

Introduction

This policy sets out our organisation's expectations on the workforce's use of social media and reminds staff of the standards of behaviour expected of them when they are posting on social media, as well as the consequences of falling below those standards.

For the purposes of this policy, social media is any online platform or app that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes social forums such as X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs and video and image-sharing websites such as YouTube. Internally this can also mean Teams.

Employees should be aware that there are many more examples of social media than can be listed here and this is a constantly changing area. Employees should follow these guidelines in relation to any social media that they use.

Use of social media at work

Bosco encourages employees to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media as part of their work. It is an important part of how we communicate with each other and also our parents and children.

Employees may contribute to Bosco social media activities by writing blogs or managing a Facebook account/running an official X (formerly known as Twitter) account for Bosco for example.

Employees must be aware at all times that, while contributing to our social media activities, they are representing Bosco. Staff who use social media as part of their job must adhere to the following rules.

Employees should use the same safeguards as they would with any other form of communication about Bosco in the public sphere. These safeguards include:

- Making sure that the communication has a purpose and a benefit to Bosco
- Obtaining permission from the Principal or a Senior Manager before embarking on a public campaign using social media; and
- Getting a colleague to check the content before it is published

Any communications that employees make in a professional capacity through social media must not:

- Bring Bosco into disrepute, for example by:
 1. Criticising or arguing with parents, colleagues others in the community;
 2. Making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisation
 3. Posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content
- Breach confidentiality, for example by:
 1. Revealing information about Bosco that you have not been asked to post about including conversations that you have had both orally or through email without explicit permission
 2. Giving away confidential information about an individual (for instance a colleague or parent or child) or another organisation (e.g. someone's contact information or information not
 3. Discussing Bosco's internal workings or future plans that have not been communicated to parents or the wider public

- Breach copyright, for example by:
 1. Using someone else's images or written content without permission;
 2. Failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something; or
 3. Do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:
 - a. Making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender or race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age
 - b. Using social media to bully another individual (such as another employee or Bosco)
 - c. Posting images or providing links that are discriminatory or offensive
 4. Be aware of safeguarding issues and materials which may adversely impact on children and vulnerable adults.
 5. Challenge and report inappropriate use of media.

Use of social media at work

Employees should not be on personal/non-work related social media whilst at work. They are not permitted to make personal use of telephones e-mail and internet facilities during work time. They may only use them at the Principal's discretion, or when there is an urgent need to contact someone in an emergency. The time spent should be kept to a minimum. Employees should also inform their family and friends only to contact them at work when it is necessary.

Staff may not use their personal mobile phones during work time and should not take personal phones or other personal electronic equipment into the classroom.

Employees must not view their computer or anything stored on it as personal. They must not download, store, display, view, retrieve or send electronic material that uses unauthorised encryption, contains programme files, is obscene, indecent, sexist, racist, defamatory, abusive, in breach of copyright, confidential, may constitute harassment, violate an individual's dignity, or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or otherwise inappropriate environment. Head Teachers may access to an employee mailbox or gain access to Internet usage reports for the following reasons at any time with no notice to:

- ensure compliance with this policy,
- monitor standards of service or
- to prevent, investigate or detect unauthorised use of the IT system or criminal activities.

If pupils are found to have accessed such images, this should be reported to the Principal

It is also strictly forbidden to download any software from or to load software onto the school's IT system except with the prior written authorisation of the Principal.

Employees should use the Internet and electronic mail in exactly the same way as they would correspond to anyone on school headed notepaper and must remember that all electronic mail falls within the framework of the Data Protection legislation. Employees must not correspond on any aspect of School business, unless it falls within the employee's job description and should not be treated as a confidential means of communication.

Monitoring use of social media during work time

Bosco reserves the right to monitor employees' social media usage. We consider that valid reasons for checking an employee's internet usage include suspicions that the employee has:

- been using social media for personal/non-work related reasons when they should be working; or
- acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy.

Monitoring will be conducted [in accordance with an impact assessment that our organisation has carried out to ensure that monitoring is necessary and proportionate. Monitoring is in Bosco's legitimate interests and is to ensure that this policy on use of social media is being complied with.

The data controller is Alfredo Santos alfredo@bosco.ac.uk

Monitoring will consist of [checking the social media sites that an employee has visited, the duration of such visits and the content that the employee has contributed on such sites].

[Monitoring will normally be conducted by our Bosco's data security officer. The information obtained through monitoring may be shared internally, including with members of the HR team, an employee's line manager, managers in the business area in which the employee works and IT staff if access to the data is necessary for performance of their roles. However, information would normally be shared in this way only if our organisation has reasonable grounds to believe that there has been a breach of the rules set out in this policy.]

[The information gathered through monitoring will be retained only long enough for any breach of this policy to come to light and for any investigation to be conducted. Data is normally securely destroyed after [insert number of days/weeks, depending on the reasons for monitoring].]

Information obtained through monitoring will not be disclosed to third parties (unless our organisation is under a duty to report matters to a regulatory authority or to a law enforcement agency).

Workers have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in our data protection policy. If workers believe that our organisation has not complied with their data protection rights, they can complain to the Information Commissioner.

Social media in your personal life

Our organisation recognises that many employees make use of social media in a personal capacity. While they are not acting on behalf of our organisation, employees must be aware that they can damage our organisation if they are recognised as being one of our employees.

- Staff should not establish or seek to establish any social contact with a pupil or their parents/carers and any contact you do have should be reported to the Principal.
- It is recognised that as you may have established friends in the community who attend Bosco, and if you do this should be reported to Senior Management and you should ensure you maintain strict confidentiality and follow the guidance in this and the relevant data protection, safeguarding and social media policies. If you wish to decline a friend/follow offer or ignore a message, then respond that it is contrary to best practice expected of staff at Bosco. Please note that by accepting requests can lead to safeguarding concerns and issues.
- Under no circumstances should you accept follow/friend requests with pupils. If a student does so, in the first instance, ignore and delete the request. Block the student from viewing your profile. Check your privacy settings again and consider changing your display name or profile picture. Immediately inform the Principal and Safeguarding Lead (Senior Leadership). If the student asks you about the friend request in person tell them that you're not allowed to accept friend requests from students. If they send you further messages show these immediately and screenshots to the Principal and DSL.
- If you see something on social media in your private life that is contrary to the principals of safeguarding (for instance a friend or relative sharing an inappropriate video) you are under the duty to report this to the designated safeguarding lead and follow the safeguarding policy and how to report this to the relevant authorities.
- Consider changing your display name - use your first and middle name, use a maiden name, spell your surname backwards, use a nickname, or use a contraction.
- Consider changing your profile picture to something unidentifiable, or if not, ensure the image is professional.
- Check your privacy settings regularly.
- Be careful about tagging other staff members in images or posts.
- Do not share anything publicly that you wouldn't be just as happy showing your pupils.
- The basic premise is to exercise common sense. What you write on social networking sites is essentially in the public domain, even if you have privacy settings or material is posted on a closed profile, group or messages.
- Ensure that your online activities or expressed opinions do not interfere with or conflict with your job or your colleagues (for example many roles within schools are viewed as role models, views expressed should not conflict with this). Ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you should present yourself with colleagues and users of services
- Do not download or copy Bosco materials without permission
- If you publish content to a website not owned by the school, and it has something to do with work that you do as an employee of the school, use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of my employer."
- Maintain boundaries between your personal and professional lives, including customising your privacy settings and avoiding inappropriate personal information becoming visible to members of the group (please note that information can be passed on by individuals that have been allowed access to and any inappropriate views or content will be viewed as contravening the code of conduct)
- Do not associate yourself with Bosco on your personal profile (e.g. by setting it as your workplace, or by 'checking in' at a college event).
- Do not discuss students or Bosco related issues in any chat groups other than your Bosco Teams account.

- Do not link your work email address to your social media accounts. Anyone who has this address (or your personal email address / mobile number) is able to find you using this information.
- Consider uninstalling social media apps from your phone, The app recognises wi-fi connections and makes friend suggestions based on who else uses the same wi-fi connection (such as parents or students).

Any communications that employees make in their personal use of social media must not:

- bring our organisation into disrepute, for example by:
 - criticising or arguing with parents, colleagues or those in the education industry;
 - making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or
 - posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;
- breach confidentiality, for example by:
 - revealing information owned by our organisation;
 - giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague, parent or child) or other rival organisations and external providers; or
 - discussing our organisation's internal workings or its future plans that have not been communicated to the parents and the wider public;
- breach copyright, for example by:
 - using someone else's images or written content without permission;
 - failing to give acknowledgment where permission has been given to reproduce something; or
- do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:
 - making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
 - using social media to bully another individual (such as an employee of our organisation); or
 - posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content.

Use of social media in the recruitment process

Unless it is in relation to finding candidates (for example, if an individual has put their details on social media websites for the purpose of attracting prospective employers), Bosco should conduct searches, either themselves or through a third party, on social media only when these are directly relevant to the applicant's skills or claims that they have made in the recruitment process. For instance:

- a prospective employee might claim that they have used social media in their previous job (for example, as a publicity tool); or

- a prospective employee's social media use may be directly relevant to a claim made in their application (for example, if they run a blog based around a hobby mentioned in their CV or a skill in which they claim to be proficient).

There should be no systematic or routine checking of prospective employees' online social media activities, as conducting these searches during the selection process might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics (for example, sexual orientation or religious beliefs) played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with our organisation's equal opportunities policy.]

Disciplinary action over social media use

All employees are required to adhere to this policy. Employees should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action. Serious breaches of this policy, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity that might cause serious damage to our organisation, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

What to do if you feel bullied and harassed

Please refer to the respect at work/grievance and disciplinary policy if this is related to a staff member. In this case and with any pupil, parent or contact related to work that is bullying or harassing you, report this to the Principal/Director of Operations. However:

- Do not retaliate or respond in anyway.
- Save evidence of any abuse by taking screenshots and recording the time and date it occurred.
- Report the material to Facebook or relevant social network and ask them to remove it.
- If the perpetrator is a parent or other external adult, a senior member of staff should invite them to a meeting to address their concerns, address any reasonable complaints and/or request they remove the offending comments or material.
- If the comments are racist, sexist, of a sexual nature or constitute a hate crime, you or someone from the school should consider contacting the police.

Facebook privacy settings

Change the visibility of your posts and stories to 'Friends', rather than 'Public'. Otherwise, pupils and their families may be able to see your posts and pictures you've been tagged in, even if you haven't accepted a friend request or they're not on Facebook

Don't forget to check your old posts and photos – see [Facebook's privacy support page](#) for step-by-step instructions on how to do this

The public may still be able to see posts you've 'liked', even if your profile settings are private, because this depends on the privacy settings of the original poster.

Prevent search engines from indexing your profile so people can't search for you by name – see [Facebook's step-by-step instructions](#)

Remember, some information is always public; your display name, profile picture, cover photo, user ID (in the URL for your profile), country, age range and gender.

Google your name to see what information about you is visible to the public.

Instagram privacy settings

Change your profile visibility from the default 'Public' setting to 'Private'. Otherwise, pupils and their families will be able to see your posts, reels, locations, and who you are following and are followed by. Go to the [Instagram Help Centre](#) for support with your privacy settings

If a pupil or parent followed you before you changed your privacy settings, block them to prevent them seeing your posts.

Be careful about giving third-party apps or websites access to your Instagram account, and check app privileges in your phone to see if any apps currently have access. Sharing your information can put your account at risk and make you visible on search engines, even if you have set your account to 'Private'.

Remember, some information is always public; your username, your bio and your profile picture.

Google your name to see what information about you is visible to the public

X privacy settings

If you have a Twitter account specifically for or about teaching, make sure you don't include identifying information about yourself or Bosco. Use a nickname, for example 'Ms M'.

Change the visibility on your birth date to 'You follow each other' to prevent pupils and parents seeing this personal information. See Twitter's [profile visibility guidance](#) for more support

Remember, your username, biography, location, website, and profile picture are always public and can be seen by students and parents, even if they don't follow you and you have protected your tweets.

Protect your tweets by checking the box in the 'Audience and tagging' section of your privacy settings. This will mean only your approved followers can see your tweets.

Google your name to see what information about you is visible to the public.

I confirm that I have read and understood this policy

NAME -----

DATE-----