




The Federation of Tiverton Schools

Tiverton High School

Social Media Policy

Status	Non-Statutory
Job title	
Nominated prime author:	Tiverton High School
Policy to be implemented by:	All Staff, Students and Parents
Version date:	3rd November 2021
Review period	
Date ratified:	10th November 2021
Signature of Co-Chair of Governors:	

Within this policy, the term 'Headteacher' includes 'Head of Primary' and 'Head of Secondary'. The term 'Deputy Head' includes 'Head of School'. The term "school" refers to ALL schools within The Federation of Tiverton Schools.

TIVERTON HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Agreed by the learning, Progress and Welfare Committee on 10th November 2021

The widespread use of social media applications brings opportunities to engage and communicate in new ways. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that the use of social media by Tiverton High School Community (staff, students and parents) is undertaken responsibly, and that the confidentiality of students and staff, and the reputation of the school, are safeguarded.

Statement of intent

This policy applies to all Tiverton High School students, staff, parents and the wider school community. It covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official school purposes including sites hosted and maintained on behalf of the school.

This policy applies to any electronic communication software, including those running on mobile devices such as social networking sites, blogs, microblogs, chatroom forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias, social bookmarking sites and content sharing sites.

It is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media hence the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium.

Principles

- The School Community should be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate. They should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between their school and personal interests.
- The School Community should not engage in activities which could bring Tiverton High School into disrepute.
- The School Community should not present their own views as those of the School on any public platform.
- The School Community must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame any person or organisation.

Related policies, guidance and expectations

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies and related documents, which can be found here: <https://tiverton.devon.sch.uk/policies/>. Those policies most closely associated with this policy include those around safeguarding, online safety, electronic device use, anti-bullying and behaviour.

Arrangements - staff use of social media

All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they believe them to be private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation.

- You should maintain proper professional boundaries with students, parents and carers when communicating electronically.
- You should always decline 'friend' requests and/or block follows from students that you receive in your personal social media accounts.
- You should not accept any contact from a former student of the school if under the age of 18.
- You should not have contact with a student's family members through personal social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest.
- You must confirm whether the school holds the permission from the parent/ carer / individual to use a photograph and /or name on any media which could lead to the image being shared more widely.
- You must not tag photographs of staff or students.
- You must not engage in posts or activities which may be detrimental to working relationships between staff.
- Assuming that permission has been gained, you must only post a photo on social media using a student's first name.
- When using a hyperlink in any social media you must check that the content is appropriate, especially if you are sharing it.
- You must not discuss personal information about other students, Tiverton High School and the wider community you interact with on any social media site.
- You should set your privacy settings on Facebook and other sites as strictly as possible, but be aware that unless your friends' settings are the same as yours, your posts may be seen more widely.
- You must keep passwords and other login information safe; remember to lock your work station/portable device when you leave it unattended.
- You must not use your school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- You must ensure all email communication between staff and members of the School and wider is made from and to official school email accounts.
- You must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Tiverton High School into disrepute.

- If you are aware of any inappropriate communications involving any student in a social media situation, you must report it to the Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead. In the event that they are both absent, concerns should be raised with the most senior member of staff in school.
- If there is any concern regarding issues relating to specific students, please consult with the Head of House in the first instance.

Arrangements - guidelines for students using social media

- Your online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that you use face to face.
- Your use of social media should be age appropriate e.g. only over 13s should be using Facebook.
- When posting comments or photos on social media channels ask yourself whether you would be happy for your parents or your future employer to read your posts.
- Provide as little information about yourself as possible; not providing your date of birth, mobile phone number, location or email address publicly will improve your online security.
- You should set your privacy settings on Facebook as strictly as possible, but be aware that unless your friends' settings are the same as yours, your posts may be seen more widely.
- Think carefully before engaging with strangers in 'open' environments, especially Twitter; be aware that 'protecting' your tweets will improve your online security.
- Do not attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' any member of staff on any social media sites.
- Do not tag or identify yourself (or other students) on Tiverton High School social media sites; even when using your own accounts, you should ask permission before tagging someone in a photo.
- Do not engage in any activities involving social media which might bring Tiverton High School into disrepute.
- Do not send or request any inappropriate or offensive images, including those of a personal nature.
- Do not engage in any abusive, threatening, unkind or bullying behaviour.
- Use of profanity or threatening language is not acceptable.
- Under no circumstances should negative comments be made about staff, parents or other students on social media sites.
- Tiverton High School reserves the right to monitor social media activity and if students are found contravening the guidelines then sanctions will be imposed, which may involve referral to other agencies, including the Police, where a crime may have been committed.

Arrangements - guidelines for Parents/Carers in regard to their children using social media

- The school will monitor, and where appropriate, moderate content and activity on Tiverton High School social media platforms.
- The school cannot be held responsible for improper use of social media by students.
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to monitor their child's activity on social media.

If you do not wish your child's name or photograph to be used in connection with the School's official social media platforms, website or PR, you must advise the school at the beginning of each school year.

Arrangements - guidelines for Parents/Carers using social media

Although social networking sites may appear to be the quickest and easiest ways to express frustrations or concerns, it is rarely appropriate to do so. Queries, concerns and complaints should be made to the school directly via telephone or email.

The school considers the following examples to be inappropriate uses of social networking sites.

- Making allegations about pupils at the School/cyber bullying.
- Making complaints about the School/staff at the School.
- Posting negative/offensive comments about specific pupils/staff at the School.
- Posting comments considered to be of national, racial, sexual or religious hatred.
- Posting comments which threaten violence.
- Posting comments that are likely to be divisive, offensive or inflammatory, such as overt political and social views, hate speech, terrorism and other illegal or immoral activities.

The School will always try to deal with concerns raised by parents in a professional and appropriate manner and understands that parents may not always realise when they have used social networking sites inappropriately. Therefore, as a first step, the School will usually discuss the matter with the parent to try and resolve the matter and to ask that the relevant information be removed from the social networking site in question. If the parent refuses to do this and continues to use social networking sites in a manner the School considers inappropriate, the School will consider taking the following action:

- Take legal advice and/or legal action where the information posted is defamatory in anyway or if the circumstance warrant this.
- Set out the School's concerns to you in writing, giving you a warning and requesting that the material in question is removed.
- Contact the Police where the school feels it appropriate – for example, if it considers crime (such as harassment) has been committed; or in cases where the posting has a racial or homophobic element, is considered to be grossly obscene or is threatening violence.

- Take other legal action against the individual.

Sanctioned use of social media

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum and to support student learning.

The school currently has an official website, as well as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube accounts and potentially other social sites. A limited number of staff and other agencies have administrator rights to post onto these sites. If you have any concerns about content you have viewed on school social media sites, you should contact the Head teacher.

When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff may set up a distinct and dedicated social media site or account for educational purposes and with the express approval of the Head teacher. This should be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff, and must be linked to an official school email account
- The web address and identity of the site should be notified to an appropriate member of the Leadership Team before access is permitted for students
- The content of any school-sanctioned social media site should be solely professional and should reflect well on the school
- Staff should not engage with any direct messaging of students through social media where the message is not public
- All social media accounts created for educational purposes should include a link in the page to this policy on the school website. This will indicate that the account is officially sanctioned by Tiverton High School.

While students and the wider school community are encouraged to interact with these social media sites they should do so with responsibility and respect.

Monitoring

Monitoring with regard to usage of internet, online content, online services and email services is already in place and will continue. This is carried out without prior notification or authorisation from users.

There should be no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the School's ICT systems.

Breaches of this policy

Any breach of this policy that leads to a breach of confidentiality, defamation or damage to the reputation of Tiverton High School or any illegal acts or acts that render Tiverton High School liable

to third parties may result in legal action, disciplinary action or sanctions in line with the School's policies.

Evaluation

Breaches of this policy will be reported as necessary to the Governors. The Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account the latest advice, good practice and technology available.

Handwritten signatures in green ink. The first signature is 'A. J. Lee' and the second is 'L. J. Smith'.

Signed.

Dated 12-10/21 Co-chairs of Governors

DRAFT