

Social Media Policy for Staff

Policy Statement

Social media or networking is a term used to refer to online technologies and practices that are used to share opinions and information, promote discussion and build relationships. Social networking sites can be used by businesses for marketing, branding and public relations exercises. Instead of information being about a person, it is about a building or service.

Social media services and tools involve a combination of technology, telecommunications and some kind of social interaction. They can use a variety of different formats, for example text, pictures, video and audio.

17.8m people in the UK are now using social networking sites as a mechanism for communicating with one another, with UK adults spending more time on social networking sites than other Europeans. 40% UK adults saying they regularly visit the sites.

These sites provide a platform, typically outside of an organisation's network based on the web where anybody can gain access and interact in some way with others. That interaction can be mainly written, (as in Facebook and Twitter), it can be video (as in YouTube) or it can be audio/video/written (as in MSN). The main idea is to interact with others in a group or community.

The growing popularity of social media has led to many organisations using these platforms as a new means of communicating with customers and users in real time. Although a lot less formal than the traditional forms of communication, social media should still be regarded as a form of communication and issues of image, brand, tone etc. should still be important considerations and should be treated in no less of a professional way.

Increasingly social media is being used for customer feedback, for collaboration and sharing of knowledge, as well as for consultation and engagement and the Council needs to understand, as well as participate, in this developing area.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to effectively manage and regulate the use of social media by Longman's Hill Community primary School, North Yorkshire County Council and its employees. This Policy sets out how social media can be managed effectively and how any risks or pitfalls can be avoided or mitigated. It provides a framework, along with guidance on the use of social media, to ensure social media is used effectively, that staff understand their responsibilities and that the use of social media does not expose the Council to security risks or reputational damage.

The aim of the policy is to ensure;

- Engagement and public consultation with individuals and communities and successful promotion of Council-based services through the use of social media.
- That School and/ or Council information remains secure and is not compromised through the use of social media.
- A consistent and corporate approach is adopted and maintained in the use of social media.
- That users operate within existing policies, guidelines and relevant legislation.

- That the School's and / or Council's reputation is not damaged or adversely affected.

These aims will mitigate the following risks which have been identified from using social media;

- Damage to the reputation of the School and / or Council, which brings the School and /or Council into disrepute.
- Breach of safeguarding.
- Civil action relating to breaches of legislation.
- Disclosure of confidential information
- Posting of information which constitutes bullying, harassment or discrimination.
- Virus or other malware (malicious software) infection from infected sites.

Conduct which results in these risks is not acceptable.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Longman's Hill Community Primary School and elected members of North Yorkshire County Council, along with other workers (including casual and agency workers, secondees and contractors, including contractual third parties) who use the School's and Council's ICT infrastructure and are granted access on the above grounds.

It applies regardless of whether the application they are using is hosted by school and / or the Council or externally. This Policy also applies when an employee is involved in contributing in an official capacity on social networking applications. Please see also paragraph 4.4 below.

Use of social media and the internet on School and Council equipment is monitored and any misuse in relation to social media which is brought to the School's or Council's attention will be investigated.

Use of personal accounts set up by staff on social media sites and used in their own time cannot be influenced by the School or Council. The only stipulation is that the Code of Conduct procedure is followed as an employee of North Yorkshire County Council and the School and / or Council is not brought into disrepute. This applies if staff are accessing social media on either their own equipment outside of the School or Council or the School's or Council's equipment.

If a member of staff is using a social media site and acting on behalf of the School or Council on their own equipment outside of North Yorkshire County Council or the School, or using the Council's or School's equipment they must adhere to this policy.

There are specific guidelines for staff when using social media and these are contained within this Policy. Failure to comply with these guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken.

Guidelines for Use of Social media by School Staff

All staff must ensure that they are familiar with the guidance that is set out within this Policy and that their use of social media does not put the School's or Council's systems and information at risk, or be damaging to the reputation of the School or Council.

All staff of Longman's Hill Community Primary School who use social media in their own personal time for recreational purposes must still adhere to this Policy and must not do anything in their own personal time that would bring the School and / or Council into disrepute.

Employees must not use their school or Council email addresses when using social media for their own personal use.

What you must and must not do

When using social media you must;

1. Only set up any online accounts of any nature, representing the School, once cleared by the Headteacher.
2. Ensure that any content on the online account which represents the school, is cleared by the headteacher.
3. Consider the integrity and opinion of the school at all times.
4. Must still represent the school in accordance with these guidelines when using personal accounts to link to or 'like' any social media sites where you have stated that you are a Council / school employee.

What you must not do when using social media

When using social media for official and personal use when in connection with the school, you must not;

1. Publish content that may result in actions against the school and / or council for libel, defamation or other claims for damages.
2. Publish personal data/information about other individuals associated with the school without their explicit written permission.
3. Promote personal financial interests, commercial ventures or personal campaigns.
4. Use social media in an abusive or hateful manner or post comments that constitute bullying, harassment or discrimination.
5. Reproduce copyright material without the express permission of the copyright owner.
6. Act in any way that may bring the school into disrepute.
7. Blogs, forums, wiki's and any other social media tools must not be set up to display a personal opinion or view of the school
8. Promote or malign any political party or campaigning organisation.
9. Use personal accounts when setting up accounts and feeding back comments within social media sites for the school.
10. Access social media sites on school equipment
11. Engage in any sort of communication online with pupils at our school or their parents. Where parents of pupils at our school are personal friends of a member of staff at the school, the staff member must adhere to this policy and ensure they adhere to the confidentiality policy.

Policy Compliance

Staff at Longman's Hill Community Primary School are requested to conform to this mandatory Policy in respect of its provisions and ethos. Failure to comply may be regarded as a breach of the Code of Conduct and could result in action being taken against the member of staff concerned.

Other violations of this Policy, such as breaches in the Data Protection Act, may also lead to disciplinary action against the individual by the school /Council, as well as possible criminal or civil action against the individual concerned.

Legislation

The legislation to be considered in conjunction with this Policy includes:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Electronic Communication Act 2000
- EU Privacy and Monitoring Directives Act 2003
- Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Local Government Act 1986
- Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1998

and any successor legislation.

In addition, consideration needs to be given to the Advertising Standards Authority guidance, and defamation and confidentiality issues. Legal services can provide specific advice where necessary.

Monitoring

This Policy will be monitored by the headteacher and governing body.

Review and Revision

This Policy is approved through the Corporate Information Governance Group and will be reviewed annually and the guidance updated on a regular basis.

Date of last review by governing body

January 2016

Date of full implementation

January 2014

Date for next review

January 2019 (Three Years)

<p><u>Policy Adopted by Headteacher</u></p> <p>Name: Mrs J Elcock</p>	<p><u>SIGNATURE</u></p>	<p><u>DATE</u></p>
<p><u>Policy Adopted by Chair of Governors (on Behalf of Governing Body)</u></p> <p>Name: Mr A Adamson</p>	<p><u>SIGNATURE</u></p>	<p><u>DATE</u></p>