



# Social media policy

## April 2018

### Office use

<b>Published:</b> April 2018	<b>Next review:</b> April 2019	<b>Statutory/non:</b> Non-statutory	<b>Lead:</b> Victoria Williams, Head of Marketing and Communications
<b>Associated documents:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICT acceptable use of computers and internet policy</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photography and videography policy</li> <li>Communications policy</li> </ul>	
<b>Links to:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Protection Act 1998 (up to 25 May 2018)</li> <li>General Data Protection Regulation (from 25 May 2018)</li> </ul>			

## Contents

1	Policy statement .....	3
2	The role of social media in our trust .....	3
3	Expected standards of behaviour and conduct.....	4
4	Management, moderation and measurement.....	5
5	Social media as a teaching and learning tool .....	7
6	Intellectual property rights .....	7
7	Branding and tone of voice .....	7
8	Review of the policy .....	8

## **1 Policy statement**

1.1 This policy applies to all Diverse Academies Trust and National Church of England Academy Trust employees – collectively known as the Diverse Academies Learning Partnership (the ‘trust’ or ‘organisation’) – and associated governors, trustees and volunteers.

1.2 In line with the trust’s communication policy, social media – amongst a range of channels – is accepted and embraced as a key communications tool. Social media provides a route through which the trust can positively share stories, connect and engage with stakeholders, in a place where they are. It has a role in supporting:

- Building affinity and customer service – offering additional channels to interact with and engage trust and academy audiences
- Publishing content – extending the reach of messages and assisting in enhancing relationships with stakeholders
- Crisis communications – providing instant communications in urgent, emergency or disaster situations, in addition or as an alternative to other channels

1.3 This policy is concerned with ensuring that the trust operates within current legislation and adopts best practice as regards to the establishment, development and management of its ‘official’ social media presence. For the purposes of this policy, ‘official’ is defined as content posted on an approved trust/academy account or an approved account which uses the trust and/or a trust academy name. All such professional communications are within the scope of this policy.

1.4 This policy does not explicitly extend to the use of personal social media accounts by employees, governors, trustees and volunteers. However, this policy should be read in conjunction with all other relevant policies, in particular the ICT acceptable use policy and the communications policy, the latter of which states: *‘All staff are accountable and have a vicarious responsibility as a representative of the organisation’*.

1.5 The protection of our children and young people is paramount. This policy sets out the framework within which the trust operates to ensure – within the parameters of a given platform – the safe, secure and appropriate use of social media.

1.5 It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to this policy.

## **2 The role of social media in our trust**

2.1 Social media is used to raise awareness and share information which promotes and celebrates the many achievements and activities of the trust, including:

- publishing news stories and announcements
- showcasing the trust’s personality, values, beliefs and successes

- encouraging parent/carer engagement through academy focused content
- listing events, meetings and staff/teacher trainee vacancies

Social media offers an additional route through which the views of trust stakeholders can be listened to. It can also play an important role in supporting communications within local academy communities, however trust accounts are not considered 'community forums' per se.

2.2 A range of social media platforms are used across the trust, and which include, subject to change and are not limited to:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- YouTube
- LinkedIn

2.3 As with all digital media, social channels are constantly evolving. The trust recognises that it is important to keep abreast of consumer trends, to be open minded to the benefits and risks of social platforms, and to consider the potential value of such tools and techniques in fostering and improving stakeholder communications.

### **3 Expected standards of behaviour and conduct**

3.1 As with all web publishing tools, the trust is mindful of its legal obligations and the responsibility it has to protect both the trust's reputation and the safety of its staff and students. As a result, the following must be adhered to:

- No personal data pertaining to a student or staff member, including full names, contact details or links to personal social media accounts, should be included in social media content.
- Social media content should not directly include any information which identifies a child or where they live. However, social media content may link to a trust or third party website where children may be photographed and named if consent has been given.

3.2 The trust's reputation must be maintained at all times. Communications on social media must be professional and respectful and in accordance with this policy. The use of social media must not infringe on the rights or privacy of individuals. The trust will not accept any form of bullying or harassment of or by members of staff or students.

3.3 Social media content must not refer to or include information that is in conflict with the trust's interests, nor be in any way inconsistent with an individual's contractual duties to the trust or in pursuance of unauthorised commercial activities.

3.4 The following non-exhaustive list may, according to the circumstances, be considered unacceptable and should never be posted:

- confidential information about the trust, its academies and any associated entities
- business strategy, intellectual property or plans for development
- details of legal proceedings/potential legal proceedings involving the trust
- promotions relating to a commercial product
- content that is threatening, harassing, discriminatory, illegal, obscene, indecent, defamatory or hostile towards any individual or entity
- any posting that constitutes a criminal offence
- anything which may bring the trust into disrepute or compromise the safety or reputation of staff, former members of staff, students and those connected with the trust

## **4 Management, moderation and measurement**

### **4.1 Management**

4.1.1 All social media accounts must be approved by a senior member of staff. Each account should have a member of staff clearly identified as holding overall responsibility for content publication, moderation and enquiry handling. Where account management is shared or delegated, this must be done so within clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and to suitably trained staff.

4.1.2 Each social media account must, as a minimum, have one day to day administrator and/or two editors with full access rights. One of the editors should have designated overall responsibility, and is expected to maintain a secure record of the account username and password (where applicable). In the event of the account editor, or any other member of staff with access to the account, leaving the organisation or changing roles, it is the editor's responsibility to ensure (as appropriate):

- the transfer of management
- the removal of account access
- account closure

4.1.3 Staff must be aware that some social media platforms, such as Facebook, invite increased user dialogue. As a result, staff must be prepared to answer questions and respond to comments in a timely and professional manner.

## 4.2 Communicating with students

All social media accounts have age restrictions. Where students under the accepted age threshold are identified as having created an [illegal] account, they can be blocked from engaging with a trust social media account i.e. they won't be able to 'like', comment or share.

## 4.3 Content publication and moderation

4.3.1 All social media channels should be monitored weekdays during office hours and in term-time. The trust cannot ensure comments will be viewed during evenings, weekends or during school and public holidays. Account 'notices' should be used where possible to inform users of the limitations of account moderation.

4.3.2 The trust will not respond to all comments posted on its various social media platforms. However, the trust will always aim to provide a response in the following circumstances:

- Where there is a wider opportunity to raise awareness or inform
- When addressing a theme of multiple comments, or a complaint or concern
- When maintaining or protecting the reputation of the trust

Where a response is considered appropriate, the trust will aim to reply within 24 hours (or on the next working day). As a minimum this should be an acknowledgement of the enquiry, even if the matter cannot be resolved at that time or in that channel.

4.3.3 Social media content should be planned and approved prior to publication by the designated editors. A 'customer' focused approach should be adopted, with the aim of creating content people want to read, talk about and share – and for which parameters for success and clear 'calls to action' are agreed at the onset, to maximise impact.

4.3.4 Public contributors are subject to moderation and any of the following types of content will be deleted:

- Abusive, racist, sexist, homophobic or inflammatory comments
- Comments considered by the trust to be spam or inappropriate
- Personal information about an individual, including contact information
- Posts that identify individual student or staff members
- Posts that advertise commercial activity or ask for donations

Profanity filters are used where available and block unacceptable, obscene and offensive language. Public contributors who fall below the expected standards of behaviour and conduct will be blocked. Furthermore, where appropriate and if the platform allows, contributors will not be allowed to tag or post any images or videos directly to the page.

## **4.5 Measurement**

For some social media accounts, the trust uses tools and software packages to assess information on audience insights and ad performance. The aim of this is to enhance content outputs and more effectively engage with audiences.

## **5 Social media as a teaching and learning tool**

5.1 Social media can enhance teaching and learning, and enable effective approaches to supporting student engagement. Where staff use social media as a teaching and learning tool, this should be done in the context and spirit of this policy.

5.2 Staff should safely explore and develop ways in which social media and social networks can be used to enrich teaching practices, whilst being mindful that social networks are often open and public. Careful consideration should be given to the appropriate use of social media, and measures taken to ensure the expected standards of behaviour are observed by staff and students at all times.

Staff should assess the risks to privacy, and students should be advised about the privacy of the information they share. Ideally, students should have a choice, or be consulted about it. The use of closed groups should only be adopted in exceptional circumstances, and where at least two members of staff have access and visibility of interactions, in line with all other relevant safeguarding measures.

## **6 Intellectual property rights**

6.1 All staff must ensure that they have permission to share any third party content, including all images, photographs, text and videos, before uploading or linking to them via social media. Where sharing is permitted, staff should ensure that such content or shared links are credited appropriately.

6.2 All staff must check the terms and conditions of a social media account before uploading content to it. By posting material to social media accounts, ownership rights and control of content may be released. Caution should be exercised in sharing all information.

6.3 The trust is not responsible for, nor does it hold any ownership, of any content posted by its staff, other than content posted by staff using official trust accounts, or in the course of their duties, as a form of professional communication.

## **7 Branding and tone of voice**

7.1 The trust's branding, and that of its academies and other entities, should be used in accordance with the relevant brand guidelines.

7.2 The use of Plain English principles are favoured by the trust i.e. that content is written appropriately for the intended audience and in a manner which easily gets the message across in a succinct and friendly way.

7.3 Social media is considered 'personal space' and the tone of voice adopted should be appropriate to the channel and the audience. In general, the trust a conversational, friendly, positive, enthusiastic and professional tone is used on trust social media platforms.

## **8 Review of the policy**

This policy will be reviewed in April 2019.