



NIDDERDALE HIGH SCHOOL **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Introduction

Nidderdale High School has adapted the North Yorkshire County Council Social Media Policy (November 2010) to suit the needs of the school. This policy supersedes any others relating to such matters and dated prior to the date of the ratification of this policy.

Policy Statement

Social media or networking is a term used to refer to online technologies and practices that are used to share opinions and information, promote discussion and build relationships. Social networking sites can be used by businesses for marketing, branding and public relations exercises. Instead of information being about a person, it is about a building or service.

Social media services and tools involve a combination of technology, telecommunications and some kind of social interaction. They use a variety of different formats, for example text, pictures, video and audio.

A large number of people in the UK are now using social networking sites as a mechanism for communicating with one another.

These sites provide a platform, typically outside of an organisation's network based on the web where anybody can gain access and interact in some way with others. That interaction can be mainly written (as in Facebook and Twitter), it can be video (as in YouTube) or it can be audio/video/written (as in MSN/Skype). The main idea is to interact with other individuals, groups or in a community.

The growing popularity of social media has led to many organisations using these platforms as a new means of communicating with customers and users in real time. Although less formal than the traditional forms of communication, social media should still be regarded as a form of communication and issues of image, brand, tone etc. should still be important considerations and should be treated in no less of a professional way.

Increasingly social media is being used for customer/stakeholder feedback, for collaboration and sharing of knowledge, as well as for consultation and engagement and the school needs to understand, as well as participate, in this developing area.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to effectively manage and regulate the use of social media by Nidderdale High School and its staff, governors and volunteers. This Policy sets out how social media can be managed effectively and how any risks or pitfalls can be avoided or mitigated. It provides a framework, along with guidance on the use of social media, to ensure social media is used effectively, that staff understand their responsibilities and that the use of social media does not expose the school to security risks or reputational damage.

The aim of the policy is to ensure;

- Engagement and public consultation with individuals and communities and successful promotion of school-based services through the use of social media.
- That school information remains secure and is not compromised through the use of social media.
- A consistent and corporate approach is adopted and maintained in the use of social media.
- That users operate within existing policies, guidelines and relevant legislation.
- That the school's reputation is not damaged or adversely affected.

These aims will mitigate the following risks which have been identified from using social media;

- Damage to the reputation of the school, which brings the school into disrepute.
- Breach of safeguarding.
- Civil action relating to breaches of legislation.
- Disclosure of confidential information.
- Posting of information which constitutes bullying, harassment or discrimination.
- Virus or other malware (malicious software) infection from infected sites.

Conduct which results in the risks above is not acceptable.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees and governors of Nidderdale High School, along with other workers (including casual and agency workers and contractors, including contractual third parties) who use the school's ICT infrastructure and are granted access on the above grounds.

It applies regardless of whether the application they are using is hosted by the school or externally. This Policy also applies when an employee is involved in contributing in an official capacity on social networking applications.

Use of social media and the internet on school equipment is monitored and any misuse in relation to social media which is brought to the school's attention will be investigated.

Use of personal accounts set up by staff on social media sites and used in their own time cannot be influenced by the school. Teachers at Nidderdale High School are governed by the Teachers Standards and the other stipulation is that the Code of Conduct is followed by all employees and Nidderdale High School is not brought into disrepute. This applies wherever staff are accessing social media either on their own equipment outside of the school or the school's equipment.

If a member of staff is using a social media site and acting on behalf of the School on their own equipment outside of Nidderdale High School, or using the School's equipment, they must adhere to the guidelines set out in this Policy.

Relationship with existing policies

There are a number of other strategies and policies which this Policy links to relating to information governance and ICT. These policies should be read in conjunction with this Social Media Policy:

- Acceptable Use Policy
- ICT & Internet Policy

In addition, dependent on the area involved, additional consideration will need to be given to the type of service and service users involved in the activity (such as safeguarding for adults and children).

Definition

Business Use

Social media access will be granted for school business use only and is subject to the approval of the Headteacher. This is likely to involve the need to communicate information to certain audiences, as well as consult and engage with students, parents, carers and guardians as well as other stakeholders. When using social media, employees must ensure that they comply with the Code of Conduct, which sets out the standards of behaviour expected.

Use by staff and governors

Members of staff and governors should ensure that they are familiar with the guidance that is set out within this policy and that their use of social media does not put the school's systems and information at risk, or be damaging to the reputation of the school. Members of staff and governors should refer to the ICT and Internet policy and the Acceptable Use Policy.

Investigatory use and monitoring

The School will monitor the use of its equipment, including the use of social media and if alerted, investigations into its use by employees will be undertaken.

Use of social media for recreational purposes

This Policy relates to the business use of social media, but it still applies where an employee is carrying out a function of the School, in his/her private time, on his/her personal equipment and identifies him/herself as an employee of the School.

Employees who use social media in their own personal time for recreational purposes must still adhere to this Policy and must not do anything in their own personal time that would bring the School into disrepute.

Employees must not use school email addresses when using social media for their own personal use.

In addition, there are specific policies relating to the use of email and the internet (as stated above) and the accessing of social media, which must be complied with.

Do's and Don'ts when using social media, you must;

1. Use school provided or approved sites in the first instance.
2. Submit a request to SLT, suitably authorised and with a supporting case.
3. Only set up any online accounts of any nature, representing the school, once cleared by the Headteacher.
4. Ensure that the accounts are the responsibility of the department in terms of content management and must be updated on a regular basis to ensure the content is fresh and relevant.
5. Ensure that a single person in the department requesting the site is responsible for maintaining the content. A deputy should be appointed in his/her absence.
6. Not associate or link a social media site to the School, without authorisation from the Headteacher, even when created externally.
7. Contact the Headteacher or his/her Deputy if a response is needed to feedback on social networking sites, in a timely way so that they can review the response first before feedback is posted back from the School. This should be adhered to particularly if the feedback is tenuous, political, negative in any way or otherwise sensitive.

8. First consider using the school website before using other social media sites.
9. Consider the integrity and opinion of the School at all times.
10. Ensure information is branded with the school logo.
11. Use generic school accounts when viewing or administrating school social media sites and must consider using or extending existing social media sites before creating your own.
12. Still represent the school in accordance with these guidelines when using personal accounts to link to or 'like' any school social media sites where you have stated that you are a school employee.

What you must not do when using social media

When using social media for official and personal use when in connection with the School, you must not;

1. Publish content that may result in actions against the school for libel, defamation or other claims for damages.
2. Publish personal data/information about other individuals without their explicit written permission.
3. Promote personal financial interests, commercial ventures or personal campaigns.
4. Use social media in an abusive or hateful manner or post comments that constitute bullying, harassment or discrimination.
5. Reproduce copyright material without the express permission of the copyright owner.
6. Act in any way that may bring the school into disrepute.
7. Blogs, forums, wiki's and any other social media tools must not be set up to display a personal opinion or view of the School. The Code of Conduct must be followed at all times as an employee of Nidderdale High School. This applies in both instances of use with personal equipment and in personal time or if the member of staff is using school equipment.
8. Promote or malign any political party or campaigning organisation.
9. Use personal accounts when setting up accounts and for feeding back comments within social media sites for the school.

Applying the Policy

Business case

To apply for access to and use of social media, staff must first discuss the intended outcome with the Headteacher. If approved by the Headteacher, access to social media websites will then be activated by the ICT technicians.

In addition, most social networking sites require users, when they sign up, to agree to terms of use. Employees are responsible for understanding and complying with these requirements for individual sites.

Management responsibilities

The Headteacher and SLT Line managers have a duty to ensure that members of staff who have access to social media comply with this Policy and relevant guidance and do not abuse their access rights, or misuse such sites. All access to the internet and social media is monitored and reports are provided to SLT, highlighting any alleged misuse. These reports will also highlight time spent on social media websites. Any breaches of this policy by staff should be investigated and dealt with immediately and in line with usual school procedures.

Implementation

This Policy has been approved and is implemented with immediate effect for all employees. It is available on the school website and is communicated to all staff along with other elements of information

governance, including the ICT and Internet policy.

Policy Compliance

Members of the school are requested to conform to this mandatory Policy in respect of its provisions and ethos. Failure to do so may be regarded as a breach of the Code of Conduct and could result in action being taken against the member of staff concerned.

Other violations of this Policy, such as breaches in the Data Protection Act, may also lead to disciplinary action against the individual by the school, as well as possible criminal or civil action against the individual concerned.

Legislation

The legislation to be considered in conjunction with this Policy includes:

- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Electronic Communication Act 2000
- EU Privacy and Monitoring Directives Act 2003
- Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Local Government Act 1986
- Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1998 and any successor legislation.

In addition, consideration needs to be given to the Advertising Standards Authority guidance, and defamation and confidentiality issues. NYCC Legal services can provide specific advice where necessary.

Governance

The Headteacher, supported by SLT, is responsible for this Policy.

Monitoring

This Policy will be monitored through the “Smoothwall”, which will report access to social media websites and the duration of time spent on the sites when required.

An automated log will be kept of all staff with access to social media and will monitor the use of social media to ensure compliance with policies and guidance.

Reapproved by Governing Body 21 October 2019

Next Review: November 2022