

Social Media Policy

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Introduction

It is crucial that children, parents, Employees, governors, Trustees and the public at large have confidence in Elevate Multi Academy Trust (Elevate) services, decisions and decision making

processes. This policy is intended to minimise the risks to the Trust through the use of Social Media and sets out the principles which must be adhered to when using Social Media.

Definitions

“Social Media” means websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking including but not exclusively: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and all other social networking sites, internet postings and blogs. This policy applies to the use of Social Media for Elevate and/or its Academies purposes as well as personal use that may affect Elevate and its Academies in any way.

“Employees” means members of staff employed by Elevate.

Scope

This policy applies to all of Elevate’s Employees, Trustees, governors, volunteers whether full time, part time, fixed term of casual and other individuals who work for or provide services on behalf of Elevate and its Academies or anyone carrying out Elevate’s or its Academies business or who has access to Elevate and its Academies electronic communication systems and equipment.

Objective of Social Media

A social media presence can enhance the visibility of Elevate in terms of sharing visions, values, CPD opportunities on a regional and national level. Influencers can be engaged with and content shared on a wide, national and professional forum. Well-being messages of support to staff and families can also be valuable. Opportunities can then be explored to further enhance the reputation of the Trust through partnerships and the sharing of expertise.

At Academy level, social media can be used to celebrate achievements and good news stories with local communities encouraging positive content and engagement. It is also an effective way to communicate with both current and prospective parents and to share events and activities on a very regular basis.

Social Media Policy

The use of Social Media is permitted as long as it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content and is in accordance with the contents of this policy.

Social Media must not be used to defame or disparage Elevate and its Academies, Employees, Trustees or individual governors, children or their families or any other third parties and should not be used to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against anyone or to make false or misleading statements, or to impersonate others.

Individuals must not express opinions on behalf of Elevate or its Academies via Social Media, unless expressly authorised to do so by the Communication Manager for Elevate and/or Head teacher for the Academy.

Individuals must not post comments about sensitive or controversial Elevate and/or Academy or Elevate and/or Academy topics or matters or do anything that could lead to the disclosure of or put at risk confidential information held by Elevate and its Academies.

Elevate and its Academies logos may be used in Social Media postings with the prior approval of the Communications Manager for Elevate and the Head teacher for the Academy.

Individuals must always be respectful to others when making any statement on Social Media and be aware that they are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see.

Individuals are strictly prohibited from posting material which is sexually explicit, racist, homophobic, offensive, derogatory or which may give rise to a legal claim against Elevate and its Academies.

Individuals must be accurate, fair and transparent when creating or altering online sources of information on behalf of Elevate.

If an individual is uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting they should refrain from posting it until it has been discussed with the Communications Manager for Elevate statements or posting and the Head teacher for Academy statements and posting.

If an individual sees Social Media content that disparages or reflects poorly on Elevate and its Academies they should contact the Communications Manager for Elevate and the Head teacher for the Academy.

Breach of this Social Media policy by anyone covered by the scope of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. In this event, Elevate's Code of Conduct processes will be followed. Anyone suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with any investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

Individuals found to be in breach of this policy may be required to remove any Social Media content that Elevate and/or the Academy considers constitutes a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a requirement may in itself result in disciplinary action.

Personal Use of Social Media

Please refer to Elevate's Acceptable Use Policy.

Using Social Media on behalf of Elevate and Academies

There must be a strong business reason for creating official Academy sites. Employees must not create sites for trivial reasons which could expose Elevate and its Academies to unwelcome publicity or cause reputational damage.

Official Elevate and Academy sites must be created only according to the requirements specified in this policy. Sites created must not breach the terms and conditions of social media service providers, particularly with regard to minimum age requirements.

Employees must at all times act in the best interests of children and young people when creating, participating in or contributing content to social media sites.

Monitoring

Elevate monitors usage of its internet and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users.

Users of Elevate email and internet services should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using Elevate's ICT system.

Requirements for Creating Social Media Sites on behalf of Elevate

Employees participating in social media for work purposes are expected to demonstrate the same high standards of behaviour as when using other media or giving public presentations on behalf of Elevate.

Prior to creating a site, careful consideration must be given to the purposes for using social media and whether the overall investment is likely to be worthwhile for achieving the proposed outcome.

The proposed audience and level of interactive engagement with the site, for example whether children, Employees or members of the public will be able to contribute content to the site, must be discussed with the Communications Manager for Elevate and the Head teacher for the Academy.

Employees must consider how much time and effort they are willing to commit to the proposed site. They should be aware that maintaining a site is not a one-off task, but involves a considerable time commitment.

The Head teacher must take overall responsibility to ensure that enough resources are provided to keep the site refreshed and relevant. It is important that enough Employees are trained and are able to maintain and moderate a site in case of staff absences.

There must be a careful exit strategy and a clear plan from the outset about how long the site will last. It must not be neglected, creating a potential risk to Elevate and its Academies brand and image.

Consideration must also be given to how the success of the site will be evaluated to assess whether the site has achieved the proposed objectives.

Approval for Creation of or Participation in Webspace

Elevate's social media sites can be created with the permission of the Head Teacher only by or on behalf of the Academy. Site administrators and moderators must be Employees or other authorised people.

Approval for creation of sites for work purposes, whether hosted by Elevate, the Academy or by a third party such as a social networking site, must be obtained from the Communications Manager for Elevate and the Head teacher for the Academy.

Approval for participating, on behalf of Elevate, on sites created by third parties must be obtained from the Communications Manager for Elevate or Head teacher for the Academy.

Content contributed to own or third-party hosted sites must be discussed with and approved by the Communications Manager for Elevate and the Head teacher for the Academy.

The Communications Manager or Head teacher must be consulted about the purpose of the proposed site and its content. In addition, Communications Manager or Head teacher approval must be obtained for the use of Elevate's or the Academy's logo and brand. Once approved, the Elevate logo should appear alongside the Academy logo.

Be aware that the content or site may attract media attention. All media enquiries must be forwarded to Elevate's Compliance Officer. Employees must not communicate with the media directly.

Content Of Webspaces

Employees must not disclose information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of Elevate without authorisation from the Communications Manager.

Information provided must be worthwhile and accurate; remember what is published on the site will reflect on Elevate and its Academies image, reputation and services.

Stay within the law and be aware that child protection, privacy, data protection, libel, defamation, harassment and copyright law may apply to the content of social media.

Employees must respect their audience and be sensitive in the tone of language used and when discussing topics that others may find controversial or objectionable.

Permission must be sought from the relevant people before citing or referencing their work or referencing service providers, partners or other agencies.

Elevate hosted sites must always include Elevate's and the Academy's logo or brand to ensure transparency and confidence in the site. The logo should, where possible, link back to the relevant page on the Academy website.

Employees participating in Elevate hosted or other approved sites must identify who they are. They must disclose their positions within Elevate or the Academy on these sites.

Employees must never give out their personal information such as home contact details or home email addresses on these sites. Personal opinions should not be expressed on official sites.

Contributors and Moderation of Content

Careful consideration must be given to the level of engagement of contributors – for example whether users will be able to add their own text or comments or upload images.

Sites created for and contributed to by children must have the strongest privacy settings to prevent breaches of confidentiality. Children and other participants in sites must not be able to be identified.

The content and postings in Elevate and Academy hosted sites must be moderated. Moderation is the responsibility of the Head teacher and the administrator that sets up or initiates the site.

The Academy social media team must designate at least one approved site Administrator and one Moderator whose role it is to review and moderate the content, including not posting or removal of comments which causes any breach. It is important that there are enough approved administrators and moderators to provide cover during leave and absences so that the site continues to be moderated.

For third-party-hosted sites such as social networking sites used for work purposes, the responsibility for protection and intervention lies first with the host site itself. However, different sites may have different models of intervention and it is ultimately the responsibility of the Employee creating the site to plan for and implement additional intervention, for example in the case of content raising child safeguarding concerns or comments likely to cause offence.

Behaviour likely to cause extreme offence, for example racist or homophobic insults, or likely to put a young person or adult at risk of harm must never be tolerated. Such comments must never be posted and appropriate authorities, for example the Police or Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), informed in the case of illegal content or behaviour.

Where necessary and practical individuals wishing to be 'friends' on a closed site must be **known people only, in the case of adults, those who have undergone appropriate security checks.**

Approval must also be obtained from the Head teacher to make an external organisation a 'friend' of the Academy site.

Social Media Site Creation Approval Form

Use of social media on behalf of Academies must be approved prior to setting up sites. Please complete the form below and forward it to the Head teacher for approval.

PURPOSE OF SETTING UP SOCIAL MEDIA SITE What are the aims you propose to achieve by setting up this site? What is the proposed content of the site?	
PROPOSED AUDIENCE (please tick) Academy staff Childs' family members External organisations Members of the public Others; please provide details	
PROPOSED CONTRIBUTORS (please tick) Academy staff Childs' family members External organisations Members of the public Others; please provide details	
ADMINISTRATION OF THE SITE	
Names of administrators (the site must have at least one approved administrator)	
Names of moderators (the site must have at least one approved moderator)	
Who will host the site?	
Proposed date of going live	
What security measures will you take to prevent unwanted or unsuitable individuals from contributing or becoming 'friends' of the site?	
SIGN OFF	

Proposer Name	
Proposer Signature	
Date	
Head teacher Name	
Head teacher signature	
Date	