



Rosh Pinah Primary School

Social Media Policy

Date of Ratification: 30th November 2022

Date for Review: 30th November 2025

Introduction

This policy applies to every individual working for Rosh Pinah Primary School irrespective of their status, level or grade. It, therefore, includes the Headteacher, members of the Senior Leadership Team, Governors, Class Teachers and Support Staff, trainees, volunteers, part-time or fixed-term employees, and agency staff (collectively referred to as “you” and “Staff” in this policy). Third parties who have access to our electronic communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with this policy.

This policy does not form part of the terms and conditions of employee’s employment with Rosh Pinah Primary School and is not intended to have contractual effect. It does however set out the School’s current practices and required standards of conduct and all staff are required to comply with its contents.

This policy may be amended from time to time, particularly in accordance with our data protection obligations and staff will be notified of any changes no later than one month from the date those changes are intended to take effect.

Rosh Pinah Primary School understands that the internet and social media platforms are increasingly used as a means of communication both at work and at home.

This policy outlines the standards we require Staff to observe when using social media, the circumstances in which the School will monitor use of social media and the action we will take if this policy is breached.

It applies to the use of social media for both work and personal purposes, whether during work hours or otherwise. This policy applies regardless of whether social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to yourself.

Rosh Pinah Primary School recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics using a wide variety of different applications. However, your use of social media can pose a risk to the School’s confidential and proprietary information, its reputation and it can jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations.

To minimise these risks, to avoid loss of productivity and to ensure that our IT resources and communications systems are used only for appropriate work-related purposes, all Rosh Pinah Primary School Staff are required to comply with the provisions in this policy.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the School’s Code of Conduct and Online Safety Policy.

Scope and Purpose of this Policy

In this policy, 'social media' means internet-based applications which allow users to collaborate or interact socially by creating and exchanging content, such as social networks or platforms, community sites, blogs, microblogging sites, wikis, web forums, social bookmarking services and user rating services. Examples include Facebook, LinkedIn, Yammer, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, Flickr, SlideShare, Foursquare and Pinterest and the review areas of e-commerce sites.

Social media platforms allow us to build connections and to share ideas and content more broadly and quickly than ever before, and Rosh Pinah Primary School supports their use. However, improper use of social media may give rise to a breach of your employment contract and/or the School's policies, and/or the following:

- bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination;
- defamation (i.e. damaging the good reputation of another person or organisation);
- contempt of court (i.e. interfering with the administration of justice, e.g. by revealing someone's identity that had been protected by the courts);
- breach of data protection laws;
- misuse of confidential information belonging to the School or to its Staff, pupils or parents, affiliates, partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders; and
- damage to the reputation of the user, the School and/or its Staff, pupils or parents, affiliates, partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders.

This policy does not seek to regulate how Staff use social media in a purely private capacity, provided that use has no bearing on the School or its activities.

This policy is intended to ensure that Staff understand the rules governing their use of social media in relation to their work for the School, or when referencing the School, or where use of social media may affect the School or its activities. It is designed to help you use these platforms and services responsibly, so as to minimise the risks set out above and to ensure consistent standards of use of social media.

This policy therefore applies where:

- your use of social media relates to Rosh Pinah Primary School or its activities;
- your use of social media relates to, or is otherwise connected with, your work, whether the intended use is personal or professional;
- you represent yourself, or are otherwise identifiable, as someone employed by, or otherwise associated with, the School.

Personnel Responsible for Implementing the Policy

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.

Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks also lies with the Headteacher.

All Senior Staff have specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all Staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below the requirements.

All Staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Headteacher in the first instance.

Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed by email to the Headteacher.

Compliance with Related Policies and Agreements

Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies. If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, employees are prohibited from using social media to:

- breach our Acceptable User Agreements for Staff and Online Safety Policy;
- breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;
- breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality;
- breach our Disciplinary Policy;
- defame or disparage the School, its Staff, pupils or parents, affiliates, partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders;
- harass or bully other Staff in any way;
- unlawfully discriminate against other Staff or third parties or breach our Equal opportunities policy;
- breach our Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague online);
- breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).

Staff should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the School and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.

Staff who breach any of the above policies may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Personal use of Social Media

You should not use a work email address to sign up to any social media account and any personal social media page should not make reference to your employment with the School (excluding LinkedIn), unless prior permission is sought from the Headteacher.

Staff must not take photos or posts from social media that belongs to the School for their own personal use.

Monitoring

The contents of our IT resources and communications systems are Rosh Pinah Primary School's property and therefore, Staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, document, telephone conversation, social media post conversation or message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems.

The School reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, Staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your acknowledgement of this policy and your use of such resources and systems. This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, log-ins, recordings and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network monitoring technologies.

Rosh Pinah Primary School may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time after they are created, and may delete such copies from time to time without notice.

All Staff are advised not to use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that he or she wishes to be kept private or confidential from the School.

Educational or Extra Curricular use of Social Media

If your duties require you to speak on behalf of the Rosh Pinah Primary School in a social media environment, you must follow the protocol outlined below.

The Headteacher may require you to undergo training before you use social media on behalf of the School and impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to your activities.

Furthermore, if you are contacted for comments about the School for publication on any forum, including in any social media outlet, you must direct the inquiry to the Headteacher and must not respond without advanced written approval.

Recruitment

The School may use internet searches, including social media searches, to perform pre-employment checks on candidates in the course of recruitment. Where the School does this, it will act in accordance with its data protection and equal opportunities obligations.

Responsible use of Social Media

The following sections of the policy provide Staff with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely:

1. Photographs for use of Social Media

Any photos for social media posts may only be taken using Rosh Pinah Primary School's cameras/devices or devices that have been approved in advance by the Headteacher.

Where any device is used that does not belong to the School, all photos must be deleted immediately from the device, once the photos have been uploaded to a device belonging to the School.

2. Protecting Rosh Pinah Primary School's Reputation

You should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality in anything you create or share on social media platforms. When you create or exchange content using social media you are making a public statement. As such, your content will not be private and can be retweeted, copied or forwarded to third parties without your consent. You should therefore consider the potential sensitivity of disclosing information (such as sickness absence information) on a platform. Once sensitive or confidential information (or offensive or defamatory information) has been disclosed, it cannot be recovered and this may result in liability both for the School and also for you personally.

Bear in mind that, even if you are using social media in a personal capacity, other users who are aware of your association with the School might reasonably think that you speak on behalf of Rosh Pinah Primary School. You should take account of any adverse impact your content might have on the School's reputation or the School's Staff, pupils or parents, governors, members, trustees, affiliates, partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders

When creating or exchanging content on a social media platform, you must at all times comply with your contract of employment with the School, the School's disciplinary rules and any of the School's policies that may be relevant.

In particular you must:

- not harass or bully other members of staff;
- not discriminate against other members of staff or third parties;
- not breach the School's Data Protection Policy, Acceptable User Agreement for Staff /or Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Practice;
- respect any confidentiality obligations owed by you or the School, and not disclose sensitive material or privacy rights of the School or any third party;
- not create or exchange or link to abusive, obscene, discriminatory, derogatory, defamatory or pornographic content;
- not upload, post or forward any content belonging to a third party unless you have that third party's consent;
- ensure that any quotes from third party material are accurate;
- check that a third party website permits you to link to it before including a link and ensure that the link makes clear to the user that the link will take them to the third party's site; and
- not post, upload, forward or post a link to chain mail, junk mail, cartoons, jokes or gossip.

In addition, you must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:

- the School;
- current, past or prospective Staff as defined in this policy;

- current, past or prospective pupils;
- current, past or prospective parents, carers or families of pupils mentioned above;
- the School's governors, trustees, members, directors, suppliers and services providers; and
- other affiliates and stakeholders.

You should be honest and open but also be mindful of the impact your posting on a social network or platform may have on the perception of Rosh Pinah Primary School.

You should avoid posting in relation to or discussing topics that may be inflammatory, such as politics or religion.

Do not escalate 'heated' discussions, try to be conciliatory and respectful and quote facts to lower the temperature and correct misrepresentations. Never contribute to a discussion if you are angry or upset.

If you disclose, whether directly or indirectly, your affiliation to the School as a member of Staff whether past, current or prospective, you must also state that your views do not represent those of the School.

If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, you should refrain from making the communication until you have discussed it with the Headteacher.

If you see content on social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the School, its Staff, pupils, parents, governors, members, trustees, directors, service providers or stakeholders, you are required to report this directly to the Headteacher without unreasonable delay. All Staff are responsible for protecting the School's reputation.

You should regularly review the privacy settings on your personal social media accounts and appropriately restrict the people who can read your posts or comments. Review the content of your personal social media accounts on a regular basis and delete anything that could reflect negatively on you in a professional capacity or on the School.

3. Respecting Intellectual Property and Confidential Information

Staff should not do anything to jeopardise the School's confidential information and intellectual property through the use of social media.

In addition, Staff should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property of other Schools, organisations, companies and individuals, which can create liability for the School, as well as the individual author.

Staff must not use the School's logos, slogans or other trademarks, or post any of our confidential or proprietary information without express prior written permission from the Headteacher.

To protect yourself and the School against liability for copyright infringement, where appropriate, reference sources of particular information you post or upload and cite them accurately. If you have

any questions about whether a particular post or upload might violate anyone's copyright or trademark, ask the Headteacher in the first instance before making the communication.

4. Respecting Colleagues, Students, Parents, Clients, Service Providers and Stakeholders

Staff must not post anything that their colleagues, the School's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, governors, trustees, service providers or stakeholders may find offensive or derogatory, including discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity.

Staff must not post anything related to colleagues, the School's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, governors, trustees, service providers or stakeholders without their advanced written permission.

Rights to the Rosh Pinah Primary School's social media accounts

This paragraph forms part of your contract of employment with the School.

If, during the course of your employment with Rosh Pinah Primary School you create or make use of the School's social media account ('Rosh Pinah Primary School Facebook Account'):

- to the extent that the rights to the School Account do not belong to the social media platform (e.g. LinkedIn, Twitter), they belong to the Rosh Pinah Primary School and
- the rights to any database of details created or maintained in connection with the School Account belong to Rosh Pinah Primary School and you must not create or maintain any separate database of those contact details.

On termination of your employment for any reason, and when requested by Rosh Pinah Primary School at any time, you must:

- provide the School with the current login and password details for all School accounts created or used by you; and
- return to the School, any copies of the database relating to each School account and refrain from using any contact details included on that database, except to the extent that those contacts are personal to you or formed part of a database that you created before you joined Rosh Pinah Primary School.

Where any post is going to be made on the Rosh Pinah Primary School's own social media the following steps must be taken:

- ensure that permission from the child's parent has been sought before the information is used on social media.
- ensure that there is no identifying information relating to a child/children in the post - for example, any certificates in photos are blank/without names or the child's name cannot be seen on the piece of work.
- the post must be a positive and relevant post relating to the children, the good work of staff, the School or any achievements.

- The School will post the information, but all staff have a responsibility to ensure that the Social Media Policy has been adhered to.

Monitoring and Review of this Policy

The Headteacher shall be responsible for reviewing this policy from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice. The Board of Governors has responsibility for approving any amendments prior to implementation.

The Headteacher has responsibility for ensuring that any person who may be involved with administration or investigations carried out under this policy receives regular and appropriate training to assist them with these duties.

If you have any questions about this policy or suggestions for additions that you would like to be considered upon review, you may do so by emailing the Headteacher.

Breaches of this policy

You should note that creating or sharing content on a social media platform may amount to misconduct even if it takes place:

- on a personal account with appropriate privacy settings;
- outside normal working hours; and/or
- without using School's computers, systems and networks.

You may be required to remove content created or shared by you which the School deems to be in breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

If you are found to be in breach of the provisions of this policy, it will be treated as a disciplinary offence which may result in disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Policy.

As an alternative, Rosh Pinah Primary School may withdraw your access to social media platforms on its systems. If you are not an employee, breach of this policy may result in termination of the School's contract with you.

You are also reminded that, in certain circumstances, an act that breaches this policy may also constitute a criminal offence.

If, in the course of using social media, you become aware of any misconduct or wrongdoing by any employee, worker or agency staff of the School, you must report it to the Headteacher.

If you feel that you have been harassed or bullied because of material posted or uploaded by a colleague onto a social media platform you should inform the Headteacher.