswood School's discipline policy.

Garswood Primary School reserves the right to require the closure of any applications or removal of content published by School representatives which may adversely affect the reputation of the School or put it at risk of legal action.

Any communications or content you publish that causes damage to the School, Local Authority, any of its employees or any third party's reputation may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct to which the School Disciplinary Policies apply.

Where applications allow the posting of messages online, (including email and website) users must be mindful that the right to freedom of expression attaches only to lawful conduct.

Garswood School expects that users of social networking applications will always exercise the right of freedom of expression with due consideration for the rights of others and strictly in accordance with these Terms of Use.



Related Garswood documentation:

- Complaints Procedure
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equality Policy
- Garswood's Computing Policy
- Online Safety and GIST Policy
- Internet Filtering and Monitoring Policy
- Garswood Primary Cyber Response Plan
- Garswood's Online Safety Audit
- Garswood's AI Policy
- Garswood's Acceptable use Policy
- Garswood's Cyber Bullying Policy
- Children's Online Safety Agreement

All agreed by Governors at Garswood Primary School

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents for schools:



Linked St Helens Council documentation to Policy:

- **IT Security Standards & Policies** - The standards outlined in the schools IT Security Standards and Policies documents should be followed when using social networking sites.
- **Disciplinary Policy and Procedure** - Use of social networking sites which is not in accordance with this policy or the School's policies may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct under the school's disciplinary policy and procedure.
- **Fairness and Dignity at Work Policy** - Where use of social networking sites can be interpreted to constitute a form of bullying or harassment of another member of staff this may be dealt with under the fairness and dignity at work policy in the first instance.
- **Equal Opportunities Policy** - Use of social networking sites should be at all times in accordance with the school's equal opportunities in employment policy.
- **Code of Conduct and Guidelines for Safe Working Practices for the Protection of Children and Staff** - The code sets out the standards of conduct expected of employees including maintaining the school's reputation, non-disclosure of confidential information and standards of behaviour expected.
- **Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People** - This document provides safeguarding guidance for all employees who work with children, young people and also vulnerable adults, including guidance around communication with young people, photography and video.



Content Standards:

- **Appropriate Content:** All posts should be age-appropriate, non-controversial, and reflect the values of the school.
- **No Commercial Posts:** The school's Instagram account should not be used for promoting businesses or third-party products/services unless it is a school-sponsored event or partnership.
- **Positive Tone:** Posts should reflect a positive, encouraging tone that celebrates students, staff, and the school community.



Privacy and Security:

- **Account Privacy Settings:** The school's Instagram account will be set to **private**, and followers should be vetted to ensure they are members of the school community (parents, carers, staff).
- **No Location Sharing:** Avoid sharing real-time locations of school activities to protect students' safety.
- **Monitoring of Comments:** The school administration or a designated staff member should monitor all comments and remove any inappropriate or harmful content promptly.



Consequences for Policy Violations:

- **For Staff:** Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary actions, including termination in serious cases.
- **For Parents and Students:** Inappropriate use of the school's Instagram account may result in limited access or being blocked from the account.



Policy review and Updates:

- Garswood School will review the Social networking in association with Instagram policy annually to ensure it is up-to-date with changes in social media practices and legal regulations.

This policy helps manage Garswood Primary School's Instagram account in a way that safeguards students, promotes educational values, and ensures responsible use by all parties.

Les Moon (Computing lead) September 2024



Instagram: Key terms to Know

Business Profiles: Instagram was built on the foundation of personal profiles, but it has evolved (like Facebook) to offer a space strictly for businesses and organisations, including schools. **#GarswoodPrimary School**, is built on a Business Profile.

Explore Page: On this page (found by clicking the magnifying glass icon in your app), Instagram's algorithm suggests photos, videos, Reels, and IGTV content based on what the user actively engages with. Your hashtag usage plays a role in if — and when — your content appears on a user's Explore Page.

Stories: These ephemeral posts allow you to share real-time posts that stay live for 24 hours. Stories can be found in the Explore page, which can help you engage with audiences who don't already follow you.

Highlights: This feature allows you to group stories together under a category, and they are featured just above your Instagram grid. If as a school we capture some great moments in our Stories and want them live on your Garswood's Instagram profile for a longer period of time, we will use Highlights.

IGTV: Within Instagram, you can add long-form videos to your IGTV section. This is a great place to house live video recordings, video series, and more for Garswood school. IGTV allows us to categorise videos in collections, much like YouTube playlists, so that we can organise our longer-form video content directly on the platform. Previews to our IGTV videos can be posted to our regular Instagram profile as well. If Garswood create any IGTV videos, the IGTV button will automatically be added to the top of our school's Instagram feed.

Reels: As Instagram's newest addition, Reels are an effective way to engage with your our parents and carers. These <15-second videos, often set to music or following a theme, are given a lot of precedence by Instagram as it attempts to compete with TikTok. Reels can be organically found on the Explore page, or through its dedicated space in the Instagram app. If Garswood school has created Reels, the Reels button will automatically be added to the top of our school's Instagram feed.

Reporting:

Posts: If you see something that shouldn't be on Instagram such as bullying or offensive content, you can report it to Instagram. Their team works 24/7 to review and remove content and accounts that go against their [Community Guidelines](#).

Accounts: Accounts in violation of Instagram's Community Guidelines can be reported in-app or via a web form. For more info visit [Instagram's Help Center](#)

Comments: If you see a comment that's spam or intended to bully or harass you or someone else, report it. For more info visit [Instagram's Help Center](#)

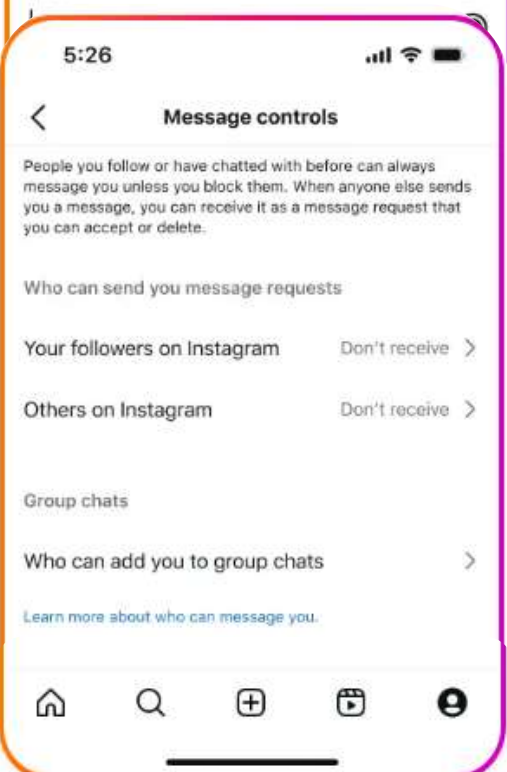
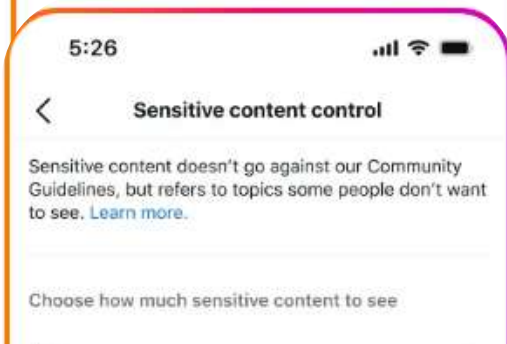
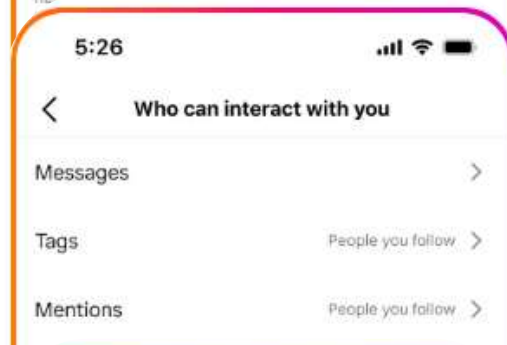
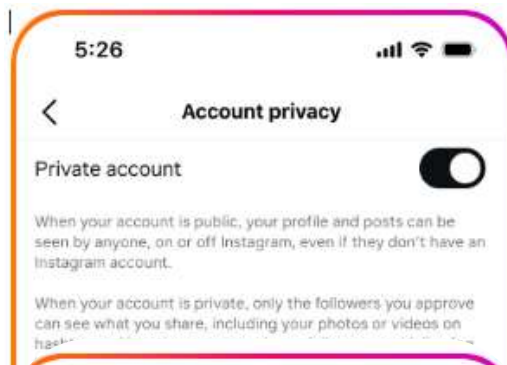
Messages: If you receive a message that feels inappropriate, tap and hold the individual message to report it. For more info visit [Instagram's Help Center](#)

Reporting on Instagram is always anonymous, so the person who posted the content will not know you reported it.

Instagram Teen Accounts:

Even though **children of Primary age are not permitted to have an Instagram account**. Instagram are adding additional controls from the age of 13, the minimum age that children can have an Instagram account. Teens 13-17 automatically have a protected experience, with built-in limits on who can contact them and the content

they see, plus more ways to connect and explore their interests. The **DEFAULT SETTINGS FOR TEENS** indicate they will get built-in limits on who can contact them and the content they see.



Private Accounts

Teen Accounts are automatically set to private. Teens under 16 can only change this default setting with help from a parent or guardian. Learn how to set up supervision on Instagram.

Messages

Teen Accounts are automatically set so Teens can't be messaged by anyone they're not already connected to.

Sensitive content control

Teen Accounts are automatically set to see less sensitive content from accounts they don't follow.

Tags, mentions and content remixing

Teen Accounts are automatically set to only allow tags, mentions and content remixing by people they follow.

Potentially offensive comments and message requests

Teen Accounts are automatically set to hide potentially offensive comments and message requests with the strictest Hidden Words setting.

Images and Videos Parental Consent Form

This form explains the reasons why, and how **Garswood Primary School** may use images and videos of your child.

Please read the form thoroughly and outline your agreement as appropriate.

Name of Student:	
Name of Parent/Carer:	
Class (if known)	

Why do we need your consent?

Garswood Primary School requests the consent of parents to use images and videos of their child for a variety of different purposes. Without your consent, the school will not use images and videos of your child.

Why do you we use images and videos of your child?

Garswood Primary School uses images and videos of students as part of school displays to celebrate school life and students' achievements; to promote the school on social media and on the schools' websites; and for other publicity purposes in printed publications, such as newspapers and the school prospectus.

Who else uses images and videos of your child?

It is common that local media and press, who take images or videos of school events, visit the school. Students will appear in these images and videos, and these may be published in local or national newspapers, or on approved websites. The local press may use images and videos of your children.

Where any organisations other than those above intend to use images or videos of your child, additional consent will be sought before any image or video is used.

What are the conditions of use?

- This consent form is valid for the time your child is at school and in line with statutory requirements on retention.
- It is the responsibility of parents to inform the school if consent needs to be withdrawn or amended.
- The school will not include personal emails or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers on images or videos on our website, in our school prospectuses or any other printed publications.
- The school may use pictures of students and teachers that have been drawn by students.

- The school may use work created by students.
- The school may use group or class images or videos with general labels, e.g. 'sports day'.
- The school will only use images and videos of students who are suitably dressed, i.e. it would not be suitable to display an image of a student in swimwear.

Please return to Garswood Primary School Office Providing your consent Please read the following conditions thoroughly and provide your consent as appropriate.

Consent:

I provide consent below, please tick boxes as appropriate:

Media	Purpose/location	Consent			
		Photo	Video	First Name	All
School Website	Click here for web link				
School Newsletter	Microsoft Sway				
Social Media	Instagram				
Local media	newspaper or online papers				
Private accounts	SeeSaw messages and SeeSaw journal				
Marketing	Prospectus, Displays, Banners, exhibitions, Leaflets etc..				
Appointed external photography	Name, Class, Roll number, SIMS				

Refreshing your consent:

Consent will be refreshed where any changes to circumstances occur – this can include, but is not limited to, the following:

- **New requirements for consent:** e.g. an additional social media account will be used to share student images and videos
- **Changes to a student's circumstances:** e.g. safeguarding requirements mean a student's image cannot be used

- **Changes to parental consent:** Where you would like to amend the provisions for which consent has been provided, you must submit your request in writing to the Head Teacher or School Business Manager at garswood@sthelens.org.uk

A new form will be supplied to you to amend your consent accordingly and provide a signature. Parents have the right to withdraw their consent at any time. Withdrawing your consent will not affect any images or videos that have been shared prior to withdrawal. If you would like to withdraw your consent, you must submit your request in writing to the Head Teacher or School Business Manager at garswood@sthelens.org.uk

 **Declaration:**

I, _____ (name of parent), understand:

- Why my consent is required.
- The reasons why **Garswood Primary School** uses images and videos of my child.
- Which other organisations may use images and videos of my child.
- The conditions under which the school uses images and videos of my child.
- I have provided my consent above as appropriate, and the school will use images and videos of my child in line with my requirements.
- I will be required to re-provide consent where any circumstances change.
- I can amend or withdraw my consent at any time and must do so in writing to Head Teacher or School Business Manager at garswood@sthelens.org.uk

Name of child(ren)	
Class(es)	
Relationship to child(ren)	
Signature	
Date	

If you have any questions regarding this form, please do not hesitate to contact the Head Teacher or School Business Manager at garswood@sthelens.org.uk