



HEBDEN GREEN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Written by	Reviewed by	Ratified by	Ratified on	To be reviewed	Status
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Introduction

The expectations' regarding safe and responsible use of social media applies to all members of Hebden Green Community School.

- The term social media may include (but is not limited to): blogs; wikis; social networking sites; forums; bulletin boards; online gaming; apps; video/photo sharing sites; chatrooms and instant messenger.
- All members of Hebden Green Community School are expected to engage in social media in a positive, safe and responsible manner.
- All members of Hebden Green Community School are advised not to publish specific and detailed private thoughts, concerns, pictures or messages on any social media services, especially content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others.
- We will control student and staff access to social media whilst using setting provided devices and systems on site.
- Inappropriate or excessive use of social media during setting hours or whilst using setting devices may result in disciplinary or legal action and/or removal of internet facilities.
- Concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of Hebden Green Community School community on social media, should be reported to the DSL or a member of the Safeguarding team and will be managed in accordance with our anti-bullying, Whistleblowing, behaviour and child protection/Safeguarding policies.

Staff Personal Use of Social Media

- The safe and responsible use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites will be discussed with all members of staff as part of staff induction and will be revisited and communicated via regular staff training opportunities.
- Safe and professional behaviour will be outlined for all members of staff (including volunteers and students) as part of our code of conduct and as part of acceptable use policy.

Reputation

- All members of staff are advised that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the setting.

- Civil, legal or disciplinary action may be taken if staff are found to bring the profession or institution into disrepute, or if something is felt to have undermined confidence in their professional abilities.
- All members of staff are advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media sites. Advice will be provided to staff via staff training and by sharing appropriate guidance and resources on a regular basis. This will include (but is not limited to): Setting the privacy levels of their personal sites. Being aware of location sharing services. Opting out of public listings on social networking sites. Logging out of accounts after use. Keeping passwords safe and confidential. Ensuring staff do not represent their personal views as that of the setting.
- All members of staff are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post online and to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance our policies and the wider professional and legal framework.
- Information and content that staff members have access to as part of their employment, including photos and personal information about students and their family members or colleagues will not be shared or discussed on social media sites.
- Members of staff will notify the Leadership Team immediately if they consider that any content shared on social media sites conflicts with their role.

Communicating with students and parents and carers

- All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add as 'friends' any current or past students or their family members via any personal social media sites, applications or profiles.
- Any pre-existing relationships or exceptions that may compromise this, will be discussed with DSL and the Safeguarding Team.
- If ongoing contact with students is required once they have left the setting, members of staff will be expected to use official setting provided communication tools.
- Staff will not use personal social media accounts to contact students or parents, nor should any contact be accepted, except in circumstance whereby prior approval has been given by the headteacher/DHT.
- Any communication from students and parents received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the DSL or Safeguarding Team.

Students Personal Use of Social Media

- Safe and appropriate use of social media will be taught to students as part of an embedded and progressive education approach, via age and need appropriate sites and resources.
- We are aware that many popular social media sites state that they are not for children under the age of 13, therefore we will not create accounts specifically for students under this age.
- Any concerns regarding students use of social media will be dealt with in accordance with existing policies, including Anti-bullying, Behaviour, Online Safety and the PFA mobile phone policy.
- Concerns will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate, particularly when concerning underage use of social media sites, games or tools.

Students will be advised:

- To consider the benefits and risks of sharing personal details on social media sites which could identify them and/or their location.
- To only approve and invite known friends on social media sites and to deny access to others by making profiles private.

- Not to meet any online friends without a parent/carer or other responsible adult's permission and only when a trusted adult is present.
- To use safe passwords.
- To use social media sites which are appropriate for their age and abilities.
- How to block and report unwanted communications.
- How to report concerns both within the setting and externally.

Official Use of Social Media

Hebden Green Community School official social media channel is the Hebden Green Facebook page:

- The official use of social media sites only takes place with clear educational or community engagement objectives, with specific intended outcomes.
- The official use of social media as a communication tool has been formally risk assessed and approved by the Headteacher.
- Leadership staff have access to account information and login details for our social media channels, in case of emergency, such as staff absence.
- Official social media channels have been set up as distinct and dedicated social media sites or accounts for educational or engagement purposes only.
- Staff use setting provided email addresses to register for and manage any official social media channels.
- Official social media sites are suitably protected and linked to our website.
- Public communications on behalf of the setting will, where appropriate and possible, be read and agreed by at least one other colleague.
- Official social media use will be conducted in line with existing policies, including: anti-bullying, data protection, confidentiality and child protection.
- All communication on official social media platforms will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny.
- Parents/carers and students will be informed of any official social media use, along with expectations for safe use and action taken to safeguard the community. Only social media tools which have been risk assessed and approved as suitable for educational purposes will be used.
- Any official social media activity involving students will be moderated.
- Parents and carers will be informed of any official social media use with students; written parental consent will be obtained, as required.
- We will ensure that any official social media use does not exclude members of the community who are unable or unwilling to use social media channels.

Staff expectations

If members of staff are participating in online social media activity as part of their capacity as an employee of the setting, they will:

- Sign our Acceptable use policy.
- Always be professional and aware they are an ambassador for the setting.
- Disclose their official role but make it clear that they do not necessarily speak on behalf of the setting.
- Always be responsible, credible, fair and honest, and consider how the information being published could be perceived or shared.
- Always act within the legal frameworks they would adhere to within the workplace, including: libel, defamation, confidentiality, copyright, data protection and equalities laws.

- Ensure that they have appropriate consent before sharing images on the official social media channel.
- Not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of the setting, unless they are authorised to do so.
- Not engage with any direct or private messaging with current, or past, students, parents and carers.
- Inform their line manager, the DSL (or deputies) and/or the headteacher of any concerns, such as criticism, inappropriate content or contact from students

Staff Misuse

- Any complaint about staff misuse will be referred to the headteacher, in accordance with the allegations and Whistleblowing policy.
- Any allegations regarding a member of staff's online conduct will be discussed with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).
- Appropriate action will be taken in accordance with our staff behaviour policy/code of conduct.

The member of staff affected must be kept informed about what action is being taken and why some types of action are not being pursued. It is important to show that all the issues have been considered and responded to appropriately.

See also

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- PFA Mobile Phone Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy