

Rose Education Provision



Personal Use of Social Media Policy

August 2025

Introduction

Social media - websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.

The purpose of the Social Media Policy is to provide guidance on personal use of social media sites or other forms of electronic communications e.g. text messages for staff and volunteers.

This is to avoid situations where safeguarding concerns could arise, the integrity of staff, governors and volunteers could be undermined, the School be brought into disrepute and professional relationships with colleagues and students compromised. Also adhering to the policy reduces the risk of staff, governors and volunteers inadvertently contravening sections of the Data Protection Act 2018 or falling foul of libel, defamation and copyright laws.

This policy is not intended to prevent staff and volunteers from using social media sites or electronic means of communications, but to make them aware of the risks they could face when sharing information about their personal/professional life. The policy is concerned with the personal use of social media sites/apps/text messages, not with work/official social media sites. Employees/governors wanting to create a work-related social media site must obtain approval from the head of school.

Roles and responsibilities

The Head of school should ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and of their responsibilities under it. It is the responsibility of the head of school to ensure that breaches of the policy are investigated and addressed – HR and ICT services may be called upon to provide specialist advice and support, this may include referral to the Local Authority's Safeguarding Unit.

Staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to the policy and procedure and ensure that they conduct themselves in a manner that will not place children or vulnerable adults at risk, bring the school into disrepute or damage their own professional reputation.

Staff and volunteers will:-

- not communicate with students through personal social networking/text messages or online gaming.
- avoid any conflict of interests, by not normally requesting or accepting students as "friends"; if in exceptional circumstances they wish to request or accept students as "friends" (e.g. where the student concerned is their son/daughter), they must seek guidance from the head of school first.
- be responsible for the content they publish on social media sites.
- ensure that any personal social networking sites they have are set to the highest security level possible, ensuring that posts are not openly visible.
- be mindful that what is published or sent will be public for a long time.
- not post anything that would disclose the identity of both current and former students in the school.
- not discuss students on social media sites / apps or in text messages.
- not post information on sites, (e.g. photographs and videos), that could bring the school into disrepute.
- not represent their own views/opinions as being those of the school.
- report to the head of school any concerns regarding content placed by other staff, volunteers or students.
- not post potentially defamatory remarks towards the school, colleagues, students, students' relatives and partner organisations on social media apps / sites or via text messages.
- not use any offensive or discriminatory language on social media apps / sites.
- not divulge any information that is confidential to the school.

- inform the head of school if they become aware of any misuse of social networking accounts or sites that are associated with colleagues, students or the school.

Employee groups can be created on social media sites such as Facebook / WhatsApp, however this should not contain school logo or school name. Creators of these groups are responsible for monitoring and securing the content of the site and ensuring that it is appropriate. It is advisable that such groups are set to closed/private.

If you require help or advice on securing your social media accounts the head of school who will be able to discuss this and provide you with guidance on the best ways to do this.

Disciplinary action

Staff and volunteers are required to understand that failure to comply with this policy could lead to disciplinary action.

Author:	Miss Sheree Curtis		
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Signed:	<i>S.Curtis</i>	Review Date:	August 2026