



MET

Social Media Policy

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1. This policy applies to:

All Trust settings.

Where this policy states 'school' this means any of our educational establishments and the wider Trust.

Where this policy states 'Headteacher' this also includes 'Head of School' and 'Centre Manager'.

Mowbray Education Trust (MET).

2. Introduction and aims

Social media, filesharing and other internet-based communication tools make it easy to share information, connect with people and extend professional networks. Social media can enhance classroom practice, introduce students to new tools and aid innovative and engaging curriculum delivery.

Employees are likely to be subjected to a higher level of public scrutiny over and above other public sector employees due to their work with children and vulnerable persons and do so generally without encountering any difficulty.

This policy aims to:

- Set guidelines, rules, and clear expectations on the use of social media
- Prevent disruption to the school arising from misuse of social media

This policy covers all users, including but not limited to governance volunteers, staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors.

Breaches of this policy may be dealt with under the Mowbray Education Trust's Conduct and Disciplinary Policy and in some cases criminal proceedings.

3. Relevant legislation and guidance

This policy refers to, and complies with, the following legislation and guidance:

- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [The General Data Protection Regulation](#)
- [Computer Misuse Act 1990](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [The Telecommunications \(Lawful Business Practice\) \(Interception of Communications\) Regulations 2000](#)
- [Education Act 2011](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools](#)

4. Definitions

- **“Social media”**: includes all technology, facilities, systems and services including but not limited to YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Twitch, filesharing and other internet-based communication tools.
- **“Users”**: anyone who uses social media, including governance volunteers, staff, pupils, volunteers, contractors, and visitors.
- **“Personal use”**: any use or activity not directly related to the users’ employment, study, or purpose.
- **“Authorised personnel”**: employees authorised by the school to perform systems administration and/or monitoring of social media.
- **“Content”**: files and data on social media including but not limited to documents, photos, audio, video, printed output, web pages, social networking sites, and blogs.

5. Responsibility and Accountability

5.1. The Trust Board

5.1.1. Review and approval of this policy and holding the Trust leaders to account for its implementation.

5.1.2 Should ensure that they are familiar with the contents of this policy and its relationship to the school’s standards, policies, and guidance on the acceptable use of ICT and e-safety.

5.2. Headteachers

5.2.1. Ensure that all users are trained and become familiar with this policy and its relationship to the school’s standards, policies, and guidance on the acceptable use of ICT and e-safety.

5.2.2. Provide opportunities to discuss appropriate social media use on a regular basis and ensure that any queries raised are resolved swiftly.

5.2.3. Must ensure that any allegations raised in respect of social media are investigated promptly and appropriately, in accordance with the school’s disciplinary procedure, code of conduct and acceptable use policy.

5.2.4. Must ensure two authorised personnel oversee each social media account.

5.3. Users

- 5.3.1. Should ensure that they are familiar with the contents of this policy and its relationship to the school's standards, policies, and guidance on the acceptable use of ICT and e-safety.
- 5.3.2. Raise any queries or areas of concern they have relating to the use of social media and interpretation of this policy with their Headteacher.
- 5.3.3. Must comply with this policy where specific activities or conduct is prohibited.

6. Principles

6.1. Guidelines when using social media at any time

- 6.1.1. Users must not place any another user(s) at risk of harm and report any situation they come across which may contravene this.
- 6.1.2. Users must follow statutory and school safeguarding procedures at all times when using social media and report all situations that may contravene these procedures.
- 6.1.3. Social media and the use of must not be excessive and/or affect your ability to complete your duties.
- 6.1.4. If you are unsure of social media relationships, they must be declared with other personal relationships or interests whenever necessary or appropriate.
- 6.1.5. Users must maintain the reputation of the school, other users, and the wider community at all times and report any situation they come across which may contravene this – including but not limited to:

Contributing or access at any time, content including but not limited to illegal, discriminatory, sexual, or otherwise offensive content.

Using inappropriate language.

Using social media to criticise or insult.

Using social media to harass, bully or intimidate.

Using social media to breach school confidentiality.

Using social media to raise concerns about a school and/or users.

- 6.1.6. Users are responsible for the configuration and use of any personal social media accounts they have. They are responsible for determining the level of security and privacy of all their social media content.

6.2. Guidance when using social media on behalf of the school

- 6.2.1. Only the Headteacher may grant explicit permission for a user to act as authorised personnel.

- 6.2.2. Authorised personnel must follow all policies and procedures.
- 6.2.3. Authorised personnel must not use personal accounts.
- 6.2.4. Authorised personnel must not discuss personal matters and must direct users to more appropriate channels.

6.3. Guidance when using social media as part of working with students

- 6.3.1. Only the Headteacher may grant explicit permission for a user to act as authorised personnel with students.

6.4. Guidelines when using social media as part of your wider professional life

- 6.4.1. Users must be clear that their social media content is personal and not endorsed or supported by their school.
- 6.4.2. Users can identify their school where appropriate but cannot use anything which implies official school content - including but not limited to:

Account name

School branding

School Logo

- 6.4.3. Users must not reveal any details that could lead to the identification of another user.

6.5. Guidance when using social media as part of your personal life

- 6.5.1. Users must be clear that their social media content is personal and not endorsed or supported by their school.
- 6.5.2. Users must not use school accounts.
- 6.5.3. Users must not use personal social media with any child who they solely have, or have had, a staff/student relationship.
- 6.5.4. Users can have social media contact with students or ex-students where other appropriate relationships exist. These relationships must be open, transparent and reported to the Headteacher – including but not limited to:
 - A student who is also a family member or a family friend.
- 6.5.5. Users must retain any communications to students or ex-students rejecting any approaches made on social media, ensure that they are professional in tone and reported to the Headteacher.
- 6.5.6. Users must not use personal social media with whom they solely have a staff/parent relationship.

6.5.7. Users can only use personal devices with social media while at their school where the use of personal devices is allowed by the school.

6.5.8. Users should only use social media when no students are presents and during breaks or non-directed time.

7. Related policies

This policy should be read alongside the school's policies on:

- ICT Acceptable use
- E-safety
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Behaviour
- Staff discipline and code of conduct
- Data protection
- Anti-Bullying

8. Log of Changes to Document

Version	Date	Page	Change	Approver:
V1.0	Mar-22	All pages	Draft for Approval	Board