



1 Introduction

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) is a broad term for any kind of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other. However, some games, for example Minecraft or World of Warcraft and video sharing platforms such as You Tube have social media elements to them.

2 Scope of policy

The contents of this policy and the procedures identified within, apply to the Proprietor, all staff and visitors to the school. In certain situations it may also apply to parents.

This policy is subject to the school's codes of conduct and acceptable use agreements.

It:

- applies to all staff and to all online communications which directly or indirectly, represent the school
- applies to such online communications posted at any time and from anywhere

Professional communications are those made through official channels, posted on a school account or using the school's name. All professional communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications are those made via personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with, or impacts on, the school, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the school with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the school are outside the scope of this policy.

Digital communications with pupils are also considered. Staff may use social media to communicate with pupils via a school social media account for teaching and learning purposes but must consider whether this is appropriate and consider the potential implications.

This policy and the supporting guidance is specifically discussed as part of staff induction and is revisited on an annual basis to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the expectations relating to their role.

All staff have access to this policy via the School Share Point-staff team-policies-safeguarding. A hard copy is available in the school policy folder with is stored in the school admin office.

3 Policy statement

The school recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. Staff, parents/carers and pupils are actively encouraged to find creative ways to use social media. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation.

The school respects privacy and understands that staff and pupils may use social media forums in their private lives. However, it is very aware that personal communications if not used professionally are likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or the school's reputation.

This policy aims to encourage the safe use of social media by the school, its staff, parents, carers and pupils.

4 Legislative-statutory compliance

This policy is compliant with the statutory guidance as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024).

It conforms to the legal requirements of:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Equalities Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Cyber Choices and the Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988

It also takes into consideration

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015
- The United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child 1992

DfE Statutory Guidance

- Digital and Technology Standards updated Jan 2025

5 Aims of policy

The aim of this policy is to:

- encourage the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education
- define the monitoring of public social media activity pertaining to the school

This policy has been put into place to encourage the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education.

6 Roles and responsibilities

SLT is responsible for:

- Facilitating training and guidance on Social Media use
- Developing and implementing the Social Media policy
- Taking a lead role in investigating any reported incidents
- Making an initial assessment when an incident is reported and involving appropriate staff and external agencies as required
- Receiving completed applications for Social Media accounts
- Approving account creation

The administrator is responsible for:

- Creating the account following SLT approval
- Storing account details, including passwords securely
- Being involved in monitoring and contributing to the account
- Controlling the process for managing an account after the lead staff member has left the organisation (closing or transferring)

Staff are responsible for:

- knowing the contents of and ensure that any use of social media is carried out in line with this and other relevant policies
- attending appropriate training
- regularly monitoring, updating and managing content he/she has posted via school accounts
- adding an appropriate disclaimer to personal accounts when naming the school

7 Process for creating new accounts

The school community is encouraged to consider if a social media account will help them in their work, e.g. a history department Twitter account, or a "Friends of the Holme Court School" Facebook page. Anyone wishing to create such an account must present a business case to the Leadership Team which covers the following points:

- the aim of the account
- the intended audience
- how the account will be promoted
- who will run the account (at least two staff members should be named)
- will the account be open or private/closed

Following consideration by the SLT an application will be approved or rejected. In all cases, the SLT must be satisfied that anyone running a social media account on behalf of the school has read and understood this policy and received appropriate training. This also applies to anyone who is not directly employed by the school, including volunteers or parents.

8 Monitoring of accounts

School accounts are monitored continuously.

Any comments, queries or complaints made through those accounts must be responded to within 24 hours (or on the next working day if received at a weekend) even if the response is only to acknowledge receipt.

Regular monitoring and intervention is essential in case a situation arises where bullying or any other inappropriate behaviour arises on a school social media account.

9 Behaviour

The school requires that all users using social media adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this policy and other relevant policies.

- digital communications by staff must be professional and respectful at all times and in accordance with this policy. Staff will not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make ill-considered comments or judgments about staff. School social media accounts must not be used for personal gain. Staff must ensure that confidentiality is

maintained on social media even after they leave the employment of the school

- users must declare who they are in social media posts or accounts. Anonymous posts are discouraged in relation to school activity
- if a journalist makes contact about posts made using social media staff must follow the school media policy before responding
- unacceptable conduct, (e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by the school and will be reported as soon as possible to a relevant senior member of staff, and escalated where appropriate
- the use of social media by staff while at work may only take place using their own personal devices during morning or lunchbreaks and may be monitored, in line with school policies. School resources eg staff laptops may NOT be used for this purpose. The school permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites
- the school will take appropriate action in the event of breaches of the social media policy. Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, the school will deal with the matter internally. Where conduct is considered illegal, the school will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies and may take action according to the disciplinary policy

10 Legal considerations

Users of social media should consider the copyright of the content they are sharing and, where necessary, should seek permission from the copyright holder before sharing.

Users must ensure that their use of social media does not infringe upon relevant data protection laws, or breach confidentiality.

11 Handling abuse

When acting on behalf of the school, it is important to respond to harmful and / or offensive comments swiftly and with sensitivity.

If a conversation turns and becomes offensive or unacceptable, school users should block, report or delete other users or their comments/posts and should inform the audience exactly why the action was taken

If you feel that you or someone else is subject to abuse by colleagues through use of online communications, then this action must be reported using the agreed school protocols.

12 Tone

The tone of content published on social media should be appropriate to the audience, whilst retaining appropriate levels of professional standards. Key words to consider when composing online content are:

- engaging
- conversational
- informative
- professional

13 Use of images

School use of images can be assumed to be acceptable, providing the following guidelines are strictly adhered to:

- permission to use any photos or video recordings should be sought in line with the school's digital and video images policy. If anyone, for any reason, asks not to be filmed or photographed then their wishes should be respected
- under no circumstances should staff share or upload pupil pictures online other than via official school channels
- staff should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on school social media accounts. Pupils should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on any school list of pupils whose images must not be published

If a member of staff inadvertently takes a compromising picture which could be misconstrued or misused, they must delete it immediately.

14 Personal use

Staff

Personal communications are those made via a personal online account. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with the school or impacts on the school, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the school with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the school are outside the scope of this policy.

Where excessive or inappropriate personal use of social media in school is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken.

The school permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites providing it is carried out on staff's own personal devices and that this is done during official break periods ie morning break or lunchtimes or after school hours.

Pupils

Staff are not permitted to follow or engage with current or prior pupils of the school on any personal social media account. There must be at least a 6 month gap from when a pupil leaves the school before any contact may be made.

The school's education programme should enable the pupils to be safe and responsible users of social media.

Pupils are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about the school. Any offensive or inappropriate comments will be resolved by the use of the school's behaviour policy

Parents/Carers

If parents/carers have access to a school learning platform where posting or commenting is enabled, parents/carers will be informed about acceptable use.

Parents/Carers are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about the school. In the event of any offensive or inappropriate comments being made, the school will ask the parent/carer to remove the post and invite them to discuss the issues in person. If necessary, parents will be directed to the school's complaints procedures.

15 Monitoring posts about the school

As part of active social media engagement, it is considered good practice to pro-actively monitor the Internet for public postings about the school.

The school will effectively respond to social media comments made by others according to a defined policy or process.

16 Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually, and updated in the interim, as may be required, to ensure that it continually addresses the risks to which pupils are/or may be exposed.

17 Links to other policies

This policy relates to, and should be read alongside the following policies and agreements:

- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Bullying (including cyber-bullying)
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- Retention of Records Policy

- Pupil Acceptable Use Agreements (KS2 and KS3-4)
- Staff and Volunteer Acceptable Use Agreement
- Staff devices loan agreement

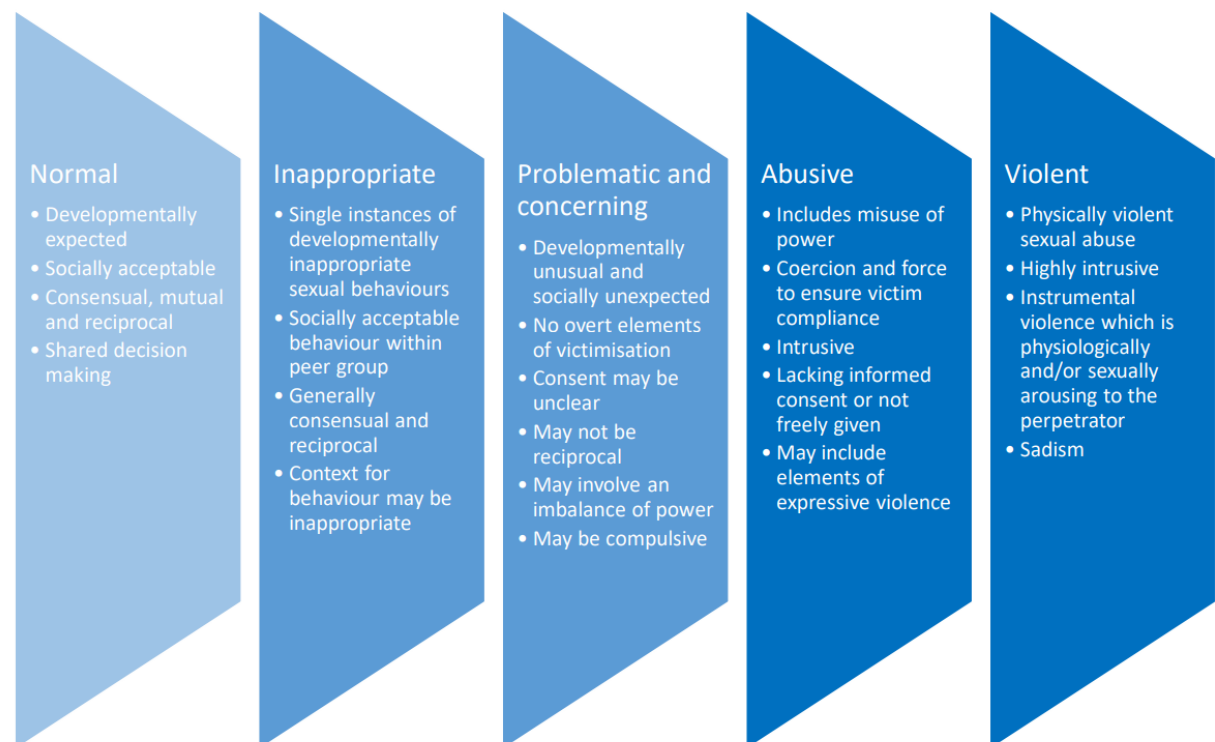
18 Policy administration

Version Number	2.0
Date created	January 2025
Date ratified	Proprietor February 2025
Electronic copy of this policy	SharePoint- staff Team/Staff/HR/policies School website www.holmecourt.com
Hard copy available	Red School Policy file in admin office
Distribution	All staff and volunteers
Date of next review	February 2026 or sooner if changes to legislation or guidance
Person responsible for review	Head Teacher



Holme Court
School Cambridge

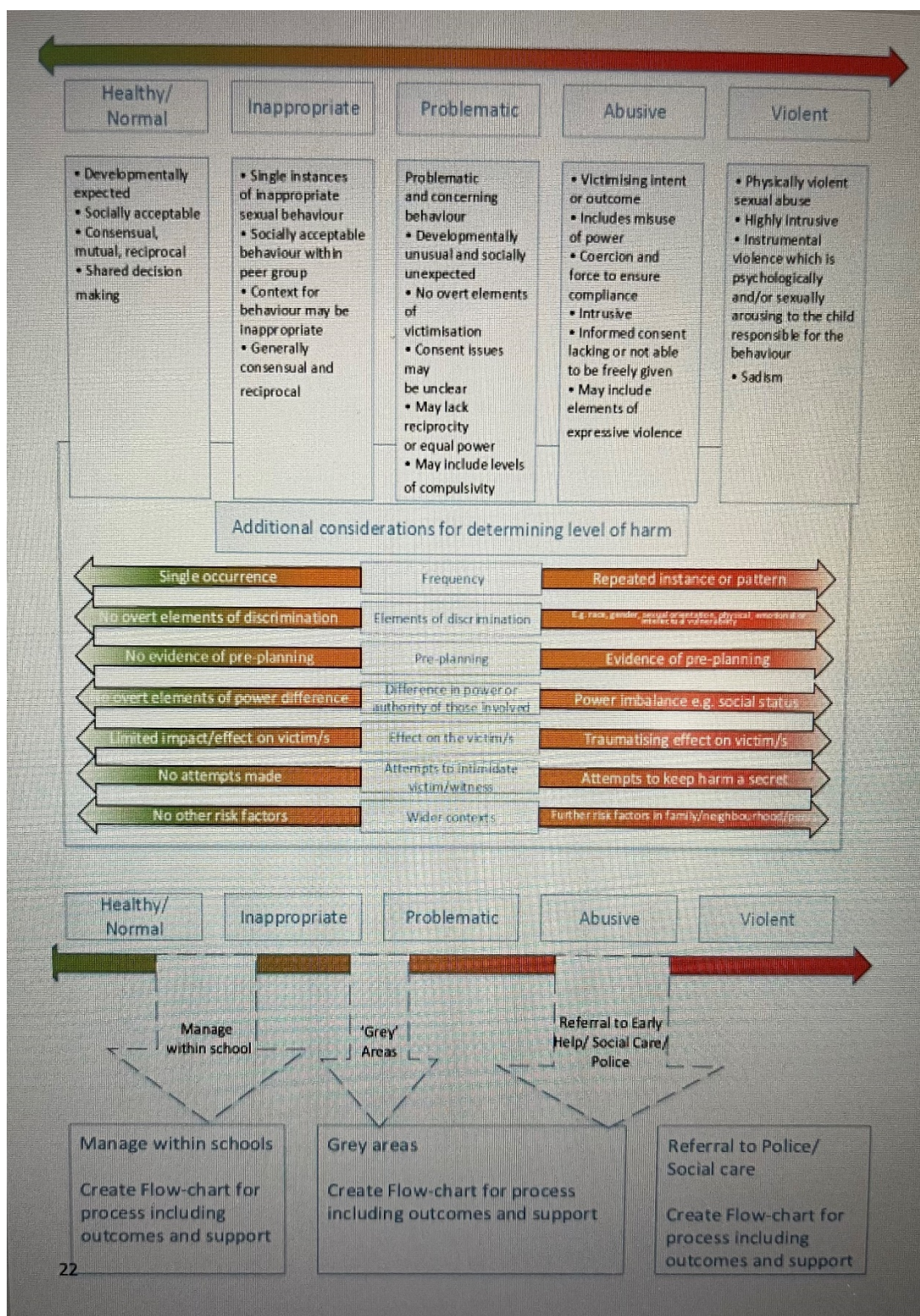
Peer to Peer Abuse Policy Appendix 1



Holme Court
School Cambridge

**Peer to Peer Abuse Policy
Appendix 2**

Referral Pathway Flowchart



Holme Court
School Cambridge

Peer to Peer Abuse Policy Appendix 3

Support for Young People: Local and National

- Internet Watch Foundation (to potentially remove illegal images)

Bedfordshire

Access and Referral Hub-support and advice and to make a referral;	0300 3008585 Mon-Thurs 8.45-5.20pm Fridays 8.45-4.20pm	www.Forms.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Out of hours emergency duty team	0300 3008123	Cs.accessandreferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
LADO Bedford Borough	01234 276 693	Lado@bedford.gov.uk
Bedford Central	0300 300 8142	LADO@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Luton	01582 548 069	LADO@luton.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire

Children's social care team	03450 455203 Mon-Friday 8am-6pm	
Children's social care team	01733 234724 out of hours	
Education Child Protection Lead	Sara Rogers 01223 729045 0799- 936820	Sara.rogers@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
LADO	01223 727967	LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Essex

Children's social care team	0345 6037627 Mon-Friday 9am-5pm	
Children's social care team out of hours	03456 061212 out of hours	
LADO	03330 139 797	lado@essex.gov.uk

Hertfordshire

Children's social care team	03001 234043 any time	https://eservices.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/child_protection-referral
LADO		LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Norfolk

Children's social care team	0344 800 8020	
LADO		LADO@norfolk.gov.uk

Suffolk

Professional consultation line-advice from MASH social worker	0345 606 1499	
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	0345 606 1499 Mon-Thurs 9-5.00pm Fri 9-4.25pm	
Customer First-referrals	0808 800 4005	
LADO	0300 123 2044	LADO@Suffolk.gov.uk

National charities:

Victim Support

A national charity dedicated to helping anyone affected by crime – not just victims and witnesses, but friends, family and anyone else caught up in the aftermath.

Rape Crisis

A national charity offering confidential help, advice and a range of Rape Crisis Centres around the UK.

Galop

A national charity providing advice and support to members of the LGBT community.

Internet Watch Foundation

If the incident involves sexual images or videos that have been made and circulated online, the victim can be supported to get the images removed <https://iwf.org.uk>

Survivors UK

A national charity supporting men who have been raped or sexually assaulted.

Crimestoppers

A national charity with a free helpline for reporting crime anonymously.

Refuge

Refuge supports women, children and men with a range of services, including refuges, independent advocacy, community outreach and culturally specific services.

Women's Aid

Women's Aid is a national charity working to end domestic abuse against women and children.

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327 Confidential helpline for men experiencing domestic violence from a partner or ex-partner (or from family members).

