



Devonshire House Preparatory School

Social Media Policy

Last review date	<i>September 2025</i>
Next review date	<i>September 2026</i>
Lead reviewer	<i>Liesl Chaudhury</i>

Serving North London Families

Devonshire House is a co-educational prep school, offering unparalleled preparation for senior school and life thereafter. Our unwavering emphasis on individual growth, within an inclusive community, balances traditional values and modern practice to inspire fearless life-long learning.

Our school values are:

- **Growth** – we reach high
- **Courage** – we learn fearlessly
- **Wonder** – we are inspired to find our spark
- **Belonging** – we care and come together

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy is in place to minimise the risks to the school through your use of social. It is designed to help you use these platforms and services responsibly, to minimise the risks and to ensure consistent standards of use of social media.

A social networking site is any website which enables its users to create profiles, form relationships and share information with other users. It also includes sites which have online discussion forums, chatrooms, media posting sites, blogs and any other social space online. It includes but is not limited to, sites such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Ping, YouTube, TikTok, Twitter and Wikipedia.

This policy applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during school/working hours or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff or any other IT equipment.



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This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policy on taking, storing and using images of children in the E-Safety Policy.

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether our equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach. If you are suspected of committing a breach of this policy you will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details so far as this is consistent with the right of an individual to private and family life.

You may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action.

Implementation of the policy

The Head has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy but has delegated day to day responsibility for its operation to the Head of Technology. Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risk also lies with the Head Technology and the IT Engineer.

All staff have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that they understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and if necessary, enforce this policy by acting when behaviour falls below its requirements.

All staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Head and/or the Head of Technology. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Head of Technology.

Relationship with other School policies

If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, you are prohibited from using social media to:

- breach our Use of Email, Internet and Communication Systems Policy;
- breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;



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- breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality;
- breach our Disciplinary Policy or related rules, policies and procedures;
- defame or disparage the school or our affiliates, parents, staff, pupils, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders;
- harass or bully other staff in any way or breach our Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy or Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy;
- unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties or breach our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy;
- breach our Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague, pupil or parent online);
- breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).

Behaviour online can be permanent and so you must be extra cautious about what you say as it can be harder to retract.

You must also be aware of the particular risks to internet security that social media presents and so to comply with our existing policy on internet security (see E-Safety Policy) you must take any extra measures necessary not to allow any of your actions on social media sites to create vulnerability to our systems.

Staff who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

General rules for the responsible use of social media

You must be aware that your role comes with particular responsibilities, and you must adhere to our strict approach to social media.

You must:

- ensure that wherever possible your privacy settings on social media sites are set so that pupils cannot access information relating to your personal lives;
- obtain the prior written approval of the [Head], to the wording of any personal profile which you intend to create where the school is named or mentioned on a social networking site;



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- seek approval from the Head before you speak about or make any comments on our behalf on the internet or through any social networking site;
- report to your Line Manager immediately if you see any information on the internet or on social networking sites that disparages or reflects poorly on the school or raises any safeguarding concerns about pupils within the school;
- immediately remove any internet postings which are deemed by us to constitute a breach of this or any other school policy;
- if applicable, consider whether a particular post puts your effectiveness as a teacher at risk;
- post only what you want the world to see.

You must not:

- provide references for other individuals, on social or professional networking sites, as such references whether positive or negative can be attributed to the school and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and us;
- post or publish on the internet or on any social networking site, any reference to the school, your colleagues, parents or pupils;
- use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libellous. You must exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colourful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterisations;
- discuss pupils or colleagues or criticise the school or staff;
- post images that include pupils;
- harass or bully other members of staff;
- attempt to communicate with pupils on any personal social network sites;
- initiate friendships with pupils on any personal social network sites;
- accept pupils as friends on any such sites; staff must decline any pupil-initiated friend requests.

The use of social media for school purposes and in the School's name

Social media should not be used for purposes relating to the school's business or the delivery of its curriculum to pupils unless the prior authority of the Head has



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been obtained. Any breach of this restriction will be treated as a disciplinary matter. If you are permitted to use social media platforms in the school's name, in addition to complying with the general rules above, you must also:

- clearly identify who you are, including your name and job title, and include contact details as appropriate as instructed by the Head of Marketing, Admissions and Communications;
- ensure that all arrangements with any third party in relation to your use of social media (e.g. online advertising, search engine optimisation or other arrangements) are properly documented, notified and approved by the Head of Marketing, Admissions and Communications ;
- ensure that your use of our logos and other branding material is consistent with our relevant policies and procedures and is approved by the Head of Marketing, Admissions and Communications;
- ensure that your communications are professional in tone rather than overly informal; and
- link back to our website as appropriate to highlight our offering.

Any social media accounts (including blogs, forums, twitter etc), sites or pages used or set up for the purpose of furthering the school's business or facilitating the provision of the curriculum to its pupils shall remain the property of the school and the Head of Marketing, Admissions and Communications must have access to it.

Personal use of social media

We recognise that you may work long hours and occasionally may desire to use social media for personal activities at the office or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communication systems (including via smartphones and tablets). We authorise such occasional use provided use is minimal and takes place substantially out of normal working hours (i.e. during your lunch break or before or after work) and so long as it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content, does not interfere with your employment responsibilities or productivity and is in accordance with this Policy.

Circulating or posting commercial, personal, religious or political solicitations, or promotion of outside organisations unrelated to the school's business are also prohibited. You must ensure that your use of social media does not create any breaches of internet security and therefore must be careful to avoid any applications that might interrupt our IT systems. Excessive use of social media that



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interrupts productivity will be subject to a disciplinary procedure, consistent with this policy.

Permission to use our systems to access social media platforms for personal use may be withdrawn at any time at our discretion.

The monitoring of social media

The school's right to monitor, intercept and review communications applies equally to the use of social media platforms (and any postings and activities) made via our system or network. Any such monitoring will be for legitimate business purposes which include:

- ascertaining and demonstrating that our rules and being complied with;
- demonstrating that expected standards are being met by those using the systems; and
- for the detection and investigation of unauthorised use of the systems (including where this is necessary to prevent or detect crime).

This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, log-ins, recordings and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network monitoring technologies.

We may store copies of such data or communications for as long as is necessary for our legitimate business purposes in accordance with data protection law. We may delete such copies periodically or from time to time without notice when their retention is no longer necessary.

Further information on monitoring can be found in our E-Safety Policy and Staff Privacy Notice.

Do not use our IT resources and communication systems for any matter that you wish to be kept private or confidential from the school.

Social media and the end of employment

If your employment with us should end, for whatever reason, any personal profiles on social networking sites should be immediately amended to reflect the fact that you are no longer employed or associated with the school.



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All professional contacts that you have made through your course of employment with us belong to us, regardless of whether you have made social media connections with them.

On the termination of employment for any reason, and when requested by us at any time, you will provide to the Head of Technology any relevant passwords and other information to allow access to any social media site, page or account which has been used or set up for the purpose of furthering the school's business or facilitating the provision of our curriculum and will relinquish any authority you may have to manage or administer any such site, page or account.