



Social Media Policy

1. Policy statement

Alexandra Infants' School 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, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, school website or school app. However, staff use of social media can pose risks to the school's confidential and proprietary information, and reputation, and can jeopardise compliance with legal obligations.

To minimise these risks, to avoid loss of productivity, and to ensure the school's IT resources and communication systems (collectively referred to as **ICT** in this policy) are used only for appropriate educational purposes, staff are required to adhere to this policy.

This policy does not form part of any member of staff's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals working throughout Alexandra Infants' School, including SLT, governors, teachers, support staff, consultants, office staff, lunchtime supervisors, agency staff, volunteers, work experience students or any other person associated with the school wherever located (collectively referred to as **staff** in this policy).

Third parties who have access to the School's ICT are also required to comply with this policy.

3. Purpose

This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, school website, school app and all other social networking sites, and all other internet postings, including blogs (collectively referred to as **social media** in this policy).

The policy applies to the use of social media for both educational and personal purposes, whether during school hours or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using School ICT or equipment belonging to 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 School ICT is 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 an 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.

4. Responsibilities

The Executive Headteacher/ Head of School have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy, but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for its operation to the network managers (J.Nicholls and A.Smith).

Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks lies with the School Business Manager.

All members of the School's Senior Leadership Team 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 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 Executive Headteacher/Head of School. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the School Business Manager.

5. Compliance with related policies and agreements

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

- (a) Breach the school's regulations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;
- (b) Breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality.
- (c) Breach the school's disciplinary rules.

(d) Defame or disparage the school, its partners, staff, students, parents/carers, school affiliates or suppliers.

(e) Harass or bully other staff in any way.

(f) Unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties or breach the school's equal opportunities policies.

(g) Breach the school's Data Protection Policy (e.g. never disclose personal information about a colleague online).

(h) Breach any other laws or ethical standards (e.g. never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone else 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 school and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the school.

Staff who do any of the above will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

6. Personal use of social media

Personal use of social media is never permitted during working time or by means of school ICT.

7. Monitoring

Staff should not use school ICT for any matter that they wish to be kept private or confidential from the school. The following will not be private: 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 school ICT.

The school reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without notice, staff activities using school ICT, including, but not limited to, social media postings and activities, to ensure that school rules and regulatory duties are being complied with and are for legitimate business purposes. Staff consent to such monitoring by their acknowledgement of this policy and their use of the school ICT. 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 school 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.

8. Business use of social media

If a member of staff's duties require them to speak on behalf of the school in a social media environment, they must still seek approval for such communication from a member of the school's senior management team, who may require them to undergo training before doing so and impose certain requirements and restrictions regarding their activities.

Likewise, if staff are contacted for comments about the school for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, the enquiry should be directed to the head teacher and they should not respond without written approval.

8. Responsible use of social media

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

9. 1 Protecting the school's reputation

Staff must avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the school's, even directly.

In particular, staff must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:

- the school;
- school students/parents/carers;
- school staff;
- school stakeholders;
- school partners.

Staff should make it clear in social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. They should write in the first person and use a personal email address when communicating via social media.

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

If disclosing affiliation as an employee of the school, staff must also state that their views do not represent those of their employer. For example, *"The views in this posting do not represent the views of my employer."* Staff should also ensure that their profile and any content they post are

consistent with the professional image they present to students, parents/ carers and colleagues.

Staff must not post comments about sensitive, business-related topics, such as the school's performance. Even if they make it clear that their views on such topics do not represent those of the school, such comments could still damage the school's reputation.

If uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, staff should refrain from making the communication until it has been discussed with the network managers (S. Webster and D. Lindop).

If staff see content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the school or partners, they should contact the [Executive Head teacher/Head of School](#). All staff are responsible for protecting the school's reputation.

9.2 Respecting intellectual property and confidential information

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

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

Staff must not use school logos or post any of the school's confidential or proprietary information without prior written permission from the school.

To protect themselves and the school against liability for copyright infringement, where appropriate staff should reference sources of particular information they post or upload and cite them accurately. Staff with questions about whether a particular post or upload might violate anyone's copyright or trademark should ask the head teacher before making the communication.

APPENDIX 1

Social Media Policy

I certify that I have read and understood all that is in this policy. I understand that failure to follow this policy could result in disciplinary action and ultimately dismissal.

I understand that Alexandra Infants' School may wish to change this policy as advancements in technology arise and that I will be made aware of these changes via an updated copy being made available on the staff shared drive.

Signed:

Name: _____

Date: _____