

Pyrford Primary School / LPCAT

Communications and social media guide

There's always something happening in the Pyrford Primary School community. The school and its Governors have worked together on this guide, with feedback from parents, to ensure you know where to seek information, and how best to use communications channels such as email, Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram if you are a class rep, or a parent commenting about the school on social media.

WHY DO WE NEED COMMUNICATION GUIDANCE?

It's great to have so many communication tools to hand; it makes life much easier, as well as helping us cut down on paper. Unfortunately, sometimes message threads get out of hand, and people can become at best misinformed, and at worst deeply upset by discussions in email, WhatsApp or Facebook groups. To avoid distress to pupils, parents, and staff, we ask that you take a moment to read this guidance and then take a moment to consider what you post before you post.

WHO WILL SEND ME INFORMATION, AND HOW?

The school

School trips, events, clubs (including breakfast and afterschool clubs), school management issues, news, year group curriculum topics and homework, school meals, PE.

Weekly school newsletter, email, school website, school Facebook page.

The PTA

Fundraising events, calls for volunteers, news, calls for donations, ticket sales, reminders.

School newsletter, email, PTA Facebook page.

Your class reps

Class socials, organising volunteers, sharing PTA messages, reminders.

WhatsApp, email, face-to-face.

Remember, PTA committee and class reps are parents just like you, so if you have queries about anything other than PTA matters and class updates, the best place to go for clarification is direct to the school.

OUR APPROACH

- We are a supportive and caring Christian community
- We teach our pupils to avoid gossip, speculation and using unkind words
- We promote a culture of openness, saying sorry, charity, and seeking forgiveness
- Mistakes happen, but we acknowledge them, say sorry, try to change, and move on.

We ask parents and carers in the school community to promote this culture.

PTA/CLASS REP MESSAGES

The school tends to email parents and carers on behalf of the PTA. The messages are approved by the senior leadership team before distribution.

The PTA holds email addresses only for volunteers and class reps. Class reps usually create an email and/or WhatsApp group to share PTA information and class updates with their class. These groups are an efficient way to stay up to date.

COMMENTING ON PTA FACEBOOK OR WHATSAPP

Class WhatsApp groups are primarily for sharing information about PTA events, weekly reminders, collections for teacher gifts, and class parent socials. If you would like to post

about something other than these topics, ask yourself if it might be better suited to a smaller group of parents in a separate friends' group.

If you are concerned about something the school has done, we urge you to speak to the school directly about it rather than airing concerns on an online forum.

Your class WhatsApp group is not an appropriate place to share comments, messages and views from other groups or organisations – use non-school forums.

Comment threads can soon get out of hand. Think about how your post could come across, and about how you would feel if you were on the receiving end.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FEEL A POST IS INAPPROPRIATE

- Please be assured that we will not tolerate inappropriate emails, posts or messages
- If someone makes an inappropriate comment please contact your class rep, the PTA communications lead, or senior staff member
- Facebook and WhatsApp moderators will refer inappropriate posts to senior staff and can bar someone from a group
- You can always choose to leave a WhatsApp group – and no-one should make a judgement about that
- You can request that any photo or comment in which you or your child are mentioned is removed

IMAGES OF PUPILS, STAFF AND OTHER PARENTS

We understand that parents will want to capture memorable moments in photographs, and that friends and family also want to be able to see photos of these special moments. The school records and shares images of identifiable individuals in line with data protection principles¹. This includes retrieving permission before publishing any photos.

If you take photos at a school event, please only share them with friends and family – particularly through social media – with thought and care. Some children, staff, parents or carers may not be comfortable with images of themselves or their children being shared. With the growth of social media, some parents are trying to limit a child's digital footprint; others are trying to minimise a child's online presence due to child protection issues.

It is important to be aware of child protection and safeguarding issues when taking photos of or filming children, and subsequently sharing those images on social media. Photos/videos of pupils should never be uploaded to social media without permission from the parents of **all** pupils featured

- Ask staff for their permission before uploading photos of them on social media
- To safeguard children, avoid posting a child's name beside their photo
- In line with the NSPCC guidance, we do not allow photographs of children in swimming or similar events
- A child/staff member has the right to ask for any photograph in which they feature not to be posted
- Never video musical items without permission
- If you choose to upload photos on social media sites you should think about ensuring your page has adequate security settings, and restrict photos to those of your own children
- The PTA Facebook page is the responsibility of the PTA, and is used to promote PTA events. The PTA will apply the same principles of seeking permission before posting articles, comments or photos of pupils, staff or parents.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU WOULD LIKE A PHOTO REMOVED

¹ In accordance with the school's [Data Protection Policy](#)

If you discover a photo on social media which you would like removed, you can:

- Ask the person who posted the photo to remove it, or at least edit it to remove your image; and/or
- Check the reporting tools of the social media platform – for example, Twitter now has a reporting tool to remove a photo that is posted without your consent; and/or
- Contact the school for assistance, and we will action it immediately in accordance with the school's '**social media**' **policy** to protect those staff and parents who do not wish to have photos of themselves or their children posted online.

SOME FINAL REMINDERS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE SHARING

- Am I posting in anger?
- Who might be able to read this?
- Could someone misinterpret what i'm saying?
- Am I showing a bad side of myself?
- Should I wait and post this tomorrow?
- Am I revealing too much about myself?
- Could someone be upset about my comment?
- Is there a better way to respond to this situation?

Before you...

      

THINK!

T = Is it True?

H = Is it Helpful?

I = Is it Inspiring?

N = Is it Necessary?

K = Is it Kind?