



## Poynton High School And Performing Art College

# Social Media Policy

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### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this Social Media Policy is to provide clear guidelines for the safe and responsible use of social media by students, school and parents/carers at Poynton High School, ensuring that online platforms are used in a way that is respectful, positive and in line with the school's values.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to all students aged 11-18, staff and parents/carers who are enrolled at Poynton High School and covers all social media platforms, including but not limited to: Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, and any other platforms that may emerge. It applies both during school hours and outside school time when engaging with the school community.

This policy operates alongside the Trust Acceptable Use Policy which outlines the guidelines and behaviours that we would expect users to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices in connection with the school and departments within it. This policy can be found at

<https://www.truelearning.org.uk/page/?title=Trust+Policies&pid=21>

- Teachers and students are expected to follow the same rules which encourage respectful conduct online as offline. We would ask that parents consider this also when approaching school matters within a public forum.

- Poynton High School makes every reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damage that result from misuse of social media technologies.

We know that teachers, students, staff, and other school community members will use social networking/media (X, Instagram, Facebook, etc.) as a way to connect with others, share educational resources, create and curate educational content. While social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks you should keep in mind when using these tools. In the social media world, the lines are blurred between what is public or private, personal or professional. We seek to ensure that our use of social media reflects our school values to inspire, achieve and celebrate.

### **General Guidelines:**

#### **1. Respect for Others:**

- Treat others with kindness and respect, both online and offline. Cyberbullying, harassment, hate speech, or any form of online abuse will not be tolerated.
- Negative comments about fellow students, teachers, or staff on social media are not acceptable.

#### **2. Privacy and Confidentiality:**

- Never share private or sensitive information about yourself or others, including personal details, addresses, phone numbers, or passwords.
- Be cautious when posting photos or videos. Always respect others' privacy, and do not post anything that could be harmful or embarrassing to anyone.
- Do not post or share content that is in breach of confidentiality agreements or sensitive school-related information, such as exam papers, internal documents, or student records.

#### **3. Appropriate Content:**

- All content shared online should be appropriate for a school environment. This includes images, text, videos, and any other forms of content.
- Explicit, violent, or inappropriate content, including images or language, is not acceptable. Posts should not promote illegal activities, substance abuse, or discrimination of any kind.
- Content that could be considered defamatory or offensive should not be shared or commented on.

#### **4. Personal and School Reputation:**

- Understand that anything you post online can affect your reputation and the reputation of the school. Always think carefully before posting or commenting on any content.
- Do not post content that could damage the reputation of Poynton High School or its staff, students, or partners.

#### **5. Responsibility for Your Own Actions:**

- You are personally responsible for the content you post online. This includes respecting the intellectual property rights of others and not posting content you do not own or have permission to share.

- If you encounter inappropriate or harmful content, report it to a member of school staff, or a responsible adult immediately.

### **School-Specific Guidelines:**

- 1. Use of School Social Media Accounts:**
  - Students are not allowed to use official school social media accounts.
  - Students must not impersonate school staff or create fake accounts that appear to be affiliated with the school.
- 2. Mobile Phones and Social Media in School:**
  - Students must not use their mobile phones in school at any time. If phones are seen, heard or used, they will be confiscated.
- 3. Online Interaction with Teachers:**
  - Students should avoid direct messaging or following teachers on personal social media accounts. Communication with teachers should only be done through official school channels (e.g., school email).
- 4. Monitoring and Reporting:**
  - The school reserves the right to monitor social media content that impacts the welfare of students or the reputation of the school. This includes any incidents of cyberbullying, hate speech, or inappropriate online behaviour.
  - Students who are involved in such activities will face appropriate disciplinary action.
  - If a student is being bullied or feels uncomfortable with content posted online, they should report it to a member of school staff.

### **Expectations of How the School Uses Social Media:**

- 1. Official School Communications:**
  - We will use appropriate social media platforms to share important information, updates, and school achievements. This includes events, reminders, highlights of student activities, and other relevant school news.
  - Official social media accounts will be monitored by staff to ensure appropriate and positive content is shared in line with the school's values and mission.
  - Any content shared by the school will align with the principles of respect, privacy, and professionalism. We will not share confidential or personal information.
- 2. Engagement with the School Community:**
  - The school encourages students (age dependent), parents, and staff to follow and engage with official school social media channels in order to stay informed about school events, news, and important notices.
  - The school will not tolerate harassment or negative comments directed at any members of the school community on official accounts. Any such comments will be removed, and individuals may be blocked or reported if necessary.

- The school will only engage in positive and constructive conversations on social media and encourage students and parents to participate in a respectful manner.
- 3. Promotion of Student Work:**
- The school may post photos or videos of students involved in activities or events, with prior consent from students or their parents. If parents have not consented, then their image will not be shared.

## **Expectations of Parents:**

### **1. Monitoring and Supporting Responsible Use:**

- Parents are encouraged to monitor their children's social media activity and support them in using these platforms responsibly. This includes having open discussions about the potential risks and the importance of maintaining a positive digital footprint.
- Parents should help students set privacy settings on their social media accounts and ensure they understand how to protect their personal information online.

### **2. Reporting Concerns:**

- If parents are aware of any inappropriate behaviour or content involving their child or other students on social media (including cyberbullying or harmful content), they are urged to report it to the school immediately.
- Parents should also support the school in addressing any issues of social media misuse by their children or by others that impact the wider school community.

### **3. Encouraging Healthy Use:**

- Parents are encouraged to help their children balance their online and offline lives by encouraging healthy social media use. This includes managing screen time, ensuring that social media does not interfere with homework or family activities, and encouraging face-to-face social interactions.

We would ask that parents and carers act as a positive role model to the young people of our school community when using social media. In doing so we would encourage all communication shared within the public domain regarding our learning community at Poynton High School to reflect the values within this policy.

When responding to, or for further information regarding any of our school posts online please contact [info@poyntonhigh.or.uk](mailto:info@poyntonhigh.or.uk) for further enquiries.

## **Consequences of Misuse by Students:**

Misuse of social media can result in a range of consequences, in line with the school's behaviour policy.

**Conclusion:**

By following this Social Media Policy, students at Poynton High School can contribute to a positive online community and help ensure a safe and respectful environment both online and at school. This policy is in place to protect students' well-being and foster an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding in the digital space.

We ask that all students, parents, and staff read, understand and follow these guidelines to help create a safe, respectful and supportive school community for everyone.

**Reviewed and Approved by:**

- The Governing Board
- 27 March 2025
- Review by Spring 2028