



Wildground Federation Social Media Policy

All children have the right to get information that is important to their well-being, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information children get is not harmful, and helps them find and understand the information they need. Article 17, UNCRC

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) is a broad term for any kind of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other. However some games, for example Minecraft or World of Warcraft and video sharing platforms such as You Tube have social media elements to them.

Wildground Federation recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. Staff, parents/carers and pupils are actively encouraged to find creative ways to use social media. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation. This policy aims to encourage the safe use of social media by Wildground Federation, its staff, parents, carers and children.

This policy is subject to the Federation's E-Safety and Acceptable Use of ICT Code of Conduct.

This policy:

- Applies to all staff and to all online communications which directly or indirectly, represent the Federation.
- Applies to such online communications posted at any time and from anywhere.
- Encourages the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education

The Federation respects privacy and understands that staff and pupils/students may use social media forums in their private lives. **However, personal communications likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or the Federation's reputation are within the scope of this policy.**

Professional communications are those made through official channels, posted on a Federation account or using the Federation name. All professional communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications are those made via a personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with the Federation or impacts on the Federation, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the Federation with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the Federation are outside the scope of this policy.

Roles & Responsibilities

- SLT
 - Facilitating training and guidance on Social Media use.
 - Developing and implementing the Social Media policy
 - Taking a lead role in investigating any reported incidents.
 - Making an initial assessment when an incident is reported and involving appropriate staff and external agencies as required.
 - Receive completed applications for Social Media accounts
 - Approve account creation
- Administrator / Moderator
 - Create the account following SLT approval
 - Store account details, including passwords securely
 - Be involved in monitoring and contributing to the account
 - Control the process for managing an account after the lead staff member has left the organisation (closing or transferring)
- Staff
 - Know the contents of and ensure that any use of social media is carried out in line with this and other relevant policies
 - Attending appropriate training
 - Regularly monitoring, updating and managing content he/she has posted via Federation accounts
 - Adding an appropriate disclaimer to personal accounts when naming the Federation

Process for creating new accounts

The Federation community is encouraged to consider if a social media account will help them in their work, e.g. a history department Twitter account, or a “Friends of the Federation” Facebook page. Anyone wishing to create such an account must present a business case to the Federation Leadership Team which covers the following points:

- The aim of the account
- The intended audience
- How the account will be promoted
- Who will run the account (at least two staff members should be named)
- Will the account be open or private/closed

Following consideration by the SLT an application will be approved or rejected. In all cases, the SLT must be satisfied that anyone running a social media account on behalf of the Federation has read and understood this policy and received appropriate training. This also applies to anyone who is not directly employed by the Federation, including volunteers or parents.

Monitoring

Federation accounts must be monitored regularly and frequently (preferably 7 days a week, including during holidays). Any comments, queries or complaints made through those accounts must be responded to within 24 hours (or on the next working day if received at a weekend) even if the response is only to acknowledge receipt. Regular monitoring and intervention is essential in case a situation arises where bullying or any other inappropriate behaviour arises on a Federation social media account.

Behaviour

- The Federation requires that all users using social media adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this policy and other relevant policies.
- Digital communications by staff must be professional and respectful at all times and in accordance with this policy. Staff will not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make ill-considered comments or judgments about staff. Federation social media accounts must not be used for personal gain. Staff must ensure that confidentiality is maintained on social media even after they leave the employment of the Federation.
- Users must declare who they are in social media posts or accounts. Anonymous posts are discouraged in relation to Federation activity.
- If a journalist makes contact about posts made using social media staff must follow the Federation media policy before responding.
- Unacceptable conduct, (e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by the Federation and will be reported as soon as possible to a relevant senior member of staff, and escalated where appropriate.
- The use of social media by staff while off duty at work may be monitored, in line with Federation policies. The Federation permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites. However, where excessive use is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken.
- The Federation will take appropriate action in the event of breaches of the social media policy. Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, the Federation will deal with the matter internally. Where conduct is considered illegal, the Federation will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies, and may take action according to the disciplinary policy.

Legal considerations

- Users of social media should consider the copyright of the content they are sharing and, where necessary, should seek permission from the copyright holder before sharing.
- Users must ensure that their use of social media does not infringe upon relevant data protection laws, or breach confidentiality.

Handling abuse

- When acting on behalf of the Federation, handle offensive comments swiftly and with sensitivity.
- If a conversation turns and becomes offensive or unacceptable, Federation users should block, report or delete other users or their comments/posts and should inform the audience exactly why the action was taken
- If you feel that you or someone else is subject to abuse by colleagues through use of a social networking site, then this action must be reported using the agreed Federation protocols.

Tone

The tone of content published on social media should be appropriate to the audience, whilst retaining appropriate levels of professional standards. Key words to consider when composing messages are:

- Engaging
- Conversational
- Informative
- Friendly (on certain platforms, e.g. Facebook)

Use of images

Federation use of images can be assumed to be acceptable, providing the following guidelines are strictly adhered to.

- Permission to use any photos or video recordings should be sought in line with the Federation's digital and video images procedures. If anyone, for any reason, asks not to be filmed or photographed then their wishes should be respected.
- Under no circumstances should staff share or upload student pictures online other than via Federation owned social media accounts
- Staff should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on Federation social media accounts. Students should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on any Federation list of children whose images must not be published.
- If a member of staff inadvertently takes a compromising picture which could be misconstrued or misused, they must delete it immediately and alert SLT.

Personal use

- Staff
 - Personal communications are those made via a personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with the Federation or impacts on the Federation, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the Federation with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.
 - Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the Federation are outside the scope of this policy.

- Where excessive personal use of social media in Federation is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken

Pupils

- Staff are not permitted to follow or engage with current or prior pupils/students (under 18) of the Federation on any personal social media network account.
 - The Federation's education programme should enable the pupils/students to be safe and responsible users of social media.
 - Pupils/students are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about the Federation. Any offensive or inappropriate comments will be resolved by the use of the Federation's behaviour policy
- Parents/Carers
 - If parents/carers have access to a Federation learning platform where posting or commenting is enabled, parents/carers will be informed about acceptable use.
 - The Federation has an active parent/carer education programme which supports the safe and positive use of social media. This includes information on the website.
 - Parents/Carers are encouraged to respond or post appropriately about the Federation. In the event of any offensive or inappropriate comments being made, the Federation will ask the parent/carer to remove the post and invite them to discuss the issues in person. If necessary, refer parents to the Federation's complaints procedures.

Monitoring posts about the Federation

- As part of active social media engagement, it is considered good practice to pro-actively monitor the Internet for public postings about the Federation.
- The Federation should effectively respond to social media comments made by others according to a defined policy or process.