

Social Media Policy - Staff

Key Document details:

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1. Introduction

1.1. Statement

The policy is required to ensure all employees have a group of rules to follow when using social media across numerous platforms and services. This will help keep them safe and raise awareness of the risks involved.

1.2. Aim and purpose

This policy outlines expectations regarding the safe and responsible use of social media to safeguard staff, the school and the wider community. Examples of social media may include blogs, wikis, social networking, forums, bulletin boards, multiplayer online gaming, apps, video/photo sharing sites, chatrooms, instant messenger and many others. This policy also covers specific use of YouTube.

1.3. Who it applies too

All TWHF staff, volunteers, Local Governing Board and Director Members, visitors, community users and contractors.

2. Policy

2.1. Description

All members of the school's community are encouraged to engage in social media in a positive, safe and responsible manner. Information about safe and responsible use of social media will be communicated clearly and regularly to all members of the schools community.

2.2. Permissive/ non permissive

Official school social media

- Use of social media sites by the school will only take place with clear educational or community engagement objectives with specific intended outcomes e.g. increasing parental engagement, admissions, recruitment, good news, etc...
- Persons using the official social media channels must be formally approved by the trust's Marketing Team and school principal.
- All new social media channels should not be set up without express permission from the trust's Marketing Team and school principal.
- All permitted new social media channels must be set up in accordance with the trust's Marketing Team's directive and authentication details should be shared with the Marketing Team and school principal.
- Members of staff running official school social media channels will be aware of the required behaviours so that the sites are used safely, responsibly and in accordance with local and national guidance and legislation.
- All communication on official school social media platforms will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny from the trust's Marketing Team and school principal.

- Any online publication on official school social media sites will comply with legal requirements including the Data Protection Act 1998, right to privacy conferred by the Human Rights Act 1998, or similar duty to protect private information and will not breach any common law duty of confidentiality, copyright etc.
- Official social media use by the school will be in line with existing marketing policies including the use of images, use of BYOD, behavior and child protection.
- Information about safe and responsible use of school social media channels will be communicated clearly and regularly to all members of the school community.
- Principals are responsible be aware of account information and relevant details for social media channels in case of emergency such as staff absence.

Parents/carers and students will be informed of any official school social media use, along with expectations for safe use and school action taken to safeguard the community.

Public communications on behalf of the school will, where possible, be read and agreed by at least one other senior level colleague, the trust's marketing team, or the school principal.

The school social media account will link back to the school website to demonstrate that the account is official. Where verification is possible e.g (Twitter Tick), this should be used.

Staff representing the school on official school social media channels should:

- Be professional at all times and an ambassador for the school.
- Disclose their official role/position but always make it clear that they do not necessarily speak on behalf of the school.
- Be responsible, credible, fair and honest at all times and consider how the information being published could be perceived or shared.
- Always act within the legal frameworks they would adhere to within school, including libel, defamation, confidentiality, copyright, data protection as well as equalities laws.
- Ensure that any image posted on the school social media channel has appropriate written parental consent.
- Not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of the school unless they are authorised to do so.
- Inform their line manager, the school online safety lead and/or the head teacher of any concerns such as criticism or inappropriate content posted online.
- Not engage with any direct or private messaging with students or parents/carers through social media and should communicate via school communication channels. Staff can acknowledge any direct message or private message to inform the sender this will be passed onto the relevant people within the school or to suggest other forms of communication e.g. using an official email.

Staff personal use of social media

- Personal use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites will be

discussed with all members of staff as part of staff induction and will be revisited and communicated via regular staff training opportunities.

- Safe and professional behaviour will be outlined for all staff (including volunteers) as part of the school Acceptable Use Policy.
- All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add as 'friends' any current or past students or current or past students' family members via any personal social media sites, applications or profiles. Any pre-existing relationships or exceptions that may compromise this will be discussed with your line manager, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Principal. If ongoing contact with students is required once they have left the school roll, staff will be expected to use existing school communication tools.
- All communication between staff and members of the school community on school business will take place via official approved communication channels (such as school email address or phone numbers). Staff must not use personal accounts to make contact with students or parents, nor should any contact be accepted, except in circumstances whereby prior approval has been given by the Principal.
- Any communication from students/parents received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the schools designated safeguarding lead.
- Staff will not share or discuss information they have access to as part of their job, including photos and personal information about students and their family members, colleagues etc.
- All members of staff are strongly advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media sites. This will include being aware of location sharing services, setting the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can, opting out of public listings on social networking sites, logging out of accounts after use and keeping passwords safe and confidential.
- All members of staff will carefully consider the information (including text and images) they post online and ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance with schools policies (safeguarding, confidentiality, data protection etc.) and wider legal framework.
- Members of staff will be encouraged to manage and control the content they post online and advice will be provided to staff via staff training and by sharing appropriate guidance and resources on a regular basis.
- Members of staff will notify the Senior Leadership Team immediately if they consider that any content in the past or present posted via any information and communications technology, including emails or social networking sites conflicts with their role in the school or would bring the school into disrepute.
- Members of staff will not identify themselves as employees of The White Horse Federation/ School on their personal social networking accounts. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and also to safeguard the privacy of staff members and the wider school community.
- Members of staff will ensure that they do not represent their personal views as that of the school on social media.

- School email addresses will not be used for setting up personal social media accounts.
- Members of staff who follow/like the schools social media channels will be advised to use dedicated professional accounts where possible to avoid blurring professional boundaries.

YouTube Policy

The default policy for The White Horse Federation is that YouTube can be used within our school sites however, the decision to remove this locally can be made by the Principal of the school (see 3.3).

The school will control students and staff access to social media and social networking sites whilst on site and using school provided devices and systems. The use of social networking applications during school hours for personal use is not permitted unless otherwise agreed by the school principal.

2.3. Compliance

Any breaches of school policy may result in criminal, disciplinary or civil action being taken. Action taken will be in accordance with the relevant school policies.

3. Key steps in the process

3.1. Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for this policy are detailed in depth on the E-Safety and Online Safeguarding policy.

3.2. Procedures

Any concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of the schools community on social media sites should be reported to the school leadership team and will be managed in accordance with existing school policies such as bullying, allegations against staff, behavior and safeguarding/child protection.

3.3. Local conditions statement

In some circumstances, local conditions mean that delivery will require local specific changes in the procedures. However the core essence of the policy must be followed.

Please highlight below any school specific policy changes, this must be signed by the principal of the school and they're responsible for this change in policy guidelines.

School Social Media Policy

The use of social media for personal use is (highlight in bold as required):

- A. Permitted during school hours
- B. Permitted during breaks and lunch periods
- C. Not permitted

School YouTube Policy (please highlight in bold as required):

- A. The use of YouTube is allowed (default)
- B. The use of YouTube is not allowed

School Name: _____

Principal Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

