



THE ST. BART'S ACADEMY

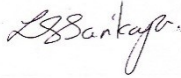
— TRUST —

Social Media Policy

February 2024

The St. Bart's Academy Trust

Social Media Policy

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Approved by Trust Board:		Lisa Sarikaya Chief Executive Officer
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Date	Section Amended	Signature
13/02/2023	TSB Policy Adopted v4	S. Jones
13/06/2023	Updated following consultation with JNCC	S. Cope
12/02/2024	Added St Bart's Mission / St Bart's Vision and Values. Updated Legal Framework / Roles and Responsibilities / Staff Social Media use	S Cope



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Statement of intent

St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust understands that social media is a growing part of life outside of school. We have a responsibility to safeguard our pupils against potential dangers when accessing the internet at school, and to educate our pupils about how to protect themselves online when outside of school.

We are committed to:

- Encouraging the responsible use of social media by all staff, parents and pupils in support of the Trust's mission, values and objectives.
- Protecting our pupils from the dangers of social media.
- Preventing and avoiding damage to the reputation of the Trust through irresponsible use of social media.
- Protecting our staff from cyberbullying and potentially career damaging behaviour.

1. St. Bart's Mission

Our moral purpose is to provide the best education and curriculum in all our academies, enabling every child to realise their full potential.

2. St. Bart's Vision and Values



We have a **Passion** for releasing potential in all our children and staff through the **Encouragement** and development of **Ambition**, aspiration and excellence in all aspects of our work. Our commitment is to place children at the centre of everything we do. Working in **Collaboration**, we strive to provide the highest quality of educational experiences and outcomes for young people in an inclusive environment. Through the **Enjoyment** of learning, we live life together in all its fullness through **PEACE**.

We believe this vision empowers children with the skills to make a positive impact on the future of the communities they serve.

Our Trust Christian ethos is also captured by the **PEACE** values and all schools work in close partnership (whether C of E or community) to ensure that all children, adults and the communities they serve flourish just as Jesus encouraged us to do in John 10:10 –

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

3. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2023) 'Data protection in schools 'The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- Computer Misuse Act 1990, amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'

4. Roles and responsibilities

The **Local Governing Committee** is responsible for:

- Ensuring the Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibilities include online safety.
- Ensuring their own knowledge of online safety issues is up-to-date.
- Ensuring all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction and on a regular basis thereafter

The **Principal** is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy and ensuring that all staff, parents and pupils are aware of their responsibilities in relation to social media use.
- Promoting safer working practices and standards with regards to the use of social media.
- Establishing clear expectations of behaviour for social media use.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including against any of the protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
- In conjunction with the Local Governing Committee, handling complaints regarding this policy and its provisions in line with the Trust **Complaints Procedures Policy**.
- Implementing appropriate sanctions and disciplinary methods where there is a breach of this policy.
- Taking steps to minimise the amount of misplaced or malicious allegations in relation to social media use.
- Ensuring appropriate security measures are implemented and compliance with UK GDPR.
- Appointing a competent Communications Officer to oversee all academy-run social media accounts.

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** is responsible for:

- The academy's approach to online safety.
- Dealing with concerns about social media use that are safeguarding concerns

Staff members are responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy and the **Acceptable Use Policy**.
- Ensuring pupils adhere to the principles outlined in this policy and that it is implemented fairly and consistently in the classroom.
- Reporting any social media misuse by staff, pupils or parents to the Principal immediately.
- Attending any training on social media use offered by the academy.

Parents are responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy
- Taking appropriate responsibility for their use of social media and the influence on their children at home.
- Promoting safe social media behaviour for both themselves and their children.

- Not engaging in activities involving social media which might bring the academy into disrepute.
- Not representing their personal views as those of the academy on any social medium.
- Acting in the best interests of pupils when creating, participating in or contributing to social media sites.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy and the academy **Behaviour Policy**.
- Ensuring they understand how to use social media appropriately and stay safe online.
- Seeking help from academy staff if they are concerned about something they or a peer have experienced online.
- Reporting online safety incidents and concerns in line with the procedures within this policy.
- Demonstrating the same high standards of behaviour outside of the academy and when online as expected within the academy.

The **Communications Officer** is responsible for:

- Monitoring and reviewing all academy-run social media accounts.
- Vetting and approving individuals who wish to be 'friends' or 'followers' on the academy's social media platforms.
- Maintaining a log of inappropriate comments or abuse relating to the academy.
- Handling inappropriate comments or abuse posted on the academy's social media accounts, or regarding the academy.
- Ensuring that enough resources are provided to keep the content of the social media accounts up-to-date and relevant.

ICT Technicians are responsible for:

- Providing technical support in the development and implementation of the academy's social media accounts.
- Implementing appropriate security measures as directed by the Principal.
- Ensuring that the academy's filtering and monitoring systems are updated as appropriate.

5. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the academy defines "**social media**" as any online platform that offers real-time interaction between the user and other individuals or groups including, but not limited to, the following:

- Blogs
- Online discussion forums, such as NetMums
- Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook
- Media-sharing devices, such as YouTube
- Micro-blogging' applications, such as X

For the purpose of this policy, “**cyberbullying**” is defined as any social media or communication technology intentionally used to bully an individual or group, including the posting or sharing of messages, images or videos.

For the purpose of this policy, “**members of the academy community**” are defined as any teacher, member of support staff, pupil, parent of a pupil, governor or ex-pupil.

6. Data protection principles

The academy will obtain consent from pupils and parents / carers when the pupil is registered at the academy using the photography and video consent form, (see **Photography and Images Policy**) which will confirm whether or not consent is given for posting images and videos of a pupil on social media platforms. The consent will be valid for the period the pupil is registered at the academy. Consent provided for the use of images and videos only applies to academy accounts – staff, pupils and parents are not permitted to post any imagery or videos on personal accounts.

Where a pupil is assessed by the academy to have the competence to understand what they are consenting to and is aged 13 or over, the academy will obtain consent directly from that pupil; otherwise, consent is obtained from whoever holds parental responsibility.

A record of consent is maintained in the academy office and recorded on Arbor throughout the period the pupil is registered at the academy.

Parents and pupils are able to withdraw or amend their consent at any time. To do so, parents must inform the academy in writing. Where parents withdraw or amend their consent, it will not affect the processing of any images or videos prior to when consent was withdrawn or amended. Processing will cease in line with parents’ and pupil’s requirements following this. Wherever it is reasonably practicable to do so, the academy will take measures to remove any posts before consent was withdrawn or amended, such as removing an image from a social media site.

Consent can be provided for certain principles only, for example only images of a pupil are permitted to be posted, and not videos. This will be made explicitly clear on the consent form provided. The academy will only post images and videos of pupils for whom consent has been received.

Only academy-owned devices will be used to take images and videos of the academy community, which have been pre-approved by the Principal for use. Only appropriate images and videos of pupils will be posted in which they are suitably dressed, i.e. it would not be suitable to display an image of a pupil in swimwear.

When posting on social media, the academy will use group or class images or videos with general labels, e.g. ‘sports day’.

When posting images and videos of pupils, the academy will apply, when necessary, data minimisation techniques, such as pseudonymisation (blurring a photograph), to reduce the risk of a pupil being identified. The academy will not post pupils’ personal details on social media platforms and pupils’ full names will never be used alongside any videos or images in which they are present.

Before posting on social media, staff will:

- Refer to Arbor / the academy office to ensure consent has been received for that pupil and for the exact processing activities required.
- Ensure that there is no additional identifying information relating to a pupil.

Any breaches of the data protection principles will be handled in accordance with the academy Data and Cyber-security Breach Prevention and Management Plan.

7. Staff social media use

7.1. Academy accounts

The academy's social media sites will only be created and monitored by the communications officer and other designated staff members. There will be a strong pedagogical or business reason for the creation of social media accounts on behalf of the academy; official academy profiles and accounts will not be created for trivial reasons. Any social media accounts must be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by staff members and must be set up using the academy contact details at every stage, so that the academy can maintain control when staff leave and easily monitor comments. When creating a specific academy page on Facebook, the account must be set up as a 'company, organisation or institute'. In order to allow each Academy to set controls for moderating comments.

Consideration will be given to the following aspects:

- The purpose for using social media
- Whether the overall investment will achieve the pedagogical aim
- The level of interactive engagement with the site
- Whether staff, parents or members of the public will be able to contribute content to the account
- How much time and effort staff members are willing to commit to the proposed site
- A clear plan which outlines aspects such as how long the site will last
- How the success of the site will be evaluated

The Principal will be responsible for authorising members of staff and any other individual to have admin access to academy social media accounts. Only people authorised by the Principal will be allowed to post on the academy's accounts.

Academy social media passwords are maintained by the **Principal and Communication Officer**.

The passwords are only shared with people authorised by the Principal.

Staff will adhere to the data protection principles outlined in [section 6](#) of this policy at all times.

Staff will ensure any posts are positive in nature and relevant to pupils, the work of staff, the academy or any achievements. Staff will not post any content online which is damaging to the academy or any of its staff or pupils.

All content expressed on academy social media accounts will not breach copyright, data protection or freedom of information legislation.

The academy's social media accounts will comply with site rules at all times. It will be noted that each networking site has their own rules which must be followed – the Principal / Designated Safeguarding Lead will induct staff to each new social media platform, providing them with the relevant training and information.

7.2. Personal accounts

Staff will not be prohibited from having personal social media accounts; however, it is important that staff protect their professional reputation by ensuring they use personal social media accounts in an appropriate manner.

Staff members will not access social media platforms during lesson times without a clear pedagogical reason, but they are permitted to use social media during break times. Staff will avoid using social media in front of pupils.

Staff members will not use any academy-owned mobile devices to access personal accounts, unless it is beneficial to the material being taught. Prior permission will be sought from the Principal. Staff are not permitted to use the school's Wi-Fi network to access personal accounts, unless otherwise permitted by the Principal.

Staff will not 'friend', 'follow' or otherwise contact pupils or parents through their personal social media accounts unless there is a familial relationship or in the case of parents, pre-existing relationships external to the academy. If pupils or parents attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' a staff member, they will report this to the Principal.

Staff members will not provide their home address, phone number, mobile number, social networking details or email addresses to pupils or parents – any contact with pupils or parents will be done through authorised academy contact channels, unless, as above, there is a familial relationship or in the case of parents, pre-existing relationships external to the academy. Staff members will use their academy email address for academy business and personal email address for their private correspondence; the two should not be mixed.

Staff members will ensure the necessary privacy controls are applied to personal accounts and will avoid identifying themselves as an employee of the academy on their personal social media accounts. Where staff members use social media in a personal capacity, they will ensure it is clear that views are personal and are not those of the academy.

No staff member will post any content online that is damaging to the academy or any of its staff or pupils. Staff members will not post any information which could identify a pupil, class or the academy – this includes any images, videos and personal information. Staff will not take any posts, images or videos from social media that belong to the academy for their own personal use. Staff members will not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy. Staff will not post comments about the academy, pupils, parents, staff or other members of the academy community.

Breaches of this policy by members of staff will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content, could lead to prosecution, disciplinary action or dismissal. Members of staff will be aware that if their out-of-work activity brings the academy into disrepute, disciplinary action will be taken.

Attempts to bully, coerce or manipulate members of the academy community via social media by members of staff will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

Social media will not be used as a platform to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues or other professionals.

Staff members' personal information will not be discussed on social media.

8. Parent social media use

Parents are able to comment on or respond to information shared via social media sites; comments can generally be classified as positive, negative and neutral (the latter usually questions). If any negative comments are posted, the academy will need to address the issue quickly. If the post is abusive, then this should be removed from the academy page and reported to the relevant social media platform straight away. If it is a genuine complaint, the academy should try to engage with the person posting face-to-face as soon as possible. As part of the discussion, the academy should ask them to remove their post.

Parents should not share any photos or personal details of pupils when commenting on academy social media sites, nor post comments concerning other pupils or staff members.

Any parents that are seen to be breaching the guidance in this policy will be required to attend a meeting with the Principal or senior member of staff, and may have their ability to interact with the social media websites removed.

Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content could lead to prosecution.

9. Pupil social media use

Pupils are instructed not to sign up to any social media sites that have an age restriction above the pupil's age.

Pupils will not access social media the school day. Pupils are not permitted to use the academy's Wi-Fi network to access any social media platforms.

Pupils will not attempt to 'friend', 'follow' or otherwise contact members of staff through their personal social media accounts, unless, there is a familial relationship or in the case of parents, pre-existing relationships external to the academy. Pupils are only permitted to be affiliates of academy social media accounts. Where a pupil or parent attempts to "friend" or 'follow' a staff member on their personal account, where no familial or pre-existing relationship exists it will be reported to the principal.

Pupils will not post any content online which is damaging to the academy or any of its staff or pupils. Pupils will not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this policy.

If inappropriate content is accessed online on academy premises, it will be reported to a teacher and the DSL / Principal.

Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously, and in the event of illegal, defamatory or discriminatory content, could lead to suspension or exclusion.

10. Online safety

Any disclosures made by pupils to staff about online abuse, harassment or exploitation, whether they are the victim or disclosing on behalf of another child, will be handled in line with the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

Concerns regarding a staff member's online behaviour will be reported to the Principal, who will decide on the best course of action in line with the relevant policies, e.g. the **Staff Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures**. If the concern is about the Principal, it will be reported to the chair of governors.

Concerns regarding a pupil's online behaviour will be reported to the DSL, who will investigate any concerns with relevant staff members, e.g. the Principal and ICT technicians, and manage concerns in accordance with relevant policies depending on their nature, e.g. the **Behaviour Policy** and **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

Where there is a concern that illegal activity has taken place, the Principal will contact the police. The academy will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils, e.g. calling the police, where criminal behaviour is thought to be inadvertent and as a result of ignorance or normal developmental curiosity. The DSL will decide in which cases this response is appropriate and will manage such cases in line with the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

As part of the usual communication with parents, the academy will reinforce the importance of pupils being safe online. The academy will also make it clear to parents what their children are being asked to do online for education purposes.

11. Blocked content

In accordance with the academy **Data and Cyber-security Breach Prevention and Management Plan**, firewalls are installed on the academy's network to prevent access to certain websites. The following social media websites are not accessible on the academy's curriculum (pupil) network:

- X
- Facebook

- Instagram

The Principal retains the right to monitor staff and pupil access to websites when using the academy's network and on academy-owned devices.

Attempts made to circumvent the network's firewalls will result in a ban from using academy computing equipment, other than with close supervision.

Inappropriate content accessed on the academy's computers will be reported to the Principal and / or Designated Safeguarding Lead so that the site can be blocked.

12. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying incidents are taken seriously at St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust. Any reports of cyberbullying on social media platforms by pupils will be handled in accordance with the academy **Anti-bullying Policy** and /or in line with the academy **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

Cyberbullying against pupils or staff is not tolerated under any circumstances. Incidents of cyberbullying are dealt with quickly and effectively wherever they occur in line with the **Anti-bullying Policy** and /or the academy **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**. Allegations of cyberbullying from staff members will be handled in accordance with the Trust **Disciplinary Policy and Procedures**.

13. Training

The academy recognises that early intervention can protect pupils who may be at risk of cyberbullying or negative social media behaviour. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils. Teachers and support staff will receive training on social media as part of their new starter induction. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Pupils will be educated about online safety and appropriate social media use on a termly basis through a variety of mediums, including assemblies, PSHE lessons and cross-curricular links. Pupils will be provided with material to reinforce their knowledge.

Training for all pupils, staff and parents will be refreshed in light of any significant incidents or changes.

14. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed **every two years** by the Trust.



THE ST. BART'S ACADEMY

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