





DINGLE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

WhatsApp Guidelines for parents

Date adopted:	13 th May 2025
Next review due:	Autumn 2027
Reviewed by:	Governing Body Safeguarding Committee
Signed:	 (Headteacher)
Signed:	 (Chair of Safeguarding Committee)
Date:	13 th May2025

Parent/Carer WhatsApp Groups

Parent/Carer WhatsApp groups, which operate independently of the school, can be a very useful way to connect parents in a particular class or year group. Class WhatsApp groups may have been voluntarily set up by the parents in each class and endeavour to include all parents with children in the class.

There is no requirement to join these groups and participation is voluntary.

Ideally, these group chats are used as an efficient means of receiving relevant updates and reminders about school events that have been published in the newsletter, the sharing of information that is of general interest to all parents in the class or a forum to offer any supportive parenting advice. The messages in the class or year WhatsApp groups come from parents/carers in their personal capacity.

The school does not post directly on any WhatsApp parent/carers groups, nor do we have 'parent advocates' who post messages on our behalf.

Code of Conduct

Most of the time, group chats will be a beneficial resource and an enjoyable place to be in. However, these same spaces also have the power to inflame; they are a potential source of misinformation and can fuel bad feeling. At worst, online parent communication groups have the potential to create unnecessary concerns. In order to prevent any offense or upset, we ask that everyone using these groups within our school community read and follow the notes and guidelines listed below:

- The group should never be used as a platform to air views/grievances regarding a member of staff, child or parent in the class or school.
- Messages posted on the WhatsApp Year Groups should be supportive and respectful of all other group users.
- The group should be used keeping in mind mutual respect and cultural sensitivity between all its members;
- Private email messages between a parent and the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, or individual staff member should not be screenshot and posted on WhatsApp/social media – this breaks both confidentiality and trust.

We anticipate parents, carers and other visitors will:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school.
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with communication and behaviour;
- Seek a peaceful solution to all issues;
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern.

Please note, the school considers the following WhatsApp activity inappropriate:

- Abusive, personal comments or open criticism about staff, pupils or other parents or any member of the school community.
- Displays of anger including swearing or using offensive language.
- Bringing the school into disrepute.
- Posting aggressive, defamatory or libellous comments.
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children.

To avoid uncomfortable or unpleasant situations for other group users, parents/carers are therefore politely asked to consider the nature of their WhatsApp post carefully as any opinions expressed are the opinions of individual members and may not be representative of the whole group.

Raising Concerns

For individual concerns regarding pupil performance, school policies, staff conduct etc. please raise any issues directly with the class teacher or, where necessary, the Headteacher, rather than using WhatsApp as a platform to air views.

If you are concerned about inappropriate comments on a class/year WhatsApp group, in confidence, please contact our Senior Leadership Team by emailing the school on info@dingle.dudley.sch.uk.

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct detailed above, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident. Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then consider:

- Sending a cautionary notice to the parent.
- Inviting the parent into school to meet with a senior member of staff or the Headteacher.
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour);
- Seek advice from our legal team/the local authority's legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
- Request that the parent does not enter the school site.

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way.