



THE
LOUGHBOROUGH
Schools Foundation

Policy Title: Staff Social Media Policy

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Point of Contact (Reviewer): External Engagement Director

STAFF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Social media refers to interaction among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Furthermore, social media depend on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content.
- 1.2 While recognising the benefits of this medium for opportunities of communication, this policy is designed for staff who use social media either as part of their role at Loughborough Schools Foundation (LSF) or for personal use where this impacts on Loughborough Schools Foundation (Includes: Foundation, Grammar School, High School, Amherst School, Fairfield Prep, Nursery and Central Services).
- 1.3 LSF understands that the majority of staff will be using social media in one form or another. This policy describes how to use the technology appropriately and provides guidance to enable staff to protect themselves and LSF from social media misuse. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using LSF's IT facilities and equipment, or equipment belonging to members of staff or any other third party.
- 1.4 Staff should note that they have a legal responsibility to represent LSF accurately and fairly in any public online space. They are also expected to uphold the values of LSF and not bring LSF into disrepute.
- 1.5 Staff will be made aware of the policy as part of their induction. The policy is non-contractual and its terms may be varied at any time. Any breach of this policy may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
 - 2.1.1 Provide LSF staff with direction and information about the appropriate use of social media in a work context.
 - 2.1.2 Clarify LSF's approach to, and provide direction on, appropriate conduct with regard to the personal use of social media by members of staff, where there are references to, or a potential impact upon, LSF.
 - 2.1.3 Protect LSF, its staff and wider community from social media misuse.
 - 2.1.4 Create consistency and coherence across LSF social media activities.

3 Scope of the policy

- 3.1 The policy applies to all LSF staff, including term-time only staff, student staff, casual and temporary staff. It also applies to those who represent LSF in an official capacity, for example agency workers and volunteers. Third parties who have access to LSF's IT facilities and equipment are also required to comply with the policy. This policy is in addition to and complements, policies regarding the use of technology, computers, email and the internet. Please also refer to the Responsible Use Policy.

- 3.2 The policy covers the publication of, and commentary on, social media by staff, which relates to LSF, its staff and wider community. Within this context, social media is any facility for online publication and commentary, including (but not exclusively) technologies including magazines, internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro-blogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs, video, rating and social bookmarking, vlogs, wall posting, music-sharing, crowdsourcing and instant messaging, to name a few; and social networking sites such as Facebook, X, Instagram, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and YouTube.
- 3.3 LSF recognises that social learning tools are increasingly being used as a teaching resource to enhance and develop the curriculum and respond to learner expectations. It is not the intention of this policy to limit such innovation, but to ensure that where social media is used for these purposes the principles of professional behaviour and the content of this policy are adhered to.

4 Social media usage at work

- 4.1 LSF must ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected. Whilst this policy is concerned with the use of social media which may impact on LSF, staff are reminded of their obligations under other employment policies when using social media sites generally and whilst at work.
- 4.2 LSF staff are reminded of their responsibility not to bring LSF into disrepute or to allow personal interaction on websites to damage professional relationships with colleagues, pupils/students or other LSF stakeholders. Staff should consider their social media content carefully, so that they do not violate LSF policies or values but also so that they protect their own privacy.
- 4.3 LSF staff often have access to private data in their jobs and this has to be respected when using social networking sites. Confidential and/or proprietary information must not be shared (e.g. information regarding sensitive personal data, disciplinary cases, grievances, internal disputes, intellectual property, etc.).
- 4.4 New or existing social media channels or sites that are intended to represent an official LSF department, team, project or initiative must be registered with the External Engagement Director (marketing@lsf.org). All new account requests must be made to the Marketing department who will advise on setting up the social media account with the correct name and branding. Under no circumstances should staff use their personal details or branding that has not been approved. A password holder must be established who controls the channel. As a security measure, the password must be shared and registered with the Marketing department.
- 4.5 Staff should ensure that the LSF External Engagement Director has the most up-to-date information should the status or any details change regarding a social media account e.g. if the person responsible for maintaining the account has changed, or if the account is no longer in active use and has been closed.
- 4.6 Before embarking on work-related social media for any work-related purposes, staff should familiarise themselves with the appropriate LSF policies and procedures, particularly if social media is being used for promotional purposes. Guidelines on LSF's acceptable use of social media must be sought from the Marketing Department (marketing@lsf.org).

- 4.7 LSF will regularly review content posted to social media sites and appropriate action will be taken to respond to issues as they arise. In respect to any social channel maintained in the name of LSF, LSF may remove or seek the removal of any content for any lawful reason, including but not limited to, content that it deems threatening, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal.
- 4.8 Filming on campus for use on social media is prohibited, unless approval has been granted by the External Engagement Director.

5 Provisions for LSF branded social channels

- 5.1 When using LSF branded social media, all rules that apply to other LSF communications apply. These include respecting LSF values, respecting members of staff, pupils/students, and other stakeholders; protecting confidentiality, privacy, and security; and proper use and safeguarding of LSF assets. These should be considered when posting content and privacy laws should always be respected.
- 5.2 For safeguarding, student/pupil surnames must never be included in any post and it is the responsibility of the owner of the channel to ensure that no photographs are published that feature a pupil who is on the Schools' 'no-photography' list. The School Registrars have responsibility for updating their School lists and the list is held centrally by the Marketing department.
- 5.3 No material should be posted that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libellous, threatening, harassing, abusive, racist, hateful, or embarrassing to another person or entity whether or not on LSF-hosted sites.
- 5.4 LSF-hosted blogs must focus on subjects related to the organisation and be beneficial to it. Staff posting blogs, be it through their own channels or having been commissioned to do so by external bodies, must seek approval from the External Engagement Director prior to publication.
- 5.5 LSF's name or brand may not be used for private purposes to endorse or condemn any opinion, product, private business, cause, or political candidate.
- 5.6 All content published on social media channels must be within branding guidelines and of a quality that appropriately profiles and positions LSF.
- 5.7 Staff must comply with copyright laws. It is critical that copyright law is complied with by ensuring that permission has been obtained to use or reproduce any copyrighted text, photos, graphics, video or other material owned by others.
- 5.8 Staff should, if possible, include citations when using or posting online material, which includes direct or paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos, or videos. Links to the original material should be provided if applicable.
- 5.9 Members of staff should be careful of whom/what they are following, liking, adding, favouriting, reposting, retweeting, and sharing since this can be viewed as an endorsement. Staff must also be very careful about re-posting links and comments from other users.

6 Provisions for non-LSF and personal social channels

- 6.1 Staff may not disclose any confidential or proprietary information about LSF, its staff or wider community, including but not limited to business, financial and personal staff/pupil/student information.

- 6.2 Staff must uphold the reputation of the Foundation when posting on social media, be it through official or personal accounts. It is not appropriate for personal social media accounts to be linked to your Foundation e-mail address.
- 6.3 Staff must not accept pupils as 'friends' or 'contacts' through social media accounts, and it is recommended that the highest privacy controls are used at all times on personal pages. Staff should not engage in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil. At all times, staff must understand and adhere to their responsibilities as laid out in the Safeguarding Policy.
- 6.4 LSF encourages staff to make positive use of social media as part of their work. However, formal LSF communications should only be relayed through official accounts or those logged with and approved by the Marketing department. Staff should not represent the Foundation through their personal accounts. Representation of personal opinions as being endorsed by LSF or any of its organisations, is strictly prohibited.
- 6.5 Staff may not use or disclose any information about staff/pupils/students obtained from work on any social media without the express written permission of the staff member/pupil/student. This applies, even if an individual is not identified by name within the information used or disclosed, if there is a reasonable basis to believe that the person could still be identified from that information. If this is the case, the use or disclosure of the information could constitute a violation of LSF policy.
- 6.6 Staff must not use LSF's name, logo or other trademarks or intellectual property in the titles of any non-LSF or personal sites or media. However, staff may share them through their personal accounts.

7 Standards of conduct

- 7.1 The standards of conduct set out within this policy should be in accordance with the staff Code of Conduct, safeguarding policies, Responsible Use Policy and contractual duty, not to bring LSF into disrepute. If these policies are not followed or are breached, this may be regarded as potential misconduct or gross misconduct and each matter will be dealt with based on its own facts.
- 7.2 LSF will require staff to remove any postings that are deemed to constitute a breach of the policy. Failure to comply with such a request may, in itself, result in disciplinary action.