



**Inspiring Futures
through Learning**

Policy and Code of Conduct for Class WhatsApp Groups

September 2026 – September 2027



Policy name:	Child Protection and Safeguarding Requirements and Procedures in IFtL
Version:	V1
Date relevant from:	September 2026
Date to be reviewed:	September 2027 <i>This policy will be reviewed every year unless legislation dictates otherwise. Recent changes in Legislation will need to be read and used to review this Policy.</i>
Role of reviewer:	IFtL Head of Safeguarding, Health, Children & Families, IFtL Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
Statutory (Y/N):	N
Published on website*:	2B

Policy level**:	2
Relevant to:	All employees through all IFtL schools and departments
Bodies consulted:	Employees Trade unions School / department governance bodies
Approved by:	IFtL Board of Trustees
Approval date:	

Key:

* Publication on website:

IFtL website

1	Statutory publication
2	Good practice
3	Not required

School website

A	Statutory publication
B	Good practice
C	Not required

** Policy level:

- Trust wide:
 - This one policy is relevant to everyone and be consistently applied across all schools and Trust departments with no variations.
 - Approved by the IFtL Board of Trustees.*
- Trust core values:
 - This policy defines the values to be incorporated fully in all other policies on this subject across all schools and Trust departments. This policy should therefore form the basis of a localised school / department policy that in addition contains relevant information, procedures and / or processes contextualised to that school / department.
 - Approved by the IFtL Board of Trustees as a Trust Core Values policy.*
 - Approved by school / department governance bodies as a relevantly contextualised school / department policy.*
- School / department policies
 - These are defined independently by schools / departments as appropriate
 - Approved by school / department governance bodies.*



1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the Trust's expectations regarding the use of parent/carer WhatsApp and other group messaging platforms associated with Trust schools. Whilst these groups are independently created and managed by parents/carers, behaviour within them may affect the wider school community.

It applies to:

- Parent/guardian-led WhatsApp or group messaging forums associated with Trust schools (e.g., class/year groups).
- All parents and carers of pupils at Trust schools.

These groups are **not official school channels** and are independent of the Trust/school. Participation is voluntary.

2. Parent/Carer WhatsApp Groups

- Groups are set up voluntarily by parents and aim to include all parents in a class or year.
- They are used to share reminders, general school information, and supportive parenting advice.
- Messages come from parents in their personal capacity. The school does **not** post or appoint 'parent advocates' to communicate via these groups.
- Parents/carers should not add another parent to a group without their consent.

3. Code of Conduct

3.1 General Principles

- Be supportive, respectful, and culturally sensitive.
- Share content relevant to the class or year group only.
- Concerns about staff, pupils, parents or school matters should be raised through the school's complaints or communication procedures rather than discussed within the group.
- WhatsApp groups are not political platforms.

3.2 Participation

- Only parents/carers of children in the relevant class/year should join.
- Participation is voluntary; there is no obligation to join or respond.
- Private messages between parents and teachers should not be shared.
- Links should relate to school, education, or extracurricular activities only.
- Do not share personal information, photographs or videos of other children without appropriate permission.

3.3 Moderation

- Groups may have a parent moderator to help maintain positive communication.
- Moderators should be comfortable with this responsibility and may choose to notify the school that they are acting as moderators.
- Moderators should encourage adherence to this Code and may remove members whose behaviour repeatedly breaches it, in accordance with the group's agreed rules.

3.4 Safeguarding & Reporting



- If a safeguarding concern arises, it should be reported immediately using the school's safeguarding procedures. Concerns about a child's welfare should never be debated or investigated within a WhatsApp group.

3.5 Expected Conduct

Parents should:

- Respect the school's ethos, values, and vision.
- Work with staff in the best interests of pupils.
- Treat all community members with courtesy.
- Resolve disagreements peacefully and through the appropriate school channels.

Inappropriate activity includes:

- Abusive, aggressive, or offensive messages.
- Using the group to publicly criticize or debate school policies, staff or individual pupils.
- Sharing defamatory, libelous, or threatening content.
- Behaviour that is intimidating, harassing or likely to have a detrimental impact on members of the school community.

3.6 Raising concerns

- Contact the class teacher or Headteacher for issues about pupil progress, policies, or staff conduct.
- For inappropriate WhatsApp content, contact the Senior Leadership Team via school email.

3.7 Response to Breaches

The school may:

- Issue a caution or advisory notice.
- Invite the parent to meet with senior staff or the Headteacher.
- Contact authorities for criminal behaviour or seek legal advice.
- Restrict school site access if necessary.

Moderators may remove parents from the group where behaviour repeatedly breaches this Code or the group's agreed rules.

Where behaviour within a parent messaging group has a significant impact on the safety, wellbeing or reputation of members of the school community, the school may take appropriate action in accordance with its Parent Code of Conduct and other relevant policies.

4. Accuracy of Information

Parents should avoid sharing rumours, unverified information or screenshots that may be inaccurate, misleading or taken out of context. If clarification is needed, parents should seek information directly from the school through official communication channels.

5. Dual Parent and Staff Member Considerations

Parents who are also staff members should:

- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Avoid offering official communication in the group.



- Consider stepping back from moderator roles to reduce perceived responsibility.
- Follow professional conduct and social media guidance.
- Staff should avoid discussing confidential school matters or matters relating to their professional role within parent messaging groups.

6. Official School Communication

- Official updates are shared via school-approved channels (text, email, app).
- WhatsApp groups **do not replace official communication**.
- Parents should not rely on WhatsApp for urgent or important school information.

7. Messaging Checklist (Parent Guidance)

Before posting in a group, consider:

- Is this relevant to the whole group?
- Is this respectful of others?
- Would I be comfortable if this message were shared more widely?
- Is this better addressed through official communication channels?

If the answer is *no*, consider another route.

