

Venture Learning

Social Media Policy

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Introduction

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) is a broad term for any kind of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other. However some games, for example Minecraft or World of Warcraft and video sharing platforms such as You Tube have social media elements to them.

Venture Learning recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. As an organisation, we actively engage with social media including Instagram and Twitter, to share good practice and to promote the achievements of our students.

Venture Learning's e-safety and PSHE curriculum should enable the students to be safe and responsible users of social media.

Venture Learning respects privacy and understands that staff, students and parents/carers are likely to engage in various forms of social media as part of their personal lives. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation. This policy:

- applies to all staff and to all online communications which directly or indirectly, represent the school;
- applies to such online communications posted at any time and from anywhere;
- encourages the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education; and,
- defines the monitoring of public social media activity pertaining to the school.

Professional communications are those made through official channels, posted on a Venture Learning account or using the Venture Learning name. All professional communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications are those made via a personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with Venture Learning, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of Venture Learning with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon Venture Learning are outside the scope of this policy.

Key Staff and Contacts

Provision Based Contacts

Name	Role
Rhys Griffiths	**Head of Provision**
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Section 1: Roles and Responsibilities

Venture Learning is responsible for regularly monitoring official social media accounts. Any comments, queries or complaints made through those accounts must be responded to within 2 working days even if the response is only to acknowledge receipt. Regular monitoring and early intervention is essential in case a situation arises where bullying or any other inappropriate behaviour arises on a Venture Learning social media account.

1.1 Head of Provision

Is responsible for:

- facilitating training and guidance on Social Media use;
- reviewing and implementing the Social Media policy;
- ensuring that all staff have signed a Social Media Acceptable Use Agreement;
- taking a lead role in investigating any reported incidents or concerns;
- making an initial assessment when an incident is reported and involving appropriate staff and external agencies as required; and,
- approving the creation of professional accounts.

1.2 Social Media Coordinator

Is responsible for:

- creating the account following approval from the Head of Provision;
- storing account details, including passwords securely; and,
- monitoring and contributing to the account.

1.3 All Staff

All staff must sign a Social Media Acceptable Use Agreement. They are responsible for:

- knowing the contents of and ensuring that any use of social media is carried out in line with this and other relevant policies including Data Protection & GDPR;
- attending appropriate training;
- regularly monitoring, updating and managing content he/she has posted via Venture Learning accounts; and,
- adding an appropriate disclaimer to personal accounts when naming Venture Learning.

1.4 Parents/carers

Parents are encouraged to comment on official accounts or post appropriately about Venture Learning. In the event of any offensive or inappropriate comments being made, Venture Leearning will ask the parent/carer to remove the post and invite them to discuss the issues in person. If necessary, parents will be referred to Venture Learning's complaint procedures.

Section 2: Operation of this Policy

2.1 Behaviour on Social Media

Venture Learning requires that all users using social media adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this policy and other relevant policies.

Digital communications by staff must be professional and respectful at all times and in accordance with this policy. Staff will not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make ill-considered comments or judgments about colleagues. Staff must ensure that confidentiality is maintained on social media including after their employment with Venture Learning has ceased.

Users must declare who they are in social media posts or accounts. Anonymous posts are discouraged in relation to school activity.

The use of social media by staff while at work may be monitored, in line with school policies. Venture Learning permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites. However, where excessive use is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken.

Unacceptable conduct, (e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) is considered extremely serious and is a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct. As such, it will be investigated as per the grievance and disciplinary procedure.

Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, Venture Learning will deal with the matter internally. Where conduct is considered illegal, the school will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies, and may take action according to the disciplinary policy.

2.2 Legal Considerations

Users of social media should consider the copyright of the content they are sharing and, where necessary, should seek permission from the copyright holder before sharing.

Users must ensure that their use of social media does not infringe upon relevant data protection laws, or breach confidentiality.

2.3 Handling Abuse

When acting on behalf of Venture Learning, staff should handle offensive comments swiftly and with sensitivity.

If a conversation turns and becomes offensive or unacceptable, professional users should block, report or delete other users or their comments/posts and should inform the audience exactly why the action was taken.

If you feel that you or someone else is subject to abuse by colleagues through use of a social networking site, then this action must be reported immediately to Venture Learning.

2.4 Tone

The tone of content published on social media should be appropriate to the audience, whilst retaining appropriate levels of professional standards. Messages should be engaging, conversational and informative.

2.5 Use of Images

School use of images can be assumed to be acceptable, providing the following guidelines are strictly adhered to:

- permission to use any photos or video recordings should be sought in line with the data protection and GDPR policy. If anyone, for any reason, asks not to be filmed or photographed then their wishes should be respected;
- under no circumstances should staff share or upload student pictures online other than via official Venture Learning social media accounts;
- staff should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on school social media accounts. Students should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on any school list of children whose images must not be published; and,
- if a member of staff inadvertently takes a compromising picture which could be misconstrued or misused, they must delete it immediately.

2.6 Personal Use

All staff should ensure that where a personal account is used which associates itself with, or impacts on Venture Learning, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of Venture Learning with an appropriate disclaimer.

Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon Venture Learning are outside the scope of this policy. Where excessive personal use of social media on site is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken.

Staff are not permitted to follow or engage with current or prior students of Venture Learning on any personal social media network account.