Creating Tomorrow Trust
Social Media Policy 2026

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to set out obligations on the part of Creating Tomorrow Academies staff regarding the acceptable use of Social Media. It also includes guidance about steps the Trust may take to ensure compliance with this policy.

Complied by: Comms&MarkBP & ITBP	**Date:** Jul 26/Oct 26
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Wellbeing in our Trust

The responsibility for managing using Social Media can be challenging and so this document aims to set out procedures to be followed to minimize what can be difficult process.

We are all affected by poor physical and mental health at times during our lives and it is important the appropriate support is available in a timely manner.

Health and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility and we encourage an open and honest culture whereby anyone can discuss any issues they may have.

The Trustees of Creating Tomorrow take the health and wellbeing of all employees seriously and are committed to supporting our staff. The Trustees ensure that support for staff is available through:

- Effective line management
- Commitment to reducing workload
- Supportive and professional working environments
- Employee support programs
    - The Teacher Support Line telephone number 08000 562561 or website www.teachersupport.info

Related policies and guidance:

- Safeguarding and Child protection policy
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Staff code of conduct
- School/college behaviour or relationship policy
- Mobile phone use policy
- E-safety policy
- Trustee and Governor code of conduct
- Data Protection Policy
- Information Security Policy

Creating Tomorrow Trust

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1. Purpose and scope

1.1 This policy aims to:

- Set guidelines and rules on the use of trust, school and college social media channels
- Establish clear expectations for the way members of the trust, school and college community engage with each other online
- Safeguard and protect pupils and staff
- Support the trust, school and college policies on data protection, online safety and safeguarding
- Ensure that the reputation of the Trust is protected
- Ensure that all CREATING TOMORROW MULTI ACADEMY TRUST employees are operating within the Trust's social media framework.

1.2 Who is covered by this Policy?

This Policy covers all CREATING TOMORROW MULTI ACADEMY TRUST students and employees working at all levels and grades.

It also applies to CREATING TOMORROW MULTI ACADEMY TRUST ambassadors, consultants, contractors, casual and agency staff, and volunteers, collectively referred to as 'staff' in this policy.

Third parties who have access to our communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with this Policy.

Staff, students and parents/carers are required to read, understand and comply with this social media policy.

1.3 What it applies to

This policy applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during school/working hours or otherwise.

It applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using:

- Trust, school and college IT facilities and equipment
- Equipment belonging to members of staff and pupils
- Any other IT/Internet-enabled equipment

1.4 Definition of social media

For the purposes of this document, 'social media' is considered to include all technologies that allow individuals to communicate and share information (including photos and video). This includes group messaging services such as WhatsApp.

It covers the use of all forms of social media, social networking sites, internet posting, and blogs, for example Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, X, Instagram, TikTok, ClassDojo, reddit, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Wikipedia, Threads, Vine, Telegram, Tumblr, Tinder, Grindr, Pinterest, Discord, BlueSky, Mastodon. This is not an exhaustive list.

2. Legislation and Regulation

All members of the trust, school and college should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, may be subject to copyright, safeguarding and data protection legislation. Everyone must also operate in line with the trust, school and college's equalities, harassment, child protection, safer recruitment, and online safety and ICT acceptable use policies.

2.1 Compliance with legislation

Anything shared through social media is subject to copyright, data protection and freedom of information legislation.

Where a person can be identified from a photograph or a video, then that piece of media contains their personal data. Its use is therefore covered by Data Protection Legislation.

2.2 Compliance with related policies and agreements

Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of the other CREATING TOMORROW MULTI ACADEMY TRUST policies. Staff and students are prohibited from using social media to:

- Breach our IT Acceptable Use Policy;
- Breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality;
- Breach our disciplinary rules;
- Harass or bully other staff or pupils in any way or breach our Code of Conduct Policy and our Behaviour, Anti Bullying and Exclusions Policy;
- Unlawfully discriminate against other staff or students or third parties or breach our Equality, Diversity and inclusion policies;

- Breach our Data Protection Policy
- Breach our Trust retention policy or IRMS toolkit;
- Breach any other laws or ethical standards
- Staff who breach any of the above policies may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- Students who breach any of the above policies may be subject to their school/college's behaviour policy which could lead to exclusion.

3. Use of official school/college/trust social media

The trust, school and college official social media channels are as follows:

- Schools and Trust: Facebook and LinkedIn; College Facebook, TikTok, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube
- This is not an exhaustive list and more may be added, or removed, to reflect the needs of the organisation.

These accounts are managed by the Trust's Communications & Marketing Business Partner, the College's School Liaison and Marketing Officer and any staff nominated by the Headteachers, Principal or Trust Executive Team. Staff members who have not been authorised to manage, or post to, the account, must not access, or attempt to access, these accounts.

If as part of your role at CREATING TOMORROW MULTI ACADEMY TRUST your duties require you to communicate on behalf of the Trust in a social media environment, you must first gain approval from your headteacher or principal, who may require you to undergo training before you do so.

You must only use Trust owned equipment to post to on an CREATING TOMORROW MULTI ACADEMY TRUST social media account. Please also refer to our IT Acceptable Use Policy for further information.

If you have suggestions for something you'd like to appear on our school social media channel(s), please speak to the Communications & Marketing Business Partner or the Headteacher/Principal.

3.1 Facebook

The school/college/trust will post on Facebook:

- Alerts about changes (e.g. changes to procedures, severe weather updates, staffing changes)
- Reminders (e.g. approaching deadlines, events or class activities, reminders about policies/procedures)
- Advertisements for school/college events or activities
- Job vacancies or requests for volunteers
- Links to newsletters, guidance and factsheets for parents and carers
- Achievements of pupils and staff
- Photos or posts about school/college trips, events and activities
- Seasonal greetings and messages about religious festivals
- Invitations to provide feedback
- Relevant posts from the community which support families and students

The school **will not** post on Facebook:

- Names and photos of individuals (unless they have given consent)
- Harmful or abusive comments
- Messages to specific people
- Political statements
- Advertisements for businesses unless directly related to the school or collegel, or which provide relevant support to families and students
- Links to staff members' personal accounts

3.2 LinkedIn

The school/college/trust will post on LinkedIn:

- Advertisements for school/college events or activities
- Job vacancies or requests for volunteers
- Links to newsletters, guidance and factsheets for parents and carers
- Achievements of pupils and staff
- Photos or posts about school/college trips, events and activities
- Seasonal greetings and messages about religious festivals
- Invitations to provide feedback
- Relevant posts from the community which support families, students and employability
- Community engagement with employers and charity
- Tag relevant contacts and organisations as appropriate to raise awareness and give thanks

The school/college/trust **will not** post on Linked In:

- Names and photos of individuals (unless they have given consent)
- Harmful or abusive comments
- Political statements unless as an approved response from the CEO to a government policy or initiative
- Advertisements for businesses unless directly related to the school, college or trust or which provide relevant support to families and students

3.3 Other social media accounts

The school/college/trust may post on other social media accounts on agreement with the Headteacher/Principal/Trust Executive Team/Communications & Marketing Business Partner, adhering to similar rules to 2.1 and 2.2. Approved posts will be dependent on the channel chosen and an agreed strategy for the channel.

3.4 Moderation

Staff responsible for our social media accounts will delete as soon as reasonably possible:

- Abusive, racist, sexist, homophobic or inflammatory comments
- Comments we consider to be spam
- Personal information, such as telephone numbers, address details, etc.
- Posts that advertise commercial activity or ask for donations

Every reasonable effort will be taken to politely address concerns or behaviour of individual users, following the school's complaints policy. If users are repeatedly abusive or inappropriate, they will be blocked.

If any complaints made on social media, staff responsible for managing accounts should request the complainant contact the school directly so they can try to resolve the issue offline. Do not respond publicly online unless authorised to do so. If in doubt, seek advice from the Communications & Marketing Business Partner.

Staff responsible for our social media accounts will also ensure that all content shared on social media platforms is age appropriate for the school community.

3.5 Following other social media users

The trust/school/college:

- Will only 'like' pages with a non-commercial interest, unless they are linked to the setting(s) and associated activities e.g. Iron Mountain (partnership), or ID Logistics (futures work), or Woburn Wildlife Park (visit) etc. Being 'liked' by us doesn't imply endorsement of any kind.
- May follow other users if they are appropriate to the setting. Being followed by us doesn't imply endorsement of any kind.

4. Personal use of social media by staff

We recommend members of staff make their private social media profiles unidentifiable to pupils, we understand many staff will use sites such as X (formerly Twitter) or LinkedIn for professional purposes.

CREATING TOMORROW MULTI ACADEMY TRUST expects all staff (including governors, trustees and volunteers) to consider the safety of pupils and the risks (reputational and financial) to the school when using social media channels, including when doing so in a personal capacity. Staff are also responsible for checking and maintaining appropriate privacy and security settings of their personal social media accounts.

Staff members will report any safeguarding issues they become aware of.

When using social media, staff **must not**:

- Use personal accounts to conduct school business, with the exception of LinkedIn for making professional connections
- Accept 'friend requests' from, or communicate with, pupils past or present (exceptions made for family members and for past pupils aged 26+).
- Complain about the school, college or trust, individual pupils, colleagues or parents/carers

- Reference or share information about individual pupils, colleagues or parents/carers
- Post images of pupils
- Express personal views or opinions that could be interpreted as those of the school/college/trust
- Link their social media profile to their work email account unless it is relevant to their role (e.g. Community and Employer Engagement Business Partner). LinkedIn is permitted but on leaving Creating Tomorrow, you must immediately change the email address to a personal account.
- Use personal social media during timetabled teaching time except in a professional capacity
- Any concerns regarding a member of staff's personal use of social media will be dealt with in line with the staff behaviour policy.

Any communication received from current pupils (unless they are family members) on any personal social media accounts will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or member of the senior leadership team immediately.

Staff should not also do not have contact via personal accounts with past pupils (if ongoing communication is required, this should be using via official school channels).

5. Personal use of social media by students

The school/college encourages students to

- Be respectful to members of staff, and the school/college, at all times
- Be respectful to other students and parents/carers
- Direct any complaints or concerns through the school/college's official channels, so they can be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure

Students **should not** use social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff
- Complain about the school/college
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other students or parents/carers
- Post images of other students without their permission

Any concerns about a student's social media use will be dealt with in line with the school/college's behaviour policy.

6. Personal use of social media by parents/carers

The school/college expects parents/carers to help us model safe, responsible and appropriate social media use for our students.

When communicating with the school via official communication channels, or using private/independent channels to talk about the school/college, parents and carers should:

- Be respectful towards, and about, members of staff and the school/college at all times
- Be respectful of, and about, other parents/carers and other students and children

- Direct any complaints or concerns through the school's official channels, so they can be dealt with in line with the school/college/trust's complaints procedure

Parents/carers **should not** use social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff, other parents/carers or students
- Complain about the school/college/trust
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other parents/carers or students
- Draw attention to, or discuss, behaviour incidents
- Post images of children other than their own

6.1 WhatsApp

We expect parents/carers to follow the above social media guidelines when using WhatsApp to communicate with the school/college.

7. Requirements for setting up a trust-affiliated account

If you would like to set up a social media account that is in anyway affiliated to the Trust or one of its schools or college or if you have already set up such an account, you must contact the Communications & Marketing Business Partner. Affiliated is defined as an account that represents any part of Creating Tomorrow and its schools, college and activities e.g. a Creating Tomorrow Linked In page, or a student enterprise Facebook account etc.

In your email to the Communications & Marketing Business Partner, provide the following detail:

- The name of the social media platform
- Case for using the channel and proposed post content
- Username and password
- The details of two account holders (every account must have two administrative contacts). You must not use your personal e-mail address for professional social media activities.

8. Request for comment through social media

If you are contacted for comment about the Trust for publication anywhere including in any social media or news outlet, direct the enquiry to the Trust Communications & Marketing Business Partner and do not respond without written approval.

9. Putting activity on hold

If it is deemed necessary, for example if one of our schools/college is experiencing a crisis event, the Trust may request that no further social media posts are made for a period of time.

10. Recruitment and social media

The Trust will not, either themselves or through a third party, conduct searches on applicants on social media.

Conducting such searches during a recruitment and selection process may lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Exceptions to this rule apply only if an individual has put their details on a social media website for the purpose of attracting prospective employers, or post interview.

Furthermore, staff should never provide references on or through use of social media sites. Such references can be attributed to the Trust and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the Trust.

11. Data Protection

Where a person can be identified from a photograph or a video, that piece of media contains their personal data. Its use is therefore covered by data protection legislation.

If posting to a trust-affiliated account (trust/school/college) consent must therefore be checked using the trust's consent form on Arbor before any pupil can be photographed and featured in a social media posting:

- For students in Year 6 and below, consent should be sought from parents.
- For students in Years 7 to 11, consent should be sought ideally from pupils verbally first (where possible) and secondly parents to confirm, to ensure we capture pupil preference.
- For students in the sixth form or college, consent needs only be obtained from the pupil unless you consider there is a particular reason to also speak to parents (for example – if student is incapable of giving consent or the parent has been given decision making rights)

Note that only Trust owned equipment may be used to capture photography, video or any other media when posting in a professional capacity. Please speak to your Headteacher/Principal if you require the use of a Trust owned device.

12. Training and awareness

The Trust IT Senior Leadership Team or Communications & Marketing Business Partner will provide a short induction to best practice in using social media for all matters relating to your professional role as an CREATING TOMORROW MULTI ACADEMY TRUST member of staff.

- Training will be provided at induction
- Training relevant to the role as required

13. Breach of this Policy

Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Headteacher/Principal or CEO (Trust staff). Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to staff in these roles.

Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this Policy will be required to cooperate with an investigation. This may involve handing over relevant business passwords and login details.

Staff may be required to remove posts which are deemed to constitute a breach of this Policy.

A breach of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours and regardless of whether our equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach.

14. Monitoring and review

The contents of our IT resources and communications systems are the property of the Trust. This means that:

- We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, for legitimate business purposes.
- Any message, file, data, document, telephone conversation, social media post, conversation or message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems can be monitored by the Trust.
- This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, log-ins, recordings and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network monitoring technologies.
- This includes ascertaining and demonstrating that expected standards are being met by those using the systems, and for the detection and investigation of unauthorised use of the systems (including where this is necessary to prevent or detect crime).

You consent to such monitoring by your acknowledgement of this Policy and your use of such resources and systems. For further information please refer to our IT Acceptable Use Policy.

The headteacher/principal/CEO will monitor the implementation of this policy, including making sure that it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the school/college/trust.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

The trust board is responsible for reviewing and approving this policy.