



BERRYMEDE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Communications and Social Media Guide

The school has produced this guide to ensure you know where to seek information, and how best to use email, Facebook and WhatsApp if you are as a parent commenting 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, school management issues, news, homework, school meals, PE. *Hard copy, email, SMS, school website.*

The PTA

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

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

Our approach

- 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 to promote this culture.

If the school gets something wrong, come and talk to us. It does not help resolve issues if you only air your concerns on an online forum.

PTA Messages

PTA newsletters are approved by the senior leadership team before distribution.

Commenting on Facebook or Whatsapp

Class WhatsApp groups are primarily for sharing information about PTA events.

If you would like to post about something other than a PTA event, ask yourself if it might be better suited to a smaller group of parents in a separate friends' group.

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
- PTA 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 are mentioned is removed
- images of pupils, staff and other parents

We understand that parents will want to capture memorable moments in photographs. The school operates an 'acceptable use of digital images' policy to protect those staff and parents who do not wish to have photos of themselves or their children posted online.

If you take photos at a school event, please do so with thought and care. Please avoid taking photos in church or during mass; the school instructs a photographer to take photographs of special masses and services.

- 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, we never post 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 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

We use these reminders With the children, to encourage them to think before they share

- Am I posting in anger?
- Who might be able to read this?

- Could someone misinterpret what I am 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 by 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?