

<p><b>Name of Policy:</b> Social Media</p>	<p><b>Version/Last Review Date:</b> October 2021 (v5)</p>
<p><b>Statutory documents linked to policy:</b>  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/social-media-use">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/social-media-use</a>                      NGA  <a href="https://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com/pupils-and-parents/engaging-parents-and-carers/resolving-issues/parental-online-abuse-of-schools-advice-and-recourse/">https://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com/pupils-and-parents/engaging-parents-and-carers/resolving-issues/parental-online-abuse-of-schools-advice-and-recourse/</a></p>	<p><b>Previous review date:</b>                      May 2013 (V1)                      May 2015 (V2)                      November 2017 (V3)                      June 2019 (V4)</p>
<p><b>Other Policies linked to this policy:</b> Information and Communications</p>	<p><b>Next Review Date:</b> OCT 2024 (V6)</p>
<p><b>Governor Committee Responsible</b></p>	<p>People &amp; Resource Management FPP</p>

WNA Vision: All children will achieve their full potential, with holistic support, whilst enjoying and driving their own learning, gaining self-respect, self-esteem and self-belief. Our classroom extends to rich, exciting environments within the forest, the beach, the city and the community as a whole.

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## 1. **Policy statement**

- 1.1 We recognise that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs and wikis. However, employees' use of social media can pose risks to our confidential and proprietary information, and reputation, and can jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations.
- 1.2 To minimise these risks, to avoid loss of productivity and to ensure that our IT resources and communications systems are used only for appropriate business purposes, we expect employees, Friends groups, volunteers and governors to adhere to this policy.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

## 2. **Who is covered by the policy?**

- 2.1 This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including governors, Friends groups, senior managers, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as **staff** in this policy).
- 2.2 Third parties who have access to our electronic communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with this policy.

## 3. **Scope and purpose of the policy**

- 3.1 This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Wikipedia, all other social networking sites, and all other internet postings, including blogs.
- 3.2 It applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during office hours or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.

3.3 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 our equipment or facilities are 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 our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

3.4 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. **Personnel responsible for implementing the policy**

4.1 The headteacher has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks also lies the headteacher.

4.2 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 headteacher. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed the headteacher.

#### 5. **Compliance with related policies and agreements**

5.1 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, employees are prohibited from using social media to:

5.1.1 breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;

5.1.2 breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality;

5.1.3 breach our Disciplinary Rules;

5.1.4 defame or disparage the organisation or its affiliates, customers, clients, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders;

5.1.5 harass or bully other staff in any way;

- 5.1.6 breach our Equal opportunities policy;
  - 5.1.7 breach our Data protection policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague online); and
  - 5.1.8 breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).
  - 5.1.9 **West Newcastle will not tolerate any racist, disability, homophobic or transphobic abuse or bullying. This will be reported to the local Safeguarding Services and Northumbria Prevent team**
  - 5.1.10 **We work within the statutory framework to address issues around radicalisation and extremist behaviour. Any concerns will be reported to the Local Safeguarding Services and police.**
- 5.2 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 organisation and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.
- 5.3 Employees who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
6. **Personal use of social media**
- 6.1 We recognise that staff may work long hours and occasionally may desire to use social media for personal activities at the school or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems. We authorise such occasional use so long as it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content and does not interfere with your employment responsibilities or productivity. While using social media at work, circulating chain letters or other spam is never permitted. Circulating or posting commercial, personal, religious or political

solicitations, or promotion of outside organisations unrelated to the organisation's business are also prohibited.

### 7. **Monitoring**

7.1 The contents of our IT resources and communications systems are our property. Therefore, staff should have no expectation of privacy in 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 our electronic information and communications systems.

7.2 We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your acknowledgement of this policy and your use of such resources and systems. 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.

7.3 We 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.

7.4 Do not use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that you wish to be kept private or confidential from the organisation.

### 8. **Responsible use of social media**

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

### 8.2 Protecting our business reputation:

8.2.1 Staff must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:

8.2.1.1 our organisation;

8.2.1.2 our pupils;

8.2.1.3 suppliers and vendors;

8.2.1.4 other affiliates and stakeholders; but

8.2.1.5 staff should also avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage our business reputation, even indirectly.

8.2.2 Staff should make it clear in social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal e-mail address when communicating via social media;

8.2.3 Staff are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media. Remember that what you publish might be available to be read by the masses (including the organisation itself, future employers and social acquaintances) for a long time. Keep this in mind before you post content;

8.2.4 If you disclose your affiliation as an employee of our organisation, you must also state that your views do not represent those of your employer. For example, you could state, "the views in this posting do not represent the views of my employer". You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to clients and colleagues;

8.2.5 Avoid posting comments about sensitive business-related topics, such as our performance. Even if you make it clear that your views on such topics do not represent those of the organisation, your comments could still damage our reputation;

8.2.6 If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting,

refrain from making the communication until you discuss it with your manager; and

- 8.2.7 If you see content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on our organisation or our stakeholders, you should contact your manager. All staff are responsible for protecting our business reputation.
- 8.3 Respecting intellectual property and confidential information:
- 8.3.1 Staff should not do anything to jeopardise our confidential information and intellectual property through the use of social media;
- 8.3.2 In addition, staff should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property of other companies and individuals, which can create liability for the organisation, as well as the individual author;
- 8.3.3 Do not use our logos, brand names, slogans or other trademarks, or post any of our confidential or proprietary information without prior written permission; and
- 8.3.4 To protect yourself and the organisation against liability for copyright infringement, where appropriate, reference sources of particular information you post or upload and cite them accurately. If you have any questions about whether a particular post or upload might violate anyone's copyright or trademark, ask your manager before making the communication.
- 8.4 Respecting colleagues, clients, partners and suppliers:
- 8.4.1 Do not post anything that your colleagues or our customers, clients, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders would find offensive, including discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity; and
- 8.4.2 Do not post anything related to your colleagues or our customers, clients, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders without their written permission.

### 9. **Monitoring and review of this policy**

9.1 The headteacher shall be responsible for reviewing this policy to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

9.2 The headteacher has responsibility for ensuring that any person who may be involved with administration or investigations carried out under this policy receives regular and appropriate training to assist them with these duties.

9.3 Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the headteacher.