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*'Together, we believe, achieve & succeed'*



# Social Media Policy

## 2023/24

Signed: *Per Short*

Date: 05.10.2023

Review Date: Summer '24



# Social Media Policy



Schools

**SUGGESTED BY** NPTCBC HR

**DATE** September  
2012

**EDITION/VERSION**

**REVIEW DATE**

*Os hoffech dderbyn gohebiaeth mewn perthynas â'ch cyflogaeth yn Gymraeg, [cysylltwch â'ch Swyddog AD dynodedig.](#)*

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## 1. DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media refers to the use of web based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Social media allows users to interact with each other in some way, by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. Some examples of Social media platforms include: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, My Space, You Tube, Bebo, and other blogs and content sharing websites.

## 2. EMPLOYEES COVERED BY THE PROCEDURE

This Social Media Policy applies to all employees of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council governed by NJC Local Government Services conditions of service and school based employees.

## 3. ACCESSIBILITY

A copy of this Policy and Procedure will be made available on the intranet and employees can also request a copy from their line manager.

## 4. THE AIM OF THE POLICY

4.1 The aim of this policy is to protect and promote the reputation of NPTCBC, its services and its employees, by providing a framework for the safe and effective use of social media to promote and develop the Council's vision and services.

4.2 In addition to this framework, employees should also refer to the Social Media Guidelines which give advice and information on using social media as an employee of the Council.

4.3 This policy also provides guidance to employees when using Social Media for personal use.

## 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 **Heads of Service/Chair of Governors** – Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the Head of Service / Chair of Governors.

5.2 **Accountable Manager/Headteacher** - Responsibility for ensuring that business cases for social media use are agreed prior to any employee using an Authority branded social media application. It is a key responsibility to ensure that all employees using an Authority branded social media site as part of their work duties even on an observational basis only, attend the social media training provided by the Council.

5.3 **Communications and Marketing Team/Headteacher** - Responsibility for the Social Media Users Database, and responsible for providing training and advice and support on behalf of the Council.

5.4 **Employees** - Responsibility of ensuring compliance with this policy.

## 6. USING SOCIAL MEDIA ON BEHALF OF NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

- 6.1 When employees need to use social media tools for NPTCBC business they should ensure that they have the appropriate authorisation, please see appendix A.
- 6.2 Authorised Users must not discuss meetings or matters that are private, confidential or internal to the authority/School.
- 6.3 Authorised Users must carefully consider the implications of referring to customers, partners, pupils or suppliers of the Council/School and approval should be sought where appropriate.
- 6.4 Any posts made on social media should respect copyright and be consistent with the relevant legislation and rules. This includes The Data Protection Act 1998 and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003, ASA CAP code and the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. It is the Authorised User's responsibility to ensure they are familiar with how these apply to the professional use of social media. If in doubt, the Authorised User should consult his / her line manager/Headteacher or the HR Section.
- 6.5 Authorised Users must not breach the Council's Disciplinary, Equal Opportunities, Code of Conduct or Bullying and Harassment policies. (links to relevant policies inserted here)
- 6.6 The Council will monitor the use of social networking sites to ensure that any use by employees complies with its Internet Policy. (Please refer to the Council's Internet Usage Policy for further details) (link to policy)
- 6.7 Employees will be held personally responsible for any unauthorised, inappropriate or illegal use of social networking sites when in a work capacity.

## 7. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- 7.1 Social Networking sites must not be accessed during working hours for personal use. Employees should note that this includes mobile phone and other internet enabled products e.g., tablets, mp3 etc. It is the responsibility of Directorate Management/Headteacher to ensure that all Internet users comply with the policies contained within this document. In addition, Internal Audit will, from time to time, undertake monitoring and investigation activities. The I.T. Division will also undertake investigations at a Corporate Director's/Chair of Governors request.
- 7.2. Employees must not use the Council/School's logo on personal web pages, reveal information which is confidential to the Council/School, or include contact details or photographs of service users/pupils or staff. Employees should exercise caution in relation to photographs of friends who are also colleagues.
- 7.3 Employees are advised against accepting direct service users, pupils, parents or previous service users, pupils or parents as contacts or friends on social networking sites. If instant messaging and other social networking sites are to be used with pupils or service users a separate approved account should be set up for this purpose, with the agreement of the Head of Service or Headteacher. This agreement must be formally recorded by the Head of Service or Headteacher
- 7.4 Employees should ensure they use appropriate privacy settings and be aware of the information being shared and with whom information is being shared with by adjusting their security settings accordingly.
- 7.5 Employees should consider the content of information on personal social media accounts. Online conduct is not considered to be any different to offline conduct but should also consider that the content of discussions could be accessed by the general public. Therefore, employees must ensure that the content does not breach the Council's/School's Disciplinary Policy / Code of Conduct.
- 7.6 Under no circumstances should offensive or discriminatory comments be made at any time about the Council/School, Members, Service Users or colleagues on the internet / social networking sites. Please refer to the Bullying and Harassment Policy as this may be deemed a disciplinary offence.
- 7.7 Employees identified as working for the Council/School must act reasonably and responsibly at all times and uphold the reputation of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council/School. Work related issues should not be discussed on the internet / social networking sites even when the issue is anonymised.
- 7.8 The Council/School does not look at private social media sites which are accessed outside of work as a matter of course, neither at the postings or photographs, however if a matter was raised to management/Headteacher it would be investigated.

7.9 Please note that the following policies may apply whilst using Social Media;

- Disciplinary
- Code of Conduct
- Bullying & Harassment
- Grievance
- Internet usage (links to policies inserted)

This list is not exhaustive.

## 8. EFFECT OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA ON EMPLOYEES

Should employees view a comment/status from another person that they believe is untrue or defamatory towards their position or the Council/School, they must contact their manager/Headteacher and, if appropriate, the Communications and Marketing Team. **The Authority may consider taking measures or actions against the person or may provide support to an employee considering a personal action against the person**

## 9. TRAINING

9.1 Employees will be provided with this policy as part of their induction programme.

9.2 Appropriate training will be provided to employees who will be using Social Media on behalf of the Council. (School employees to contact Headteacher)

## 10. REVIEW

This policy will be the subject of periodic review.

## Appendix A

### Procedure for Authorised Users

- 1.1 To contribute to an existing social media site: Before any Authorised User posts any images/video/audio files, they must ensure they are in possession of the appropriate and correctly filled in consent/material release forms available from the Communications and Marketing Team/Headteacher.
- 1.2 To set up a new social media account:  
A business case form (link to form) must be submitted to the Communications and Marketing Team/Headteacher, which will assess the application and seek approval from the Head of Service/Headteacher.
- 1.3 Prior to using social media tools on behalf of NPTCBC employees should ensure that they have received appropriate training and are registered on the approved social media user list held by the Communications and Marketing Team/Headteacher. They will then be designated as an Authorised User.

- 1.4 When using social media sites as a spokesperson on behalf of the Council/School, Authorised Users must identify themselves as being an employee of the Council/School.
- 1.5 Authorised Users should be aware that content on social media websites may be subject to Freedom of Information Requests. For guidance in relation to Freedom of Information requests please contact Legal Services.
- 1.6 When individuals from partner organisations are contributing and acting on behalf of NPTCBC using the Authority branded social media they will also be expected to comply with the relevant Council/School Policies.
- 1.7 Authorised Users must only use @npt.gov.uk email address (or that of their own reputable organisation if they are not employed by the Council/School) for user accounts which will be used for official Council/School purposes.
- 1.8 Authorised Users must alert their line manager and the Communications and Marketing Team/Headteacher if any incorrect or inappropriate information is submitted/viewed at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.9 If employees leave the authority or change roles and will no longer be using social media sites on behalf of the Council/School, they are to inform the Communications and Marketing Team prior to their departure.

## **Appendix B**

### **Guidance Note for Schools**

This guidance note applies to all Blaenbaglan Primary School staff, whether employed by the Authority or employed directly by the school.

#### **Guidance/protection for staff on using social networking**

Other users could post a photo on your profile in which you are named, so think about any photos you appear in. On Facebook, you can 'untag' yourself from a photo. If you do find inappropriate references to you and/or images of you posted by a 'friend' online you should contact them and the site to have the material removed.

Staff members should decline 'friend requests' from pupils they receive in their personal social media accounts. Instead, if they receive such requests from pupils who are not family members, they must discuss these in general terms in class and signpost pupils to become 'friends' of the official school site.

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.

**We recommend for Personal Use of Social Media you should not;**

- Request access to a pupil's area on the social networking site.
- Interact with any ex-pupil in the school on social networking sites who is under the age of 18
- Discuss personal information about pupils/your employer/colleagues, or make disparaging remarks. Doing this in the presence of others may be deemed as bullying and/or harassment.
- Accept friend requests from a person you believe to be a parent at your school.
- Put yourself in a position where there is a conflict between your work for the school or Authority and your personal interests.
- Represent your personal views as those of the school or the Authority on any social medium.
- Have contact e.g., messaging through any personal social medium with any pupil, whether from the school or any other school, unless the pupils are family members – this information must be disclosed to the Headteacher.
- Post Photographs, videos or any other types of image of pupils and their families or images depicting staff members wearing school or Authority uniforms or clothing with school or Authority logos or images identifying sensitive school or Authority premises must not be published on personal webspace.
- School or Authority email addresses and other official contact details must not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- Social Networking sites must not be accessed during working hours for personal use

**Staff should be aware that the following breaches of policy may result in disciplinary action or dismissal;**

- Out-of-work activity which may cause potential embarrassment for the school or Authority or detrimentally effects the School/ Authority's reputation.
- Confidentiality, or defamation or damage to the reputation of the school or the Authority or any illegal acts or acts that render the school or the Authority liable to third parties may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

# Employee Declaration – Social Media Policy



Schools

Appendix C

Employee Declaration – Social Media Policy			
I, _____ (PRINT NAME)			
Employed by, _____ (NAME OF EMPLOYER)			
_____ _____ _____ (ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER)			
Declare that I have received a copy of the above mentioned Social Media policy & Guidance Note and;			
			Tick
I have read it			
I understand it			
I agree to work according to those conditions and provisions			
Signed (Employee)		Date	
Signed (Witness)		Date	

**The COPY of this page MUST be completed and returned to the office**