Heathland Whitefriars Federation

Social Media, Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy

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Introduction

This Policy applies to all Federation staff regardless of their employment status. This Policy does not form part of the terms and conditions of employee's employment with the Federation and is not intended to have contractual effect. It does however set out the Federation's current practices and required standards of conduct and all staff are required to comply with its contents. Breach of the provisions of this Policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence which may result in disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal in accordance with the Federation's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

This Policy may be amended from time to time and staff will be notified of any changes no later than one month from the date those changes are intended to take effect.

Purpose of this Policy

The Federation recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs and Wikipedia. However, staff use of social media can pose risks to the Federation's confidential and proprietary information, its reputation and it can jeopardise our compliance with our legal obligations. (Please see Appendix 1 for advice to school staff on using Facebook).

To minimise these risks, avoid loss of productivity and to ensure that our IT resources and communications systems are used only for appropriate work-related purposes, all Federation staff are required to comply with the provisions in this Policy.

Who is covered by this Policy?

This Policy covers directors and all individuals working at all levels and grades within the Federation, including employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as 'staff' in this Policy).

Third parties who have access to our electronic communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with this Policy.

Scope and Purpose of this Policy

This Policy deals with the use of all forms of social media including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Wikipedia, all other social networking sites, and all other internet postings, including blogs.

It applies to the use of social media for both work and personal purposes, whether during work hours or otherwise. The Policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.

Breach of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours and regardless of whether the Federations' equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach. Any member of staff suspected of

committing a breach of this Policy will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

Staff may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this Policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

Personnel responsible for implementing the Policy

The Board of Directors have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this Policy, but have delegated day-to-day responsibility for its operation to the Headteacher.

Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this Policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks also lies with the Headteacher in liaison with the IT Network Manager.

All senior Federation staff have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this Policy, ensuring that all staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking-action when behaviour falls below its requirements.

All Federation Staff are responsible for the success of this Policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Headteacher in the first instance. Questions regarding the content or application of this Policy should be directed by email to Ms.S Mandair at smandair.310@lgflmail.org or Miss M Panesar at mpanesar5.310@lgflmail.org

Compliance with related policies and agreements

Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies. If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, employees are prohibited from using social media to:

- Breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;
- Breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality;
- Breach our Disciplinary Rules;
- Defame or disparage the Federation, its schools, its staff, its pupils or parents, its affiliates, partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders;
- Harass or bully other staff in any way or breach our Anti-harassment and bullying Policy;
- Unlawfully discriminate against other Staff or third parties or breach our Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Breach our Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague online);
- Breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).

Staff should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the

Federation and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.

Staff who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Personal use of social media

Personal use of social media is never permitted during working time or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems.

Staff should not use a work email address to sign up to any social media and any personal social media page should not make reference to their employment with the Federation, (excluding LinkedIn, where prior permission is sought from the Headteacher).

Staff must not take photos or posts from social media that belong to the Federation for their own personal use.

Monitoring

The contents of our IT resources and communications systems are the Federation's property. Therefore, staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post conversation or message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems.

The Federation reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff members activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your acknowledgement of this policy and your use of such resources and systems. This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, log-ins, recordings and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network monitoring technologies.

The Federation may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time after they are created, and may delete such copies from time to time without notice.

All staff are advised not to use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that they wish to be kept private or confidential from the Federation.

Educational or Extra Curricular Use of Social Media

If your duties require you to speak on behalf of the Federation in a social media environment, you must follow the protocol outlined below.

The Headteacher may require you to undergo training before you use social media on behalf of the Federation and may impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to your activities.

Likewise, if you are contacted for comments about the Federation for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, you must direct the inquiry to the Headteacher and must not respond without advanced written approval.

Recruitment

The Federation may use internet searches to perform pre-employment checks on candidates in the course of recruitment. Where the Federation does this, it will act in accordance with its data protection and equal opportunities obligations.

Responsible use of social media

The following sections of the Policy provide staff with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.

Photographs for use of Social Media

Any photos for social media posts may only be taken using Federation cameras/devices or devices that have been approved in advance by the Headteacher. Where any device is used that does not belong to the Federation all photos must be deleted immediately from the device, once the photos have been uploaded to a device belonging to the Federation.

Staff Protocol for use of Social Media

Where any post is going to be made on the Federation's own social media the following steps must be taken:

Ensure that permission from the child's parent has been sought before information is used on social media.

Ensure that there is no identifying information relating to a child/children in the post - for example any certificates in photos are blank/without names or the child's name cannot be seen on the piece of work.

The post must be a positive and relevant post relating to the children, the good work of staff, the Federation or any achievements.

Social Media can also be used to issue updates or reminders to parents/carers and the Headteacher will have overall responsibility for this. Should you wish for any reminders to be issued you should contact the Headteacher by email to ensure that any post can be issued.

The proposed post must be presented to the Headteacher for confirmation that the post can 'go live' before it is posted on any social media site.

Miss A Bowd and Miss J Litzner Sellers will post the information, but all staff have responsibility to ensure that the Social Media Policy has been adhered to.

The use of Mobile Phones and Smart Technology

Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school or college can sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart

technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content.

Staff must ensure that they report usage of a mobile phone/smart technology to the class teacher immediately.

Staff must ensure that they do not use their mobile phones/smart technology whilst around children. Personal phone calls must be made in the staffroom or outside of the building.

If a member of staff feels that a colleague is using their mobile phone/smart technology which is in breach of this policy, they must report this to SLT or the DSL.

Protecting our business reputation

Staff must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:

The Federation;

- Current, past or prospective staff as defined in this Policy
- Current, past or prospective pupils
- Parents, carers or families of (iii)
- The Federation's suppliers and service providers; and
- Other affiliates and stakeholders.

Staff should also avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the Federation's reputation, even indirectly.

If Staff are using social media they should make it clear in any social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. Staff should write in the first person and use a personal rather than school e-mail address when communicating via social media.

Staff are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media. Staff should remember that what they publish might be available to be read by the masses (including the Federation itself, future employers and social acquaintances) for a long time. Staff should keep this in mind before they post content.

If staff disclose whether directly or indirectly their affiliation to the Federation as a member of staff whether past, current or prospective, they must also state that their views do not represent those of the Federation.

Staff must ensure that their profile and any content posted are consistent with the professional image they are required to present to colleagues, pupils and parents.

Staff must avoid posting comments about confidential or sensitive Federation related topics. Even if staff make it clear that their views on such topics do not represent those of the Federation, such comments could still damage the Federation's reputation and incur potential liability.

If a member of staff is uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, they should refrain from making the communication until they have discussed it with their Line Manager, Head of Department or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

If a member of Staff sees content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the Federation, it's staff, pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders, they are required to report this in the first instance to the Headteacher without unreasonable delay. All staff are responsible for protecting the Federation's reputation.

Respecting intellectual property and confidential information

Staff should not do anything to jeopardise Federation confidential information and intellectual property through the use of social media.

In addition, staff should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property of other Federation's, organisations, companies and individuals, which can create liability for the Federation, as well as the individual author.

Staff must not use the Federation's logos, brand names, slogans or other trademarks, or post any of our confidential or proprietary information without express prior written permission from the Headteacher.

To protect yourself and the Federation against liability for copyright infringement, where appropriate, reference sources of particular information you post or upload and cite them accurately. If you have any questions about whether a particular post or upload might violate anyone's copyright or trademark, ask the Headteacher in the first instance before making the communication.

Respecting colleagues, pupils, parents, clients, service providers and stakeholders

Staff must not post anything that their colleagues, the Federation's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders may find offensive, including discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity.

Staff must not post anything related to colleagues, the Federation's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders without their advanced written permission.

Monitoring and review of this Policy

The Head of Operations and the Network Manager shall be responsible for reviewing this Policy from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice. The Board of Directors has responsibility for approving any amendments prior to implementation.

The Headteacher has responsibility for ensuring that any person who may be involved with administration or investigations carried out under this Policy receives regular and appropriate training to assist them with these duties.

If staff have any questions about this policy or suggestions for additions that they would like to be considered on review, they may do so by emailing Ms. S. Mandair or Miss M Panesar in the first instance.

Appendix 1: Social media Cheat Sheet for Staff

10 rules for staff on social media

1. Change your display name – use your first and middle name, use a maiden name, spell your surname backwards, use a nickname, or use a contraction
2. Change your profile picture to something unidentifiable, or if not, ensure the image is professional
3. Check your privacy settings regularly for all your social media accounts, as settings often change
4. Be careful about tagging other staff members in images or posts
5. Don't share anything publicly that you wouldn't be just as happy showing your pupils
6. Don't use social media sites in school hours
7. Don't make comments about your job, your colleagues, your school or your pupils online – once it's out there, it's out there
8. Don't associate yourself with the school on your profile (e.g. by setting it as your workplace, or by 'checking in' at a school event)
9. Don't link your work email address to your social media accounts. Anyone who has this address (or your personal email address / mobile number) can find you using this information
10. Consider uninstalling social media apps from your phone. The app recognises wi-fi connections and makes friend suggestions based on who else uses the same wi-fi connection (such as parents or pupils)

What to do if…

A pupil adds you on social media

- Don't accept friend or follow requests from pupils
- In the first instance, ignore and delete the request. Block the pupil from viewing your profile
- Check your privacy settings again, and consider changing your display name or profile picture
- If the pupil asks you about the friend request in person, remind them of the school's social media policy and tell them that you are not allowed to accept friend requests from pupils and that if they persist, you'll have to notify senior leadership and/or their parents.
- If the pupil persists, take a screenshot of their request and any accompanying messages
- Notify your senior leadership team or headteacher about what is happening

A parent adds you on social media

- It is at your discretion, in accordance with your school's social media policy, whether to respond. Bear in mind that:
    - Responding to one parent's friend request or message might set an unwelcome precedent for both you and other teachers at the school
    - Pupils may then have indirect access through their parent's account to anything you post, share, comment on or are tagged in
- If you wish to decline the offer or ignore a message, consider drafting a stock response (either individually or as a school) to let the parent know why you're doing so

You're being harassed on social media, or somebody is spreading something offensive about you

- Do not retaliate or respond in any way
- Save evidence of any abuse by taking screenshots and recording the time and date it occurred
- Report the material to Facebook or relevant social network and ask them to remove it. See how to do this:
- If the perpetrator is a current school pupil or staff member, the school's own mediation and disciplinary procedures are usually sufficient to deal with online incidents
- If the perpetrator is a parent or other external adult, a senior member of staff should invite them to a meeting to address their concerns, address any reasonable complaints and/or request they remove the offending comments or material
- If the comments are racist, sexist, of a sexual nature or constitute a hate crime, you or someone from the school should consider contacting the police

Check your privacy settings

Facebook

- Change the visibility of your posts and stories to 'Friends', rather than 'Public'. Otherwise, pupils and their families may be able to see your posts and pictures you've been tagged in, even if you haven't accepted a friend request
- Don't forget to check your old posts and photos – see Facebook's privacy support page for step-by-step instructions on how to do this
- The public may still be able to see posts you've 'liked', even if your profile settings are private, because this depends on the privacy settings of the original poster
- Prevent search engines from indexing your profile so people can't search for you by name – see Facebook's step-by-step instructions
- Remember, some information is always public: your display name, profile picture, cover photo, user ID (in the URL for your profile), country, age range and gender
- Google your name to see what information about you is visible to the public

Instagram

- Change your profile visibility from the default 'Public' setting to 'Private'. Otherwise pupils and their families will be able to see your posts, reels, locations, and who you are following and are followed by. Go to the Instagram Help Centre for support with your privacy settings
- If a pupil or parent followed you before you changed your privacy settings, block them to prevent them seeing your posts
- Be careful about giving third-party apps or websites access to your Instagram account, and check app privileges in your phone to see if any apps currently have access. Sharing your information can put your account at risk and make you visible on search engines, even if you have set your account to 'Private'.
- Remember, some information is always public: your username, your bio and your profile picture
- Google your name to see what information about you is visible to the public

X (formerly Twitter)

- If you have an X account specifically for or about teaching, make sure you don't include identifying information about yourself or your school. Use a nickname, for example 'Miss M'
- Change the visibility on your birth date to 'You follow each other' to prevent pupils and parents seeing this personal information.
- See X's profile visibility guidance for more support
- Remember, your username, biography, location, website and profile picture are always public and can be seen by pupils and parents, even if they don't follow you and you have protected your tweets
- Protect your tweets by checking the box in the 'Audience and tagging' section of your privacy settings. This will mean only your approved followers can see your tweets
- Google your name to see what information about you is visible to the public