NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR
FREDERICK GOUGH SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

1. Frederick Gough School is committed to making the best use of all available technology and innovation to maintain high standards of education. These tools also enable the school to deliver modern effective services through engagement with the wider school community.

2. Social media has the ability to transform delivery through redesigning, replacing or complementing existing ways of working and adopting new models of working.

3. We use the term 'social media' to describe any kind of web-based tool that you can use for sharing what you know, including but not limited to: social networks such as Facebook or X, blogs and video or image-sharing websites such as YouTube..

4. Social media involves the building of online communities or networks to encourage participation and engagement. It is about sharing and interaction and gives people the opportunity to make their own content, provide feedback, improve services and communicate with others who care about the same place or issue.

5. . The school's use of social media will include:

    - **Communication** – to listen to users and their conversation about school issues.
    - **Engagement** – to participate in conversations and build dialogue with users.
    - **Employees** –to support the undertaking of their work duties and share knowledge with colleagues in an appropriate way.

6. This policy will extend to governors and other members of the wider school community as appropriate.

USING SOCIAL MEDIA FORWORK

7. This policy has been developed to help employees understand good practice for online participation and to make clear the standards expected of anyone using social media for work.

    This is in addition to any professional standards that govern specific areas of work for employees and in addition to all other school policies or codes.

8. Social media should be seen as another communication channel in the same way as telephone and e-mail and therefore the same behaviour and activities should be

observed. However, it is important to note that unlike telephone and e-mail exchange information posted on a social media site is publicly available.

9. Before using social media for work purposes, employees must receive sufficient training and support, and the necessary permission from the head teacher/principal.

10. Employees must take responsibility for content they publish through social media on behalf of the school, and must be aware that any breaches may result in disciplinary action.

11. For any communications made in a professional capacity through social media,, employees must not:

- Bring the school into disrepute;

- be disrespectful or unprofessional;

- make defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations/groups;

- publish information that has not been checked and verified for accuracy;

- post an image that is inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;

- breach confidentiality, for example by revealing personal information about an individual;

- publish or discuss information about the school, or its internal processes/ procedures, which should not be in the public domain;

- breach copyright, for example by using someone else's images or written content without permission;

- fail to acknowledge where permission has been given to reproduce something;

- do anything that could be considered discrimination, bullying or harassment;

12. The school's social media accounts are not to be used for personal reasons. Unauthorised entry into the school's computer systems, unauthorised use of software or breach of the data protection requirements is a breach of the school's disciplinary rules.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

13. It is employees' personal choice whether they participate in social media activity in their own time. Whilst the views and opinions expressed are their own, employees are still representatives of the school and should be aware that any information posted about the school cannot be entirely separate from their working life.

14. All employees using social media should be aware that what they say can be accessed around the world within seconds; it may be shared or re-published elsewhere and will continue to be available indefinitely.

15. Employees should also consider their privacy settings and be mindful that even if information is restricted to 'friends'/'followers' it is, in effect, still public as you cannot control what they do with any content posted - they might take a screenshot, for example.

16. Employees that make personal use of social media outside of work are advised not to identify their employer or role in order to avoid any confusion as to whether they are speaking as an employee or individual.

17. Employees should follow these guiding principles when using social media in a personal capacity:
- You should not identify the school if doing so would bring discredit to the school. This could include making negative or derogatory remarks (directly or indirectly) about colleagues, your managers or your employer..
- Ensure your use of social media complies with any professional standards which cover your role.
- Do not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child, ensuring that communication only takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries through the school's own communication channels.
- Respect the privacy of others and make sure you don't publish any information that is confidential.
- Stay within the lawand be aware that defamation, copyright and privacy laws, amongst others, apply.
- Be aware that participating online in a personal capacity may attract media interest in you as an individual, so proceed with care.
- Add a disclaimer to your blog or social media profile to make it clear that your accounts and views are personal, e.g. "these views are my own and do not represent the views of Frederick Gough School", if you have identified the school as your employer.
- School equipment must not be used to access social media in a personal capacity.

18. Any inappropriate use of social media, including messaging tools, may breach the school's disciplinary rules and could result in disciplinary action. **If in doubt always seek advice**.