



Social Media Policy For Education Establishment Staff

STONE HILL

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY:	MR P SCOTTING HEADTEACHER
APPROVED: PUPIL WELLBEING COMMITTEE	DATE: 20.02.24
SIGNED: MR M GALLAFENT	ROLE: CHAIR OF GOVERNORS
TO BE REVIEWED:	FEBRUARY 2025

This policy extends past school to Post 16 and will be reviewed in line with the changing curriculum and current needs of the pupils

Where in the policy it says Stone Hill School, we are referring to Stone Hill School and Post16.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to interact with one another, for example from rediscovering friends on social networking sites such as *Facebook* to keeping up with other people's lives on *Twitter* and maintaining pages on internet encyclopaedias such as *Wikipedia*.
- 1.2 While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that Stone Hill staff and contractors are expected to follow when using social media.
- 1.3 It is crucial that pupils, their family members and the public at large have confidence in the school's decisions and services. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that staff members use social media responsibly so that confidentiality of pupils and other staff and the reputation of the school and Doncaster Council are safeguarded.
- 1.4 Staff members must be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all teaching and other staff, whether employed by the Council or employed directly by the school, external contractors providing services on behalf of school or the Council, teacher trainees and other trainees, volunteers and other individuals who work for or provide services on behalf of the school. These individuals are collectively referred to as 'staff members' in this policy.
- 2.2 This policy 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. (see sections 5, 6, 7 and Appendices 1A and 1B).
- 2.3 This policy applies to personal web-space such as social networking sites (for example *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *LinkedIn*), blogs, microblogs, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as *Wikipedia*, social bookmarking sites such as *del.icio.us* and content sharing sites such as *Flickr* and *YouTube*. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media - the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium.

3 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 Stone Hill I is committed to ensuring that all staff members provide confidential services that meet the highest standards. All individuals working on behalf of the school are bound by a legal duty of confidence and other laws to protect the confidential information they have access to during the course of their work. Disclosure of confidential information on social media is likely to be a breach of a number of laws and professional codes of conduct, including:
 - the Human Rights Act 1998

- Common law duty of confidentiality,
- the Data Protection Act 2018, and
- GDPR 2018

3.2 Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

- Person-identifiable information, e.g. pupil and employee records and details protected by the Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR 2018)
- Information divulged in the expectation of confidentiality
- School or Council business or corporate records containing organisationally or publicly sensitive information
- Any commercially sensitive information such as information relating to commercial proposals or current negotiations, or personal details for staff, pupils or their family members and
- Politically sensitive information.

3.3 Staff members should also be aware that other laws relating to libel, defamation, harassment and copyright may apply to information posted on social media, including:

- Libel Act 1843
- Defamation Acts 1996 and 2013
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Malicious Communications Act 1998
- Communications Act 2003,
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and any updated laws and
- GDPR 2018

3.4 Stone Hill could be held vicariously responsible for acts of their employees in the course of their employment. For example, staff members who harass co-workers online or who engage in cyberbullying or discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, etc or who defame a third party while at work may render Stone Hill liable to the injured party.

4 RELATED POLICIES

4.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school and Council policies:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Governors Code of Conduct

5 PRINCIPLES – *BE PROFESSIONAL, RESPONSIBLE AND RESPECTFUL*

5.1 You must be conscious at all times of the need to keep your personal and professional lives separate. You should not put yourself in a position where there is a conflict between your work for the school or Council and your personal interests.

5.2 You must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Stone Hill or the Council into disrepute.

5.3 You must not represent your personal views as those of Stone Hill or the Council on any social media.

- 5.4 You must not discuss personal information about pupils, their family members; Stone Hill or Council staff and other professionals you interact with as part of your job on social media.
- 5.5 You must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations, Stone Hill or the Council. You should ensure at all times that you are not offensive, obscene, and discriminatory or harass others.
- 5.6 You must be accurate, fair and transparent when creating or altering online sources of information on behalf of Stone Hill or the Council.
- 5.7 You should ensure that you do not misuse confidential, sensitive or copyrighted information.

6 PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- 6.1 Staff should be aware that social network sites are not private and anything published on them is considered in the public domain. Your personal use of social media is not considered to be totally outside of the work domain and depending on your actions you may face disciplinary action at work for your personal use of social media.
- 6.2 Staff members must not identify themselves as employees of Stone Hill or service providers for the school or Council in their personal web-space. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and the Council and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, particularly those involved in providing sensitive frontline services.
- 6.3 Staff members must not have contact through any personal social medium with any pupil, whether from Stone Hill or any other education establishment, unless the pupils are family members. Staff members must decline 'friend requests' from pupils they receive in their personal social media accounts. If Staff Members receive such requests from pupils who are not family members, they must discuss these in general terms in class.
- 6.4 Stone Hill does not expect staff members to discontinue contact with their family members via personal social media once the school starts providing services for them. However, any information staff members obtain in the course of their employment must not be used for personal gain nor be passed on to others who may use it in such a way.
- 6.5 Staff members must not have any contact with pupils' family members through personal social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.
- 6.6 If staff members wish to communicate with pupils through social media sites or to enable pupils to keep in touch with one another, they can only do so with the approval of the school and through official school sites created according to the requirements specified in section 7 and Appendix 1A and 1B.
- 6.7 On leaving Stone Hill's service; staff members must not contact Stone Hill's pupils by means of personal social media sites. Similarly, staff members must not contact pupils from their former education establishments by means of personal social media.

- 6.8 Information school staff members have access to as part of their employment, including personal information about pupils and their family members, colleagues Council staff and other parties and school or Council corporate information must not be discussed on their personal web-space.
- 6.9 Photographs, videos or any other types of image of pupils and their families or images depicting staff members wearing school or Council uniforms or clothing with education establishment or Council logos or images identifying sensitive education establishment or Council premises (e.g. care homes, secure units) must not be published on personal web-space.
- 6.10 School or Council email addresses and other official contact details must not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- 6.11 Staff members must not edit open access online material including but not limited to online encyclopaedias such as *Wikipedia* in a personal capacity at work. This is because the source of the correction will be recorded as the employer's IP address and the intervention will, therefore, appear as if it comes from the employer itself.
- 6.12 Stone Hill or Council corporate, service or team logos or brands must not be used or published on personal web-space
- 6.13 Stone Hill does not allow access to social media while at work.
- 6.14 Caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be 'friends' in personal social networking sites. Social networking sites blur the line between work and personal lives and it may be difficult to maintain professional relationships or it might be just too embarrassing if too much personal information is known in the work place.
- 6.15 Staff members are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. Staff members should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online; it is not safe to reveal home addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information. It is a good idea to use a separate email address just for social networking so that any other contact details are not given away.

7 MONITORING OF INTERNET USE

- 7.1 Stone Hill monitors usage of its internet and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users.
- 7.2 Users of Stone Hill School's email and internet services should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the school's ICT system.

8 BREACHES OF THE POLICY

- 8.1 Any breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the staff member/s involved in line with Stone Hill or Council Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- 8.2.1 A breach of this policy leading to breaches of confidentiality, or defamation or damage to the reputation of Stone Hill or the Council or any illegal acts or acts that render Stone Hill or the Council liable to third parties may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

- 8.2.2 Contracted providers of Stone Hill or Council services must inform the relevant school or Council officer immediately of any breaches of this policy so that appropriate action can be taken to protect confidential information and limit the damage to the reputation of the school and the Council. Any action against breaches should be according to the school's internal disciplinary procedures.

Appendix 1a

STONE HILL SCHOOL

Staff ICT Acceptable Use Agreement

ICT and the related technologies such as email, the internet and mobile devices are an expected part of our daily working life in school. This agreement, along with Stone Hill School's staff policy on Social Media is designed to ensure that all staff are aware of their professional responsibilities when using any form of ICT. All staff are expected to sign this policy and adhere at all times to its contents. Any concerns or clarification should be discussed with Mr Thompson, school e-Safety coordinator.

- I will only use the school's email / Internet / Intranet / Learning Platform and any related technologies for professional purposes or for uses deemed 'reasonable' by the Head or Governing Body.
- I will comply with the ICT system security and not disclose any passwords provided to me by the school or other related authorities.
- I will ensure that all electronic communications with pupils and staff are compatible with my professional role.
- I will only use the approved, secure email system(s) for any school business.
- I will ensure that personal data (such as data held on SIMS) is kept secure and is used appropriately, whether in school, taken off the school premises or accessed remotely. Personal data can only be taken out of school or accessed remotely when authorised by the Head or Governing Body.
- I will not install any hardware or software without permission of the Network Manager.
- I will not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Images of pupils and/ or staff will only be taken, stored and used for professional purposes in line with school policy and with written consent of the parent, carer or staff member. Images will not be distributed outside the school network without the permission of the parent/ carer, member of staff or Headteacher.
- I understand that all my use of the Internet and other related technologies can be monitored and logged and can be made available, on request, to my Line Manager or Headteacher.
- I will respect copyright and intellectual property rights.
- I will ensure that my online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring my professional role into disrepute.
- I will support and promote the school's e-Safety policy and help pupils to be safe and responsible in their use of ICT and related technologies.

School Equipment

- I accept that when school lap-tops, digital cameras etc. are taken home I must sign the appropriate form and adhere to the conditions specified.

User Signature

I have read and understood the above statements. I agree to comply with Stone Hill School's rules for use of ICT facilities and Internet use. I understand that failure to comply could result in the loss of my access rights. In addition, if the school suspects their system is being used for criminal purposes or for storing unlawful material, the matter could be brought to the attention of the relevant law enforcement authorities.

I agree to follow this code of conduct and to support the safe use of ICT throughout the school:

Signature Date

Full Name (printed)












Job title

Appendix 1b

STONE HILL SCHOOL

Visitor - ICT Acceptable Use Agreement

This agreement is designed to ensure that all visitors are aware of their personal and professional responsibilities when using any form of ICT in Stone Hill School.

-  I will respect the access the school has provided to me. I will only use email, Internet, Intranet, Learning Platform and any other related technologies for professional purposes and for uses deemed 'reasonable' by the Head or Governing Body.
-  I will not attempt to breach security or log on as another individual. I will not disclose any passwords provided to me by the school or other related authorities.
-  I take responsibility for my own use of technology. I will ensure that personal data (such as data held on SIMS) is kept secure and is used appropriately. Personal data can only be taken out of school or accessed remotely when authorised by the Head or Governing Body.
-  I will not attempt to change any settings nor install any hardware or software without permission of the Network Manager.
-  I will not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
-  Images of pupils and/ or staff will only be taken, stored and used for professional purposes online with school policy and with the written consent of the parent, carer or staff member.
-  Images will not be distributed outside the school network without the permission of the parent/ carer, member of staff or the Headteacher.
-  I understand that all my use of the Internet and other related technologies can be monitored and logged and can be made available, on request, to the Headteacher.
-  I will respect copyright and intellectual property rights.
-  I will ensure that my online activity in school will not bring my professional role or Stone Hill School into disrepute.
-  I will immediately report any illegal, inappropriate or harmful material I become aware of to a member of staff or the e-safety co-ordinator.

I have read and understood the above statements. I agree to comply with Stone Hill School's rules for use of ICT facilities and Internet use. I understand that failure to comply could result in the loss of my access rights. In addition, if the school suspects their system is being used for criminal purposes or for storing unlawful material, the matter could be brought to the attention of the relevant law enforcement authorities.

Signature Date

Full Name (printed)

Job title

