

MAYFIELD SCHOOL




SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

APPROVED BY ¹: PHS Sub Committee

Name: David Batten

Position: Chair of Governors

Signed: 

Date: Spring Term 2022

Review Date ²: Spring Term 2024

¹The Governing Body are free to delegate approval of this document to a Committee of the Governing Body, an individual Governor or the Head Teacher.

²Governors free to determine review period.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. At Mayfield School we are committed sharing the achievements of our pupils and staff with parents, carers and our local community
- 1.2. Social media has a key role in helping us communicate positive messages about our school
- 1.3. Communicating in this way helps pupils, parents and the public have confidence in the school's leadership and direction
- 1.4. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that we use social media responsibly so that confidentiality of pupils and other staff and the reputation of the school are safeguarded.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to Mayfield School's governing body, all teaching and other staff, whether or not employed directly by the school, external contractors providing services on behalf of the school, teacher trainees and other trainees, volunteers and other individuals who work for or provide services on behalf of the school. These individuals are collectively referred to as 'staff members' in this policy.
- 2.2. This policy covers personal use of all social media as well as the use of social media for official school purposes, including sites hosted and maintained on behalf of the school
- 2.3. This policy applies to social networking sites, blogs, forums, podcasts and content sharing sites such as *YouTube*.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 3.1. 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 1998
 - Common law duty of confidentiality, and
 - The Data Protection Act 1998.
- 3.2. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:
 - Person-identifiable information, e.g. pupil and employee records protected by the Data Protection Act 1998
 - 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.
- 3.3. 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.
- 3.4. Mayfield 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 cyber bullying or discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, etc. or who defame a third party while at work may render Mayfield School liable to the injured party.

4. RELATED POLICIES

- 4.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with all other policies relating to personal conduct and use of IT

5. PRINCIPLES – BE PROFESSIONAL, RESPONSIBLE AND RESPECTFUL

- 5.1. 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 school and your personal interests.
- 5.2. You must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Mayfield School into disrepute.
- 5.3. You must not represent your personal views as those of Mayfield School.

- 5.4. You must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other professionals you interact with as part of your job on social media.
- 5.5. You must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations.

6. USING SOCIAL MEDIA ON BEHALF OF MAYFIELD SCHOOL

- 6.1. Staff members can only use social media sites approved by the school for communicating
- 6.2. Official school social media accounts must be created only according to the requirements specified in Appendix A of this Policy. Accounts created must not breach the terms and conditions of social media service providers, particularly with regard to minimum age requirements.
- 6.3. Staff members must, at all times, act in the best interests of children and young people when creating, participating in or contributing content to social media sites.

7. BREACHES OF THE POLICY

- 7.1. Any breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the staff member/s involved in line with Mayfield School's disciplinary policy and procedures.
- 7.2. A breach of this policy leading to breaches of confidentiality, or defamation or damage to the reputation of Mayfield School or any illegal acts or acts that render Mayfield School liable to third parties may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.
- 7.3. Contracted providers of Mayfield School must inform the relevant school officer 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.

Review of this policy

²This policy will be reviewed bi-annually or sooner if legislation or best practice requires this.

¹Review of this policy has been delegated to the Premises Health & Safety committee.

APPENDIX A: Requirements for creating social media accounts on behalf of Mayfield School

1. CREATION OF ACCOUNTS

- 1.1. Staff members participating in social media for work purposes are expected to demonstrate the same high standards of behaviour as when using other media or giving public presentations.
- 1.2. Staff members must consider how much time and effort they are willing to commit to the proposed site. They should be aware that maintaining a site is not a one-off task, but involves a considerable time commitment.
- 1.3. Overall responsibility to ensure that enough resources are provided to keep the account refreshed and relevant sits with the Head. It is important that enough staff members are trained and are able to maintain and moderate a site in case of staff absences or turnover.
- 1.4. Social media accounts must not be neglected, creating a potential risk to the school's brand and image.
- 1.5. Consideration must also be given to how the success of the site will be evaluated to assess whether the site has achieved the proposed objectives.

2. APPROVAL FOR CREATION OF ACCOUNTS

- 2.1. Mayfield School social media accounts can be created only by, or on behalf of, the school. Site administrators and moderators must be Mayfield School employees or other authorised people.
- 2.2. Content contributed to accounts must be discussed with and approved by the staff member's line manager.
- 2.3. Be aware that the content may attract media attention. All media enquiries must be forwarded to the Head immediately. Staff members must not communicate with the media without the advice or approval of the Head (or appropriate manager).

3. CONTENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

- 3.1. Information provided must be worthwhile and accurate; remember what is published will reflect on the school's image, reputation and services.
- 3.2. Stay within the law and be aware that child protection, privacy, data protection, libel, defamation, harassment and copyright law may apply to the content of social media.
- 3.3. Staff members must respect their audience and be sensitive in the tone of language used and when discussing topics that others may find controversial or objectionable.
- 3.4. Permission must be sought from the relevant people before citing or referencing their work or referencing service providers, partners or other agencies.
- 3.5. Mayfield School social media accounts must always include the school logo or brand to ensure transparency and confidence in the site.
- 3.6. Staff members must never give out their personal information such as home contact details or home email addresses on social media accounts
- 3.7. Personal opinions should not be expressed on social media accounts

4. CONTRIBUTORS AND MODERATION OF CONTENT

- 4.1. The content of Mayfield School social media accounts must be moderated.
- 4.2. At least two approved Administrators should be appointed, whose role it is to review and moderate content, including removing inn appropriate content.
- 4.3. Behaviour likely to cause extreme offence, for example racist or homophobic insults, or likely to put a young person or adult at risk of harm must never be tolerated. Such comments must never be posted or removed immediately and appropriate authorities, for example Cumbria Police informed in the case of illegal content or behaviour.
- 4.4. Administrators must not allow unknown people to follow social media accounts and limit the site to known people only.