SEGHILL FIRST SCHOOL
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

In keeping with Seghill First School's other policies and procedures, this document is issued for guidance and is not intended to have contractual effect. Seghill First School reserves the right to vary, amend or depart from the contents of this policy from time to time in appropriate circumstances.

1.0 Policy

Seghill First School recognises and accepts that its staff may keep personal blogs on the internet and that social networking sites, such as Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), are a useful way of interacting socially with colleagues and friends.

While Seghill First School does not wish to discourage staff from accessing such sites on the internet, and will not infringe upon employee privacy rights, it expects certain standards of conduct to be observed to protect the school, its staff, governors and partners from the dangers of inappropriate use.

The purpose of this policy and guidance is to set out how the school expects social network users to behave when using social networking for personal and/or business use.

The absence or lack of explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy. Where no policy or guideline exists, staff should use their professional judgment and take the most prudent action possible. Staff should consult with the Headteacher, if uncertain.

It should be noted that this policy also applies to conduct outside of working hours and away from school premises.

Seghill First School will not tolerate any form of online bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination and victimisation against staff, including by or against someone who is not a member of staff, but who the member of staff comes into contact with, in connection with work (a third party).

2.0 Scope

The social media policy applies to all employees, workers and volunteers of Seghill First School.

The policy includes the use of the internet, emails, tablets, computers, smart phones, and networking websites.

The policy covers media used by staff on the internet and includes networking sites such as, Facebook, X and LinkedIn, as well as blogs, forums, message boards, review sites and online polls.

3.0 Definitions

Employee: full time, part time, permanent and temporary teachers and support staff who undertake to do work under an employment contract for Seghill First School personally. Employees are entitled to a wide range of employment rights.

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Worker: full time, part time, permanent, temporary individuals who undertake to do, or perform personally, work or a service for Seghill First School, whether under a contract of employment or any other contract for a reward. 'Worker' includes agency workers, casual workers, but normally excludes those who are self-employed and work that is part of a client or customer relationship. Workers are entitled to some employment rights, including holiday pay and protection against unlawful discrimination.

Volunteer: individuals who willingly, without being required to, carry out unpaid work for Seghill First School.

Staff: employees, workers and volunteers.

Social Media: interactive, web-based media used, for example, on computers, tablets, and smart phones, which allow people to interact and keep in touch with others in a public forum. Social media allows people to share information, ideas, opinions, knowledge, interests and views online. Examples of social media includes blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, online social forums, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, networking sites, video- and image-sharing websites and similar sites and services which allow users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.

Cyberbullying/Cyberharassment: the use of electronic communication to bully or harass a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature. This can include posting rumours about a person, threats, sexual remarks, disclosing personal information or hate speech.

Bullying: offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power through means which undermine, disrespect, frighten, humiliate, insult, intimidate, threaten or cause physical or emotional harm to someone.

Harassment: unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Discrimination: treating someone less favorably than another person because of a protected characteristic that they have.

4.0 Principles

Staff using social networking sites will ensure that they comply with the school's duty to safeguard children and young people at all times.

Staff are encouraged to achieve the highest possible standards of personal behaviour and conduct.

Staff have chosen to work in the public sector and in choosing to do so, have accepted that:

- their conduct will be of the highest possible standard, both inside and outside of work;
- they have the public trust to uphold; and
- they will be held to account for their conduct by the public.

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A member of staff's off-duty hours are their own personal concern. However, each member of staff has a duty to ensure their conduct outside of work does not put them in a position where there is conflict between work responsibilities, and their personal interests and their conduct does not bring into question their suitability to work with children.

5.0 Responsibility

5.1 Governing Body

The governing body has responsibility for adopting, developing and reviewing this policy and ensuring that effective monitoring systems and procedures are in place.

The governing body has delegated authority to the headteacher, to make decisions in relation to social media.

5.2 Headteacher

The headteacher will:

- understand clearly this social media policy and ensure that it is communicated to all staff;
- support staff in their use of social media and ensure staff who use social media for work-related purposes receive appropriate training.

5.3 Staff

All staff will:

- Be responsible for what they write on social media and must exercise good judgment and common sense. Staff must refrain from comments that can be interpreted as slurs, demeaning, inflammatory, etc and must not publish any views which are racist, sexist or narrow-minded.
- Staff should always consider carefully before publishing any comment online and consider how comments may reflect on Seghill First School.
- Good judgment is paramount.
- fully understand and comply with this social media policy.

5.4 Responsibility for this policy lies with the headteacher who has responsibility for social media procedures and should ensure that the staff are fully aware of their responsibilities under social media.

6.0 Expected Staff Behaviour

Seghill First School's safeguarding policies and procedures and staff code of conduct must be followed in conjunction with this policy.

Staff using social networking sites for personal use must not:

- Give their personal contact details to pupils/students people for example, e-mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web based identities or initiate or make arrangements to contact pupils/students through social networking sites.
- Accept approaches made by children or parents to make contact through personal social networking sites.
- Post any information about pupils/students, colleagues, parents, governors/trustees or other partners within the school community.

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- Behave in a manner which would be regarded as bullying or harassment, including sexual harassment (cyberbullying), including in appropriate t emails, text messages or messages via other social media.
- Spread sexual or, other, rumours about a person, or sending sexually explicit emails, text messages or messages via other social media.
- Use the information on any sites in a manner, which may be interpreted as discriminatory or of an otherwise offensive, derogatory or defamatory nature.
- Use social networking sites for personal use during working time.
- Use a computer belonging to Seghill First School to access social media for personal use.
- Use a work e-mail address registering for, or posting on, social websites.
- Post material that is inappropriate or harmful to school, its pupils/students, governors/trustees and other partners.
- Bring the school into disrepute or criticise or damage the reputation of Seghill First School or individuals of the organisation.
- Disclose confidential or sensitive matters or data relating to the school.
- Expose Seghill First School to libel, copyright, data protection and other legal risks.
- Reference or cite Seghill First School or post any personal information about pupils/students, colleagues, parents, governors or other partners within the school community.
- Use Seghill First School's logos and trademarks. Plagiarism applies online as well as in print.
- Where staff may be identified through social media that they work at the school staff should ensure that any information posted is the member of staff's personal opinion, and not use the name of the school to promote personal or political opinions.

Staff using social networking sites for personal use must:

- Ensure that they comply with the school's duty to safeguard children and young people at all times, dignity at work policy and procedure, the code of conduct and all other relevant school's policies and procedures.
- Be honest and respectful when using social media. Everything posted on social media may be tracked back to the source so staff must ensure content posted on social media accounts, both in a work and personal capacity, fits with their role of a member of school staff, working with children.
- Ensure that they understand the implications of any privacy settings on any social networking sites they use and that they read the full terms and conditions for using the site(s).
- Respect copyright laws, and always reference or cite sources appropriately.
- Be aware that blogs may create documents which the Courts can order to be disclosed for use in litigation. Consequently, staff will be assumed to have written any contentious items, unless they can provide definitively that they have not done so.

Staff who are unsure about whether a blog, tweet, post, comment, or photo is acceptable, should always consult his/her the headteacher. Staff must inform his/her headteacher of any blogs to which he/she regularly contributes

7.0 Seghill First School's Social Networking Site(s) and Work Related Blogging

Where a member of staff has been authorised by the headteacher to contribute to social networking site(s) owned by Seghill First School (e.g. Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, Linkedin), any postings must be in line with this policy.

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Staff must be aware that while contributing to the school's social media activities, they are posting the views of the school and should not contribute personal views.

When using social media in reference to school, staff must:

- understand and adhere to the school's staff code of conduct and other relevant school policies;
- ensure the communication has a purpose and a benefit for the school;
- obtain permission from the headteacher before embarking on a public campaign using social media; and
- obtain permission from the headteacher before images of individuals are posted.

Any communications that staff make on behalf of school through social media must not breach confidentiality for example provide information about:

- intellectual property or information owned by the school or;
- an individual including a pupil/student, colleague, governor/trustee or school partnernship contact; or
- the school 's internal workings (such future plans that are not yet in the public domain.

If there are questions about what is considered confidential, staff should check with the headteacher.

Social media communication may generate media attention. Staff should refer these enquiries to the headteacher.

8.0 Inappropriate Use of Social Media

If a member of staff is found to have used social media and/or social networking in an inappropriate manner, disciplinary action may be taken. This could include dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct, depending on the nature and severity of the offence under the school's disciplinary policy and procedure.

Examples of inappropriate use of social media includes including using social medical to post comments which could be regarded as:

- offensive or derogatory;
- discriminatory;
- bullying or harassment, including sexual harassment, (cyberbullying);
- bringing the school into disrepute;
- in breach of school copyright;
- in breach of school confidentiality;

This list is not exhaustive.

9.0 Third Party Harassment via Social Media

Third party harassment occurs when a member of staff is subjected to harassment by someone who is not a member of staff, but who the member of staff comes into contact with, in connection with work. This includes parents, pupils/students, suppliers, contractors and members of the public.

Staff who have concerns that they are being harassed on social medial by a third party should notify the headteacher. Further information is available in the dignity at work policy and

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procedure. Any complaints of third party harassment will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

Should a third party harass, including sexually harass, a member of staff, via social media, they will be warned that continued provision of the school's service to them will cease if they are to act in a similar way again. Should their behaviour recur, they will be informed that the school's service to them will cease. Any criminal acts will be reported to the police.

10.0 Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the headteacher. Where there are issues with the way the policy and/or procedure are working, these will be looked at closely with a view to identifying measures to improve their effectiveness.

Document Record

Version	**Reason for Amendments/Update/Review**	**Date of Adoption by** Seghill First School	**Date of next review**
1.0	New policy and procedure provided by debbiejuddhr.		
1.1	Added trust to list of organisations Section 1.0: Added text at paragraph 2. Section 6.0: Added to bullet point 7.		
1.2	Section 2.0: third paragraph added. Section 4.0: original bullet points incorporated into section 6.0. Section 4.0: new paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 added. Updated to reflect the employer's duty to prevent sexual harassment under the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2020) Act 2023: Section 1.0 (final paragraph added); Section 3.0 (final 3 paragraphs added); Section 6.0 (bullet points 4 and 5 added); Section 8.0 (amended third bullet point). Section 9.0 (new section added).		
1.3	Policy reviewed and no changes made to the model policy provided by Debbie Judd HR. Personalised for our school.	November 2026	November 2027

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