

THE LION WORKS SCHOOL



Social Media Policy

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1. Introduction

This policy is in place to minimise the risks to students and staff of The Lion Works School through use of social media. This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, Whatsapp and Snapchat and all other social networking sites, internet postings, blogs, and chat apps. It applies to the use of social media for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect our school in any way. This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, and casual workers. The policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

2. Personnel responsible for implementing the policy

Senior leadership 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 acting 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 Head Teacher. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Headteacher.

3. 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, you are prohibited from using social media to:

- (a) breach our Code of Conduct.
- (b) breach our Disciplinary Policy or procedures.
- (c) breach our Anti-bullying Strategy
- (d) breach our Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague or student online).
- (e) breach any other laws or regulatory requirements.

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

Staff must make themselves aware of and act in accordance with their duties under the Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges September 2019 as these relate to:

- their own on-line activity
- the on-line activity of students and other colleagues and
- information of which they become aware on-line

including their duties relating to Children Missing from Education, Child Sexual Exploitation, FGM and Preventing Radicalisation (Prevent).

4. Personal use of social media

Use of Social Media during work hours is not permitted.

You must avoid making any social media communications that could damage our school interests or reputation, even indirectly.

You must not use social media to defame or disparage us, our staff, students, parents/carers or any third party; to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against students, parents/carers, staff or third parties; to make false or misleading statements; or to impersonate colleagues or third parties.

You must not express opinions on our behalf via social media.

You must not post comments about sensitive school-related topics, such as our performance, or do anything to jeopardise our commercial interests, confidential information or intellectual property.

You must not accept students or their parent/carers as friends or use social media to send any personal messages to them directly or indirectly. Never enter a social media dialogue with parent/carers or similar over a school related issue, the correct grievance procedures should always be followed by a parent or staff. Personal communication could be considered inappropriate and unprofessional and may put you and/or your colleagues vulnerable to allegations.

You are strongly advised not to be friends (on or off line) with recent over 18 students (the potential for colleagues at The Lion Works School to be compromised in terms of content and open to accusations makes the risk not worth taking) and colleagues at The Lion Works School are also strongly advised not to be friends with students at other schools (on or off line) as this is likely to make them vulnerable to allegations and may be open to investigation by the School or police. Where a colleague is considering not following this advice, they are required to discuss the matter, and the implications with the Headteacher, or designated safeguarding lead.

You must not share any personal information with any student (including personal contact details, personal website addresses/social networking site details) and ensure good safeguarding practice; caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be "friends" in personal social networking sites. Social networking sites blur the line between work and personal lives and it may be difficult to maintain professional relationships or it might be 'embarrassing' if too much personal information is known in the workplace. You must not post or share photographs of students under any circumstances and any misuse of social media should be reported to the Headteacher.

5. Guidelines for responsible personal use of social media

You should make it clear in social media postings, or in your personal profile, that you are speaking on your own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal e-mail address.

You must be conscious at all times of the need to keep your personal and professional lives separate. You should not put yourself in a position where there is a conflict between your work for The Lion Works School and your personal interests.

Be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that you are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see.

If you disclose your affiliation with us on your profile or in any social media postings, you must state that your views do not represent those of your employer. You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to the School community and colleagues.

All communication via social networking sites should be made with the awareness that anything said, shown or received could be made available, intentionally or otherwise, to an audience wider than that originally intended (social networking sites are public forums). You are strongly advised, in your own interests, to take steps to ensure as far as possible that their on-line personal data is not accessible to anybody who they do not want to have permission to access it. For example, you are strongly advised to check the security and privacy settings of any social networking site you subscribe to and set these to maximum and, where relevant, use strong passwords and change them regularly.

6. Breach of this policy

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to cooperate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

You may be required to remove any social media content that we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action.