



Social Media Policy

Policy Details:

Reviewed: March 2022

Next review: March 2024

Policy history:

March 2022	Updated: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changed employee to staff member• Changed governor to LAB member• Improved clarity in certain parts of the policy	James Bancroft (Principal)
June 2019	Policy written using model from Leighton Academy	James Bancroft, Principal

This policy was reviewed at the Local Advisory Board Meeting in Term 4, 2021 to 2022.



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

These notes provide guidance to ALL categories of school staff members and Local Advisory Board (LAB) members on the use of social networking websites.

Using social networking sites and other new media in a personal capacity

It is recognised that many staff members and LAB members use social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and YouTube.

In the majority of cases this is uncomplicated and trouble-free. However, there are some occasions where an employee or governor's personal life and work life can start to overlap through these sites. For example:

- Where members of the school community search for information about staff members or LAB members and identify an aspect of their personal life which they take issue with – this could be a particular concern if a complaint has been made about that staff member or LAB member
- Journalists increasingly use the web to research stories, and may reprint photos or comments that they find relating to staff members
- Some people also look on social networking sites to find out information about people applying for jobs.

Whilst the academy respects a staff member/LAB member's right to a private life and has no wish to interfere with this, it is strongly recommended, when using such social media, to consider the potential impact on both the professional reputation of the staff member/LAB member and that of the academy.

The use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. Staff who work for the academy with these groups should not have any social contact with them or their families, unless the reason for this contact has been declared and agreed with members of the SLT.

Recommendations

The academy must ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected. It therefore requires each staff member/LAB member using social media to adhere to the following recommendations:

- Ensure that matters relating to school are not discussed with staff, LAB members, pupils or parents
- Not have a pupil or former pupil under the age of 18 as a 'friend' to share information with
- Ensure that you do not conduct yourself in a way that is detrimental to the academy
- Ensure that you do not represent yourself as an employee of the academy
- Take care not to allow your interaction on these websites to damage or compromise working relationships between members of staff, LAB members, students, or other stakeholders, e.g. It would be unwise for staff to allow current students access to any information which would compromise their position and authority in the academy
- Take care not to post photographs of yourself or your colleagues taken in the academy that could be misconstrued or misrepresent the academy.
- Care should be taken not to take photographs of students, clients or visitors within the academy, nor of academy logos
- Ensure that you never post or send abusive or defamatory messages
- Negative references should not be made to any staff member, governor, pupil, parents or school activity/event unless prior permission has been obtained and agreed with the principal



- Where family and friends who have pupils in school are friends on social media please declare this in writing on the allocated declaration form.
- It would not be appropriate to network during the working day on school equipment.
- All colleagues and LAB members are advised to state that your views online do not represent those of your employer

Security and identity theft

Staff members and LAB members should be aware that social networking websites are a public forum, particularly if the employee or governor is part of a "network". Staff members and LAB members should not assume that their entries on any website will remain private.

Staff members and LAB members must also be security conscious and should take steps to protect themselves from identity theft, for example by restricting the amount of personal information that they upload. It is important to avoid posting detailed personal information such as date of birth, place of birth and favourite football team, which can form the basis of security questions and passwords.

With this in mind, Staff members and LAB members must:

- ensure that no information is made available that could provide a person with unauthorised access to the academy and/or any confidential information; and
- refrain from recording any confidential information regarding the academy on any social networking website.

Staff members and LAB members are recommended to:

- Keep your passwords secure, change them regularly and use passwords that are difficult to guess
- Check your security/privacy settings on social networking sites to ensure that your information is only visible to the people who you want to see it, i.e. friends only
- Put your name into an internet search engine (e.g. [Google](#)) to see what people can find out about you. Are you happy with what they can view?
- Help your friends and colleagues by letting them know if you notice comments/information on their pages that might be misconstrued.

Staff members and LAB members should always use their own judgement but should bear in mind other relevant academy policies around standard of conduct and the acceptable use policy.

Monitoring

These guidelines will be monitored regularly to ensure that they are operating fairly, consistently and effectively.



Social Media Declaration

This declaration should be updated at the start of every school year by Staff members and LAB members.

The declaration must be signed even if there are no social media connections.

Name:

I have the following social media connections with friends and family who have children attending the school.

I have read and understood the Social Media Policy.

Signed:

Date:

Principal's signature:

Date:

Name of parent	Name of pupil	Connection	Anything the academy should be aware of?