

THE KINGSLEY SCHOOL

Social Media Policy

Effective from September 2020

Reviewed September 2020

Next Review due: September 2021

Social Media e-safety Policy

This policy exists in conjunction with the following other policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- ICT acceptable use policy

Principles – be professional, responsible and respectful

- Staff must be conscious at all times of the need to keep personal and professional lives separate.
They should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between work for the school and personal interests.
- They must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring The Kingsley School into disrepute.
- They must not represent personal views as those of The Kingsley School on any social medium.

Rationale

This policy is principally a policy for staff guidance. The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff at the school.

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that members of staff are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that this is balanced with our duties to school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

For example, use of social networking applications has implications for a staff member's duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that the professionalism and reputation of the school, its staff and governors is protected
- Safeguard all children
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social



media is legitimately representative of the school

- Protect the school from legal risks

Definitions and Scope

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: Blogs, Online discussion forums, collaborative spaces, media sharing services, 'microblogging' applications, and online gaming environments. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, Windows Live Messenger, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Flickr, Xbox/PS4 Live, Blogger, Tumblr, Last.fm, LinkedIn and comment streams on public websites such as newspaper sites.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presences such as virtual worlds. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media – the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium.

All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the School's Equalities, KCSIE – Sept 2020, Safeguarding and Kingsley's ICT Acceptable Usage Policy (*updated – January 2020*). Within this policy there is a distinction between use of school-sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes, and personal use of social media.

Use of Social Media in practice

1. Personal use of social media

- Staff must consider the reputation of the School in any posts or comments related to the school on any social media accounts.
- Staff should not make posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to the School and members of its community on any social media accounts.
- School staff are advised not to invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or children from the school community in any personal social media whilst in employment at The Kingsley School. Where staff choose not to follow this advice staff members should be conscious at all times of the need to keep personal and professional lives separate and be mindful of what constitutes a professional relationship and image of The Kingsley (as outlined in the Employee Handbook). This might include those members of staff who are parents of children in the school and therefore are in regular contact with other parents and their children.
- Staff members must not identify themselves as employees of Kingsley School or service providers for the school in their personal webspace. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, particularly those involved in providing sensitive frontline services.
- Staff must ensure that confidentiality is maintained on social media even after they leave the employment of the school.
- Members of the school staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts.
- Staff should not accept any current pupil of any age or any ex-pupil of the school under the age of 18 as

a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account.

- Staff members must not have any contact with pupils' family members through personal social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.

- 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 just too embarrassing if too much personal information is known in the work place.
- Photographs, videos or any other types of image of pupils and their families or images depicting staff members wearing school uniforms or clothing with school logos or images identifying sensitive school issues must not be published on personal webspaces. (For example, trip photos with clearly identifiable school hoodies).
- All email communication between staff and members of the school community on school business must be made from an official school email account.
- Staff should not routinely use personal mobile phones to make contact with members of the school community on school business, nor should accepting any such contact be encouraged, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Headteacher or in an emergency where there is no other alternative.
- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated person for Child Protection (Christina McCullough, Deputy Headteacher – Pastoral, Monica Gamble, Interim Head of Prep, Dawn Morgan, Head of Sixth Form).
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications (or even is unsure whether something is inappropriate) involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above. If they are not happy with the response the staff member may / has a responsibility to contact social services.
- The Kingsley School only permits limited personal use of social media while at work. Access to social media sites for personal reasons is not allowed on school time. Staff members are expected to devote their contracted hours of work to their professional duties and personal use of the internet should not generally be on the school's time.
- When acting on behalf of the school, offensive comments must be reported to a member of SLT and handled swiftly with sensitivity.
- If staff are aware that themselves or someone else is subject to abuse by colleagues through use of a social networking site, action must be reported using the agreed school protocols.
- The School permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites.

School-sanctioned use of social media

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum and to support student learning. For example, the school has an official Twitter account @kingsley_school and several A-level course require the use of blogs for assessment.

There are also many possibilities for using social media to enhance and develop students' learning.

When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- The content of any school-sanctioned social media site should be solely professional and should reflect well on the school.
- School social media accounts must not be used for personal gain.
- There must be a strong pedagogical or business reason for creating official school sites to communicate with pupils or others. Staff must not create sites for trivial reasons which expose the school to unwelcome publicity or cause reputational damage and staff must seek approval in writing from SLT before setting up any accounts. This should be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff, and ideally should be linked to an official school email account.
- All social media accounts created for educational purposes should include a link in to the ICT Acceptable Use Policy. This will indicate that the account is officially sanctioned by The Kingsley School.
- The URL and identity of the site should be notified to the appropriate member of the SLT before access is permitted for students.
- Care must be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe.
- Staff must not publish photographs of children without the written consent of parents/carers, identify by name any children featured in photographs, or allow personally identifying information to be published on school social media accounts.
- Staff members can only use official school sites for communicating with pupils or to enable pupils to communicate with one another. Dialogue is discouraged unless it is public.
- Any inappropriate comments on or abuse of school-sanctioned social media should immediately be removed and reported to a member of SLT.
- Staff should not engage with any direct messaging of students through social media where the message is not public

Legal Framework

The Kingsley School is committed to ensuring that all staff members provide confidential services that meet the highest standards. All individuals working on behalf of the school are bound by a legal duty of confidence and other laws to protect the confidential information they have access to during the course of their work. Disclosure of confidential information on social media is likely to be a breach of a number of laws and professional codes of conduct, including:

- The Human Rights Act 1
- Common law duty of confidentiality, and
- GDPR May 2018

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

- Person-identifiable information, e.g., pupil and employee records protected by the GDPR 2018
- Information divulged in the expectation of confidentiality
- School business or corporate records containing organisationally or publicly sensitive information
- Any commercially sensitive information such as information relating to commercial proposals or current negotiations, and
- Politically sensitive information

Staff members should also be aware that other laws relating to libel, defamation, harassment and copyright may apply to information posted on social media including:

- Libel Act 1843
- Defamation Acts 1952 and 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Malicious Communications Act 1998
- Communications Act 2003, and
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

The Kingsley School could be held vicariously responsible for acts of their employees in the course of their employment. For example, staff members who harass co-workers online or who engage in cyberbullying or discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, etc or who defame a third party while at work may render The Kingsley School liable to the injured party.

Monitoring of Internet Use

- The Kingsley School monitors usage of its internet and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users.

Users of The Kingsley School email and internet services should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the school's ICT system.

Breaches of the Policy

- Any breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the staff member/s involved in line with The Kingsley School's Employee handbook.
- A breach of this policy leading to breaches of confidentiality, or defamation or damage to the reputation of The Kingsley School or any illegal acts or acts that render The Kingsley School liable to third parties may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.
- Contracted providers of The Kingsley School must inform the relevant school immediately of any breaches of this policy so that appropriate action can be taken to protect confidential information and limit the damage to the reputation of the school. Any action against breaches should be according to contractors' internal disciplinary procedures.

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