



Learn-AT
Learning ~ Fellowship

**Social Media Code of Conduct
for Parents and Carers**

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Please note that this policy supersedes and replaces any equivalent policies or sections of policies. This policy is non contractual and can therefore be amended without consultation. Before you use this policy, please check you have the latest version using the footer reference and Learn-AT Policy Index.

This policy applies to all Learn Academies Trust schools and should be read in conjunction with the latest associated guidance issued by Learn-AT.

1. Statement of intent

- 1.1. All Learn-AT schools value positive partnership with all parents. All members of staff work hard to nurture constructive relationships with families and to engage parents in their children's education and the life of the school. Our mission is to serve children and families, to work with parents to raise the adults of the future together.
- 1.2. We understand the benefits of using social media. However if it is misused, the whole school community can be negatively affected. The school's reputation can be damaged and enormous distress can be caused to individuals.
- 1.3. Staff and governors' use of social media is governed by the school's e-safety policy and internet code of conduct. This code of conduct sets out clear guidance for how we expect parents and carers to conduct themselves on social media and when using messenger apps, such as WhatsApp.

2. Legal framework

- 2.1. This policy is informed by statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Data Protection Act 1998
 - Defamation Act 2013
 - Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (as amended)

3. E-safety and social media conduct

- 3.1. All Learn-AT schools expect parents and carers to behave in a respectful, civil and courteous way online and will not tolerate any of the following online behaviours:
 - Sending abusive messages to parents or teachers
 - Sending abusive messages about parents and teachers
 - Posting defamatory 'statuses' about fellow parents, pupils, the school or its employees
 - Complaining about the school's policies, values and methods on social media
- 3.2. The Trust has a Complaints Policy in place which applies to all its schools. This outlines clear a clear procedure for all parental complaints. It is therefore inappropriate and unnecessary for parents to broadcast grievances publicly online.

- 3.3. Parents will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking and their conduct online.
- 3.4. 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.
- 3.5. Parents must not attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' any member of staff on social media.
- 3.6. Parents are instructed not to post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this code of conduct.
- 3.7. Learn-AT retains the right to request any damaging material to be removed from social media websites.

4. Online messaging

- 4.1. Learn-AT expects parents to use messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, for purposes beneficial to themselves and the schools, and will not accept any of the following behaviour:
 - Sending abusive or offensive messages to fellow parents
 - Sending abusive or offensive messages about members of staff, parents or the school
 - Sending abusive or offensive messages to members of staff
- 4.2. The Trust 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.
- 4.3. Should any problems arise from contact over messaging apps, the school will act quickly by contacting parents directly, to stop any issues continuing.
- 4.4. The school can request a meeting with parents if any misconduct, such as sending abusive messages or posting defamatory statements, occurs online.
- 4.5. The headteacher can, with the permission of the parent, view messages sent between parents or groups of parents in order to deal with problems quickly and effectively.
- 4.6. The headteacher can request that 'group chats' are closed down should any problems continue between parents or groups of parents.

5. Monitoring and review

- 5.1. The Trust will review this code of conduct every three years and will communicate any changes to all schools and parents/carers.
- 5.2. All parents will be asked to read this code of conduct following any substantial changes.