



## Social Media Policy



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EXPLORE

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### 1. Introduction

South Brockwells Farm Partnership recognises and embraces the numerous benefits and opportunities that social media offers. While employees are encouraged to engage, collaborate, and innovate through social media, they should also be aware that there are some associated risks, especially around issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation.

### 2. Scope

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to encourage good practice, to protect South Brockwells Farm Partnership and its employees, and to promote the effective use of social media as part of South Brockwells Farm Partnership activities.

2.2 This policy covers personal and professional use of social media and aims to encourage its safe use by its employees.

2.3 The policy applies regardless of whether social media is accessed using South Brockwells Farm Partnership's Information & Communication Technology (ICT) facilities and equipment, or equipment belonging to members of staff.

2.4 Personal communications via social media accounts that are likely to have a negative impact on professional standards or South Brockwells Farm Partnership's reputation are within the scope of this policy.

2.5 This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including full-time and part-time employees, fixed-term employees, and volunteers.

### 3. Roles, responsibilities, and procedure

3.1 Employees should:-

- be aware of their online reputation and recognise that their online activity can be seen by others including parents, pupils, and colleagues on social media
- ensure that any use of social media is carried out in line with this policy and other relevant policies

- be responsible for their words and actions in an online environment. They are therefore advised to consider whether any comment, photograph or video that they are about to post on a social networking site is something that they want pupils, colleagues, other employees of South Brockwells Farm Partnership, or even future employers, to read. If in doubt, don't post it!

3.2 The Partnership are responsible for:-

- addressing any concerns or questions employees may have on the use of social media.
- operating within the boundaries of this policy and ensuring that all staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them

#### **4. Definition of social media**

Social media is a broad term for any kind of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other. It allows people to share information, ideas, and views. Examples of social media include blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, Myspace, Flickr, and YouTube.

#### **5. Acceptable use**

5.1 Employees should be aware that content uploaded to social media is not private. Even if access is restricted to 'friends', there is still capacity for it to be re-posted or distributed beyond the intended recipients. Therefore, employees using social media should conduct themselves with professionalism and respect.

5.2 Employees should be aware of both professional and social boundaries and should not, therefore, accept or invite 'friend' requests from pupils or ex-pupils under the age of 18, or from parents on their personal social media accounts such as Facebook.

5.3 All communication with parents via social media should be through the South Brockwells Farm social media accounts.

5.4 Employees should:-

- be mindful of the content they are sharing
- ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites to be as strict as possible and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy.

5.5 Employees should not upload any content on to social media sites that:-

- is confidential to South Brockwells Farm Partnership, academy, or its staff
- amounts to bullying
- amounts to unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation
- brings South Brockwells Farm Partnership or academy into disrepute
- contains lewd, sexually explicit, threatening or similarly inappropriate or offensive comments, images, or video clips
- undermines the reputation of the academy and/or individuals
- is defamatory or knowingly false
- breaches copyright
- is in any other way unlawful

## 6. Breaches of this policy

6.1 Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy (or if complaints are received about unacceptable use of social networking that has potentially breached this policy), the member of staff will be expected to co-operate with South Brockwells Farm Partnership's investigation which may involve:-

- handing over relevant passwords and login details
- printing a copy or obtaining a screenshot of the alleged unacceptable content
- determining that the responsibility or source of the content was in fact the member of staff.

6.2 The seriousness of the breach will be considered including the nature of the content, how long the content remained visible on the social media site, the potential for recirculation by others and the impact on South Brockwells Farm Partnership or the individuals concerned.

- Employees should be aware that actions online can be in breach of the harassment/IT/equality policies and any online breaches of these policies may also be treated as conduct issues.
- Serious breaches could result in the dismissal of the employee. Where conduct is considered to be unlawful, the partnership will report the matter to the police and other external agencies.

## 7. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and, in accordance with the following, on an as-and-when-required basis:-

- legislative changes
- good practice guidance
- case law
- significant incidents reported

## 8. Legislation

8.1 Acceptable use of social networking must comply with UK law. In applying this policy, South Brockwells Farm Partnership will adhere to its rights, responsibilities, and duties in accordance with the following:-

- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Defamation Act 2013

8.2 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.

- When using social media, employees should be aware of the potential impact on themselves and the employer:-
  - whether for work-related or personal use
  - whether during working hours or otherwise
  - whether social media is accessed using the employer's equipment or using the employee's equipment.

Employees should use discretion and common sense when engaging in online communication.

## 9. Policy and status review

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