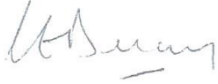




Social Media Policy

Signed:	
Chair of Trust Board:	Claire Delaney
Approved:	1 September 2026
Renewal:	Every two years
Review Date:	1 September 2028

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1.0 Bellevue Place Education Trust – Our commitment

Learn, Enjoy, Succeed

BPET is a growing family of autonomous schools that strive for excellence for the communities they serve. Our staff are empowered to balance academic rigour and curricular breadth to inspire confidence, creativity and respect. Our pupils are at the heart of everything we do as to LEARN, ENJOY and SUCCEED.

LEARN

We offer a breadth and ambition of provision that supports an exceptional academic education, nurturing every child's learning journey – regardless of ability, background or special educational needs – and helping them develop a lifelong passion for learning.

ENJOY

We believe learning should be enjoyable, and that through this enjoyment children develop life-long learning habits. We achieve this by creating opportunities for all children to reach their full potential at school, and to enjoy school life – helping to ensure pupils grow into happy, independent and confident learners.

SUCCEED

We strive for excellence, aiming to ignite ambition, aspiration, pride and a desire to contribute to society. We prepare our pupils to approach life with confidence, purpose and integrity.

Working together: the BPET way

We achieve far more by learning, supporting and collaborating within and across our network of schools and communities. We do so with an unwavering and shared commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion, and respect.

2.0 Introduction

BPET understands that social media is an established part of life outside of school. We have a responsibility to safeguard our pupils against potential dangers when accessing the internet at school, and to educate our pupils about how to protect themselves online when outside of school.

We are committed to:

- Encouraging the responsible use of social media by all staff, parents and pupils in support of the school's mission, values and objectives.
- Protecting our pupils from the dangers of social media.
- Preventing and avoiding damage to the reputation of the school through irresponsible use of social media.
- Protecting our staff from cyberbullying and potentially career damaging behaviour.
- Arranging online safety meetings for parents, if the need for support arises

3.0 Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Information Commissioner's Officer guidance
- DfE: Data Protection in Schools - latest version
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990, amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Defamation Act 2013.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Pupil Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Made about Staff, Supply Staff, Contractors and Volunteers
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Information and Records Retention Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Information and Records Retention Policy
- Social Media Code of Conduct for families, parents and care givers.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy and ensuring that all staff, parents and pupils are aware of their responsibilities in relation to social media use.
- Promoting safe working practices and standards with regards to the use of social media.
- Establishing clear expectations of behaviour for social media use.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including against any of the protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
- In conjunction with the Local Governing Board, handling complaints regarding this policy and its provisions in line with the BPET Complaints Policy.
- Implementing appropriate sanctions and disciplinary methods where there is a breach of this policy.
- Taking steps to minimise the amount of misplaced or malicious allegations in relation to social media use.

- Working alongside the Head of Digital Innovation and the Data Protection Officer to ensure appropriate security measures are implemented and compliance with UK GDPR.

The BPET Board (supported by the BPET Central Team) is responsible for:

- Ensuring the DSL's remit covers online safety.
- Reviewing this policy on a regular basis.
- Ensuring their own knowledge of online safety issues is up-to-date.
- Ensuring all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction.

Staff members are responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy
- Ensuring pupils adhere to the principles outlined in this policy and that it is implemented fairly and consistently in the classroom.
- Reporting any social media misuse by staff, pupils or parents to the headteacher immediately, who will then report to the Head of Marketing & Communications.
- Attending any training on social media use offered by or through the school or BPET (i.e. National College).

Parents are responsible for:

- Taking appropriate responsibility and supervision for the use of social media sites and the influence on their children at home.
- Promoting safe social media behaviour for both themselves and their children.
- Attending online safety meetings held by or offered through the school, wherever possible.
- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy and in the Social Media Code of Conduct for Families, including:
 - o Not engaging in activities involving social media which might bring the school into disrepute.
 - o Not representing their personal views as those of the school on any social medium or channel.
- Acting in the best interests of pupils when creating, participating in or contributing to social media sites.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy.
- Ensuring they understand how to use social media appropriately and stay safe online.
- Know how to seek help from school parents and staff if they are concerned about something they or a peer have experienced online.
- Reporting online safety incidents and concerns in line with the procedures within this policy.
- Demonstrating the same high standards of behaviour as expected within the school.

The Head of Marketing and Communications is responsible for:

- Monitoring and reviewing all school-run social media accounts.

- Monitoring and consulting with staff on the purpose of the social media account, how they contribute to it, and the content published.
- Maintaining a log of inappropriate comments or abuse relating to the school.
- Handling inappropriate comments or abuse posted on the school's social media accounts, or regarding the school.
- Encouraging schools to set aside enough resources to keep the content of the social media accounts up-to-date and relevant.
- Provide training to staff where relevant.

School ICT providers and Head of Marketing & Communications are responsible for:

- Providing technical support in the development and implementation of the school's social media accounts.
- Implementing appropriate security measures as directed by the headteacher.
- Ensuring that the school's filtering and monitoring systems are updated as appropriate.

5.0 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines "social media" as any online platform that offers interaction between the user and other individuals or groups including, but not limited to, the following:

- Class Dojo (closed social media group for parents and staff)
- Blogs
- Online discussion forums, such as MumsNet
- Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook, Instagram
- Media-sharing platforms such as YouTube and TikTok
- 'Micro-blogging' applications, such as X (formerly Twitter)

For the purpose of this policy, "cyberbullying" is defined as any social media or communication technology intentionally used to bully an individual (staff or pupils) or group, including the posting or sharing of messages, images or videos, even if this is in "private" groups. From a legal standpoint, "private" social media groups are still public forums, and therefore defamation law applies.

For the purpose of this policy, "members of the school community" are defined as any teacher, member of support staff, pupil, parent of a pupil, local adviser or ex-pupil.

6.0 Data protection principles

The school will obtain consent from pupils and parents at the beginning of each academic year using the consent form or through Arbor, which will confirm whether or not consent is given for posting images and videos of a pupil on social media platforms, the school website and the school's newsletter. Consent provided for the use of images and videos only applies to school accounts and the BPET account and their marketing activities – staff, pupils and parents are not permitted to post any imagery or videos on personal accounts.

A record of consent, which details the pupils for whom consent has been provided, is valid from the date of signing for four years, unless withdrawn. **Parents and pupils are able to withdraw or amend their consent at any time.** To do so, parents and pupils must inform the school in writing or via the

parents' portal Arbor or via email to the School Operations Manager or headteacher. Where parents or pupils withdraw or amend their consent, it will not affect the processing of any images or videos prior to when consent was withdrawn or amended if said images are difficult to recall, [in accordance to the ICO guidelines](#). Wherever it is reasonably practicable to do so, the school will take measures to remove any posts before consent was withdrawn or amended, such as removing images from a social media site. Processing will cease in line with parents' and pupils' requirements following this.

The School Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring consent records remain up-to-date.

Consent can be provided for certain principles only, for example only images of a pupil are permitted to be posted, and not videos. This will be made explicitly clear on the consent form provided or email request. The school will only post images and videos of pupils for whom consent has been received.

Only BPET or school-owned devices will be used to take images and videos of the school community. Only appropriate images and videos of pupils will be posted in which they are suitably dressed(i.e. it would not be suitable to display an image of a pupil in swimwear.)

When posting on social media, the school will use group or class images or videos with general labels, e.g. 'sports day'.

The school will not post pupils' personal details on social media platforms and pupils' full names will never be used alongside any videos or images in which they are present.

Before posting on social media, staff will:

- Refer to the consent record log to ensure consent has been received for that pupil and for the exact processing activities required.
- Ensure that there is no additional identifying information relating to a pupil.

Any breaches of the data protection principles will be handled in accordance with BPET's Data and Cyber-security Breach Prevention and Management Plan.

7.0 Staff social media use

School accounts

The school's social media sites will only be created and monitored by BPET's Head of Marketing and Communications and other designated staff members. There will be a strong pedagogical or business reason for the creation of new social media accounts on behalf of the school; official school profiles and accounts will not be created for trivial reasons.

If members of staff wish to create a new social media account, they will consult with the Headteacher and the Head of Marketing and Communications who will ascertain the purpose of the proposed site and its content.

A school social media account will be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by staff members and will be linked to an official school email account, where possible.

Consideration will be given to the following aspects:

- The purpose for using social media
- Whether the overall investment will achieve the pedagogical or business aims
- The level of interactive engagement with the site
- Whether pupils, staff, parents or members of the public will be able to contribute content to the account
- How much time and effort staff members are willing to commit to the proposed site
- A clear plan which outlines aspects such as how long the site will last
- How the success of the site will be evaluated.

School social media passwords are kept in the headteacher's office – these are not shared with any unauthorised persons, including pupils, unless otherwise permitted by the headteacher. Staff will adhere to the data protection principles outlined in section 4 of this policy at all times.

Staff will ensure any posts are positive in nature and relevant to pupils, the work of staff, the school or any achievements. Staff will not post any content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or pupils.

All content expressed on school social media accounts will not breach copyright, data protection or freedom of information legislation.

Staff will ensure the headteacher has checked the content before anything is posted on social media.

If inappropriate content is accessed online, a report form will be completed and passed on to the Data Protection Officer (DPO) and the school DSL. The DPO retains the right to monitor staff members' internet usage in line with the Data and Cyber-security Breach Prevention and Management Plan.

The school's social media accounts will comply with site rules at all times, particularly with regards to the minimum age limit for use of the site. It will be noted that each networking site has their own rules which must be followed – the Head of Marketing and Communications will induct staff to each new social media platform, providing them with the relevant training and information.

8.0 Personal accounts

Staff members will not access social media platforms during lesson times, but they are permitted to use social media during break times away from the eyes of the children. Staff will avoid using mobile phones and social media in front of pupils.

Staff members will not use any school-owned devices to access personal accounts or to engage in personal conversations via the school's accounts, unless it is beneficial to the material being taught. Prior permission will be sought from the headteacher or senior leader. Staff are not permitted to use the school's WiFi network to access personal accounts, unless otherwise permitted by the headteacher.

Staff will not befriend, 'follow' or otherwise contact pupils or parents through their personal social media accounts. If pupils or parents attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' a staff member, they will report this to the headteacher.

Staff members will not provide their home address, phone number, mobile number, social networking details or personal email addresses to pupils or parents – any contact with pupils or parents will be done through authorised school contact channels. Staff members will use their school email address for school business and personal email address for their private correspondence; the two should not be mixed.

Staff members will ensure the necessary privacy controls are applied to personal accounts. Where staff members use social media in a personal capacity, they will ensure it is clear that views are personal and are not those of the school.

No staff member will post any content online that is damaging to the school or any of its staff or pupils, either on a school account, or on their personal account. Staff members will not post any information which could identify a pupil, class or the school – this includes any images, videos and personal information. Staff will not take any posts, images or videos from social media that belong to the school for their own personal use. Staff members will not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.

Breaches of this policy by members of staff will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content, could lead to prosecution, disciplinary action or dismissal. Members of staff will be aware that if their out-of-work activity brings the school into disrepute, disciplinary action will be taken.

Attempts to bully, groom, coerce or manipulate members of the school community via social media by members of staff will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

Social media will not be used as a platform to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their families members, colleagues or other professionals.

Staff members' personal information will not be discussed on social media.

9.0 Parent social media use

Parents are able to comment on or respond to information shared via social media sites; however, parents should do so in a way which does not damage the reputation of the school.

Parents will be asked not to share any photos or personal details of pupils when commenting on school social media sites, nor post comments concerning other pupils or staff members, in accordance with the [Social Media Code of Conduct for Families](#).

Any parents that are seen to be breaching the guidance in this policy will be required to attend a meeting with the headteacher and may have their ability to interact with the social media websites removed.

Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content could lead to prosecution.

10.0 Pupil social media use

Pupils will not access social media during lesson time, unless it is part of a curriculum activity. Pupils are not permitted to use the school's WiFi network to access any social media platforms unless prior permission has been sought from the headteacher, and the Head of Digital Innovation has ensured appropriate network security measures are applied.

Pupils will not attempt to 'friend', 'follow' or otherwise contact members of staff through their personal social media accounts. Pupils are only permitted to be affiliates of the school's social media accounts. Where a pupil or parent attempts to "friend" or 'follow' a staff member on their personal account, it will be reported to the headteacher.

Pupils will not post any content online which is damaging to the school or any of its staff or pupils. Pupils will not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.

Pupils are instructed not to sign up to any social media sites that have an age restriction above the pupil's age.

If inappropriate content is accessed online on school premises, it will be reported to a teacher, possibly escalated to the headteacher or to the parents or guardians.

Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content, could lead to exclusion.

11.0 Online safety

Any disclosures made by pupils to staff about online abuse, harassment, grooming or exploitation, whether they are the victim or disclosing on behalf of another child, will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Concerns regarding a staff member's online behaviour will be reported to the headteacher, who will decide on the best course of action in line with the relevant policies, e.g. the Staff Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Made about Staff, Supply Staff, Contractors and Volunteers, and Disciplinary Policy. If the concern is about the headteacher, it will be reported to the BPET Chief Executive.

Concerns regarding a pupil's online behaviour will be reported to the DSL, who will investigate any concerns with relevant staff members, e.g. the headteacher and ICT provider, and manage concerns in accordance with relevant policies depending on their nature, e.g. the Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where there is a concern that illegal activity has taken place, the headteacher will contact the police. The school will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils (e.g. by calling the police) where criminal behaviour is thought to be inadvertent and as a result of ignorance or normal developmental curiosity, e.g. a pupil has taken and distributed indecent imagery of themselves. The DSL will decide in which cases this response is appropriate and will manage such cases in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

12.0 Blocked content

In accordance with the school's Data and Cyber-security Breach Prevention and Management Plan, the online safety officer will install firewalls on the school's network to prevent access to certain websites. The following social media websites, for example, are not accessible on the school's network:

- X (formerly Twitter)
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Tik Toc.

The Head of Marketing and Communications retains the right to monitor staff and pupil access to websites when using the school's network and on school-owned devices.

Attempts made to circumvent the network's firewalls will result in a ban from using school computing equipment, other than with close supervision.

Inappropriate content accessed on the school's computers will be reported to the online safety officer so that the site can be blocked. Requests may be made to access erroneously blocked content by submitting a blocked content access form to the online safety officer, which will be approved by the headteacher.

13.0 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying incidents are taken seriously at **name of school**. Any reports of cyberbullying on social media platforms by pupils will be handled in accordance with the Anti-bullying Policy.

Cyberbullying against pupils or staff is not tolerated under any circumstances. Incidents of cyberbullying are dealt with quickly and effectively wherever they occur in line with the Anti-bullying Policy. Allegations of cyberbullying from staff members will be handled in accordance with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

14.0 Training

The school recognises that early intervention can protect pupils who may be at risk of cyberbullying or negative social media behaviour. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils. Teachers and support staff will receive training on social media as part of their new starter induction. Teachers and support staff will receive termly and ongoing training as part of their development.

Pupils will be educated about online safety and appropriate social media use on a termly basis through a variety of mediums, including assemblies, PSHE lessons and cross-curricular links. Pupils will be provided with material to reinforce their knowledge.

Parents will be invited to online safety and social media training on an annual basis and provided with relevant resources, such as our [Social Media Code of Conduct for Families](#).

15.0 Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.