

# Brenchley Preschool

## Social Media Policy



### Key Details

**Designated Safeguarding Lead: Zena Ames**

**Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Sian Scovell**

**Chair of the Committee with responsibility: Vic Relle**

**Date written/updated: August 2025**

**Date agreed and ratified by Committee: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025**

**Date of next review: September 2026**

This policy will be reviewed at least annually. It will also be revised following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

## 1. Policy aims and scope

- This policy has been written by Brenchley Preschool involving staff and parents/carers, building on Kent County Councils LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service Social Media policy template, with specialist advice and input as required.
- It takes into account the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE, Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS), 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (WTSC) and the local Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership (KSCMP) procedures.
- The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all members of Brenchley Preschool community when using social media.
  - Brenchley Preschool recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to ensure that all children and staff are protected from potential harm when using social media.
  - As outlined in our child protection policy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Zena Ames, DSL, is recognised as having overall responsibility for online safety.
- The policy applies to all use of social media; the term social media includes, but is not limited to, blogs, wikis, social networking sites, forums, bulletin boards, online gaming, apps, video/photo sharing sites, chatrooms and instant messenger apps or other online communication services.
- This policy applies to children, parents/carers and all staff, including the Committee, Management team, Practitioner's, plus any support staff, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of the setting (collectively referred to as "staff" in this policy).

## 2. Links with other policies

- This policy links with several other policies, practices and action plans, including but not limited to:
  - Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
  - Behaviour policy
  - Cameras and image use policy
  - Child protection policy
  - Staff code of conduct/staff behaviour policy
  - Confidentiality policy
  - Brenchley Curriculum policies including Tapestry
  - Data security and GDPR
  - Mobile and smart technology
  - Online Safety

### **3. General social media expectations**

- Brenchley Preschool believes everyone should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity. Even though online spaces may differ in many ways, the same standards of behaviour are expected online as offline, and all members of our community are expected to engage in social media in a positive and responsible manner.
- All members of our community are advised not to post or share content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others on any social media service.
- We reserve the right to control including monitoring and restricting learner and staff access to social media via our filtering and monitoring systems which are applied to all Brenchley Preschool provided devices and systems; further information on how this is achieved is addressed in our child protection policy.
- We will ensure children have no access to social media on the children's devices at Brenchley Preschool and staff are reminded that they are not permitted to access personal social media accounts on Brenchley Preschool provided devices as these are for accessing work related content only.
- Any use of social media during Brenchley Preschool hours or whilst using Brenchley Preschool devices may result in removal of internet access, devices and/or disciplinary action.
- In the event of remote learning taking place - The use of social media or apps, for example as a formal remote learning platform or education tool would be robustly risk assessed by the DSL and Manager, prior to use with the children. If permitted, any use will take place in accordance with our existing policies, for example, child protection, staff behaviour acceptable use policies, remote learning Acceptable Use Policy.
- Concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of Brenchley Preschool community on social media will be taken seriously. Concerns will be managed in accordance with the appropriate policies, including anti-bullying, allegations against staff, behaviour, staff behaviour/code of conduct, Acceptable Use Policies, and child protection.

### **4. Staff use of social media**

- The use of social media during Brenchley Preschool hours for personal use is not permitted for staff. On preschool provided devices this is not permitted at any time during working hours or non-working hours. Staff may access social media on their personal devices during their lunch breaks.
- Safe and professional online behaviour is outlined for all members of staff, including volunteers, as part of our induction, code of conduct/behaviour policy and/or acceptable use of technology policy.
- The safe and responsible use of social media sites will be discussed with all members of staff as part of staff induction. Advice will be provided and updated via staff training and additional guidance and resources will be shared with staff as required on a regular basis.
- Any complaint about staff misuse of social media or policy breaches will be taken seriously in line with our child protection and allegations against staff policy.

## **4.1 Reputation**

- All members of staff are advised that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the Brenchley Preschool. Civil, legal or disciplinary action may be taken if staff are found to bring the profession or institution into disrepute, or if something is felt to have undermined confidence in their professional abilities.
- All members of staff are advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media. This may include, but is not limited to:
  - Setting appropriate privacy levels on their personal accounts/sites.
  - Being aware of the implications of using location sharing services.
  - Opting out of public listings on social networking sites.
  - Logging out of accounts after use.
  - Using strong passwords.
  - Ensuring staff do not represent their personal views as being that of the Brenchley Preschool.
- Members of staff are encouraged not to identify themselves as employees of Brenchley Preschool on their personal social networking accounts; this is to prevent information being linked with the setting and to safeguard the privacy of staff members.
- All staff are expected to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance our policies and the wider professional reputation and legal framework. All members of staff are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post on social media.
- Information and content that staff members have access to as part of their employment, including photos and personal information about children and their family members or colleagues, will not be shared or discussed on social media sites.
- Members of staff will notify the leadership team immediately if they consider that any content shared on social media sites conflicts with their role.

## **4.2 Communicating with children/pupils/students and their families**

- Staff will not use any personal social media accounts to contact children or their family members.
- All members of staff are not permitted to communicate with or add any current children or their family members, as 'friends' on any personal social media accounts. Once the children have left our care at Brenchley Preschool as a whole, then staff members may add parents/carers if they so wish.
- Any communication from children and parents/carers received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the DSL (or deputy) who will then share this with the Manager.
- Any pre-existing relationships or situations, which mean staff cannot or would struggle to comply with this requirement, will be discussed with the DSL and the Manager. Decisions made and advice provided in these situations will be formally recorded to safeguard children, families and members of staff and the setting.

- If ongoing contact with children is required once they have left the setting, members of staff will be expected to use existing alumni networks, or use official setting provided communication tools to ensure a paper trail is clear.
- Parents will be told of the expectations that they are not to add or be friends with staff members upon the children starting at the preschool.

## 5. Official use of social media

- Brenchley Preschool official social media channels are twitter, a general Facebook page; and a private facebook page for parents/carers.
- The official use of social media sites by Brenchley Preschool only takes place with clear educational or community engagement objectives and with specific intended outcomes and once the use has been formally risk assessed and approved by the Manager prior to use.
- Official social media sites are suitably protected and, where possible, run and/or linked to/from our website.
  - Official social media channels have been set up as distinct and dedicated accounts for official educational or engagement purposes only.
  - Management use setting provided email addresses to register for and manage official social media channels.
  - Management have access to account information and login details for our social media channels, in case of emergency, such as staff absence.
- Official social media use will be conducted in line with existing policies, including but not limited to anti-bullying, image/camera use, data protection, confidentiality and child protection.
- All communication on official social media platforms by staff on behalf of the setting will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny. Public communications on behalf of the setting will, where appropriate and possible, be read and agreed by at least one other colleague.
- Parents/carers and children will be informed of any official social media use, along with expectations for safe use and action taken to safeguard the community.
- Parents and carers will be informed of any official social media use with children; any official social media activity involving children will be moderated if possible and written parental consent will be obtained as required.
- We will ensure that any official social media use does not exclude members of the community who are unable or unwilling to use social media channels.
- Members of staff who follow and/or like our official social media channels will be advised to use dedicated professionals accounts where possible, to avoid blurring professional boundaries.
- If members of staff are managing and/or participating in online social media activity as part of their capacity as an employee of the setting, they will:
  - Read and understand our Acceptable Use Policy.
  - Where they are running official accounts, sign our social media Acceptable Use Policy.

- Be aware they are an ambassador for Brenchley Preschool
- Be professional, responsible, credible, fair and honest, and consider how the information being published could be perceived or shared.
- Always act within the legal frameworks they would adhere to within the workplace, including libel, defamation, confidentiality, copyright, data protection and equalities laws.
- Follow our image use policy at all times, for example ensuring that appropriate consent has been given before sharing images.
- Not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of the setting, unless they are authorised to do so.
- Not engage with any private or direct messaging with current children or their family members.
- Inform their line manager, the DSL (or deputy) and/or the Manager of any concerns, such as criticism, inappropriate content or contact from children.

## **6. Children use of social media**

- The use of social media during Brenchley Preschool hours for personal use is not permitted for children.
- Any concerns regarding children's use of social media will be dealt with in accordance with appropriate existing policies, including anti-bullying, child protection and behaviour.
- The DSL (or deputy) will respond to social media concerns involving safeguarding or child protection risks in line with our child protection policy.
- Sanctions and/or support may be taken where necessary.
- Concerns regarding children's use of social media will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate, particularly when concerning underage use of social media services and games.

## **7. Policy monitoring and review**

- Technology evolves and changes rapidly. Brenchley Preschool will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local concerns and/or any changes to our technical infrastructure.
- We will regularly monitor internet use taking place via our provided devices and systems and evaluate online safety mechanisms to ensure that this policy is consistently applied. Any issues identified will be incorporated into our action planning.
- All members of the community will be made aware of how the Preschool will monitor policy compliance: such as through AUPs, staff training, session management and staff meetings for example.

## 8. Responding to policy breaches

- All members of the community are informed of the need to report policy breaches or concerns in line with existing Brenchley Preschool policies and procedures. This includes but is not limited to child protection and/or behaviour policy, staff code of conduct, online safety.
- After any investigations are completed, Management staff will debrief, identify lessons learnt and implement any policy or curriculum changes, as required.
- We require staff, parents/carers and children to work in partnership with us to resolve issues.
- All members of the community will respect confidentiality and the need to follow the official procedures for reporting concerns.
- Children, parents and staff will be informed where necessary of our complaints procedure and staff will be made aware of the whistleblowing procedure.
- If we are unsure how to proceed with an incident or concern, the DSL (or a deputy) or Manager will seek advice from the local authority, Kent County Councils Education Safeguarding Service or other agency in accordance with our child protection policy.

*This Policy was reviewed at a Management Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025.*



.....

Mrs Victoria Relle – Chairman of Brenchley Preschool

## Brenchley Preschool Social Media Policy 2025



Staff Member	Signature	Date
Sian		
Helen		
Zena		
Kirsty		
Trina		
Elaine		
Claire		
Eryn		
Lucy		
Lizzie		