



HORRIS HILL
FOUNDED 1888

Social Media Policy

Policy reviewed:	February 2021
Policy approval:	Reviewed by Policy Audit Committee February 2021 Approved by Full Governing Board March 2021
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- 1 **Introduction:** The School recognises 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, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Whatsapp and all other internet postings including blogs, wikis and other interactive websites. It is also a valuable educational tool.
- 2 **Purpose:** This policy applies to the use of social media for School and your own personal purposes, whether during normal working hours or in your personal time. Its purpose is to help staff avoid the potential pitfalls of sharing information on such social media sites and should be read in conjunction with the acceptable use policy for pupils. This policy is designed for your protection.
- 3 **IT facilities:** The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using the School's IT facilities and equipment or your personal devices.
- 4 **Personal use:** The School permits the incidental use of the internet and social media so long as it is kept to a minimum and takes place substantially out of normal working hours. Use must not interfere with your work commitments (or those of others). Personal use is a privilege and not a right. If the School discovers that excessive periods of time have been spent on the internet provided by the School either in or outside working hours, disciplinary action may be taken and internet access may be withdrawn without notice at the discretion of the Head.
- 5 **Guiding principles:** Staff are required to behave responsibly at all times and adhere to the following principles:
 - 5.1 You should not be "Friends" with, "Followers" of, or connect with pupils on any social media or other interactive network. It would be considered inappropriate to connect with pupils on a personal account. Depending on the circumstances, it may also be inappropriate to connect with parents, guardians or carers.
 - 5.2 You must be mindful of how you present yourself and the School on such media. Staff are entitled to a social life like anyone else. However, the extra-curricular life of an employee at the School has professional consequences and this must be considered at all times when sharing personal data.
 - 5.3 You should always represent your own views and must not allude to other people's personal views in your internet posts. You must not publish anything which could identify colleagues, pupils, parents or guardians on any personal social media account, personal webpage or similar platform without the prior consent of the Head in writing. This includes photos, videos, or other materials such as pupil work.
 - 5.4 When writing an internet post, you should consider whether the contents would be more appropriate in a private message. While you may have strict privacy controls in place, information could still be shared by others. It is always sensible to consider that any information posted may not remain private.

- 5.5 You should protect your privacy and that of others by omitting personal data from internet posts such as names, email addresses, home or work addresses, phone numbers or other personal data.
 - 5.6 You should familiarise yourself with the privacy settings of any social media you use and ensure that public access is restricted. If you are not clear about how to restrict access, you should regard all your information as publicly available and behave accordingly.
 - 5.7 You must not post anything that may offend, insult or humiliate others, particularly on the basis of their sex, age, race, colour, national origin, religion, or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, pregnancy or maternity.
 - 5.8 You must not post anything that could be interpreted as threatening, intimidating or abusive. Offensive posts or messages may be construed as cyber-bullying.
 - 5.9 You must not post disparaging or derogatory remarks about the School or its Governors, staff, volunteers, pupils or parents, guardians or carers. This includes in any online group formed for alumni of the School.
 - 5.10 You must not post anything that could be interpreted as glorifying or supporting terrorism, extremism or organisations promoting terrorist or extremist views, or encouraging others to do so.
 - 5.11 You must not use social media in a way which could constitute a breach of any policies contained in the Employment Manual.
- 6 **Removing postings:** You may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. If you fail to remove postings, this could result in disciplinary action.
 - 7 **Breach:** A breach of this policy may be treated as misconduct and could result in disciplinary action including in serious cases, dismissal.
 - 8 **Reporting Concerns:** If you become aware of any online activity or content relating to the School or its wider community that causes you concern, or if you become aware of any online activity or content that could constitute bullying or harassment, and in either case on a School, personal or public social media platform or other online forum, you should report this internally to the Head or Bursar.
 - 9 **Monitoring:** The School regularly monitors the use of the internet service to check that the use is in accordance with this policy. Please see the IT Acceptable Use Policy for further information on monitoring. If it is discovered that any of the IT services are being abused and / or that the terms of this policy are being infringed, disciplinary action may be taken which could result in your dismissal.