

LT2 Social Media Policy (for Staff)

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Policy Level (Trust/School)	Trust	
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LT2 Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

Our vision is to build a group of outstanding Schools across phases, including specialist provision, to become (a mid-size) Trust that provides vibrant and inclusive learning environments in which every member of the learning community is passionate about learning. The Trust is led by a CEO (Chief Executive Officer) who works closely with Headteachers who lead the two Schools supported by a Central Team to support Finance, HR (Human Resources), Estates and Governance.

Mission

LT2 Trust and Schools will have a relentless focus on high achievement, supported by robust organisational structures and governance. We aim to give children and young people in our care the knowledge, skills and experiences to expand their minds and world view to enable them to develop a naturally inquisitive approach to learning and life, fit for an ever-changing world.

Ultimately, we will educate and support all children attending LT2 Schools to grow into capable and contributing citizens who have developed the personal attributes and characteristics that will enable them to become considerate, self-reliant and confident young people who are ready for the next stage of their lives.

Values

The Trust Values underpin the mission and provide the basis on which LT2 Schools can articulate the key behavioural characteristics that promote a positive philosophy. Our six values are unseen drivers of our behaviour as experienced by others and are designed to create a shared organisational culture:

Kindness – The quality of friendliness, generosity, and consideration

Collaboration – The belief that working and learning with others will lead to greater success

Curiosity – A strong desire to know and to learn

Resilience – The ability to recover quickly and learn from the difficulties we face

Respect – To appreciate the importance of understanding and admiration for others and self, honesty

Endeavour – The belief that hard work is needed to achieve something of which we can be proud

Definitions

- Where the word 'Trust' is used in this document it refers to The Learning Today Leading Tomorrow Trust.
- Where the words 'Trust Board' are used it refers to the board of Trustees who set the vision for the Trust and hold the executive leadership team to account for delivering the Trust's strategic plan.
- The term 'use' includes accessing social networking sites by means of PC, mobile phone or by any other device.

1. Organisation and Responsibilities

1.1 Introduction

The Trust recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics using a wide variety of social media or social networking sites, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat, blogs and Wikis. However, some online interactive games and video sharing platforms, such as YouTube have social media elements to them.

The Trust will use the website, social media and social networking accounts to:

- Strengthen communication links with parents, carers, guardians and the wider community.
- Promote successes of the schools and pupils to a wider audience
- Promote special events such as parent/carers workshops, awareness days etc.
- Provide information regarding the school day, such as what the children have been learning or what happened when visitors come to the schools.
- Photographs of students will only be used if parental permission has been granted and a child's full name will never be used.
- Signpost links to interesting articles to enhance learning opportunities.

However, staff use of social media can pose risks to the Trust's confidential and proprietary information, its reputation and it can jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations.

To minimise these risks, avoid loss of productivity and to ensure that IT resources and communications systems are used only for appropriate work-related purposes, all staff are required to comply with the provisions in this policy.

This policy applies to all Trust staff regardless of their employment status. This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades within the Trust, including senior managers, officers, governors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as Staff in this policy). Third parties who have access to Trust electronic communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with this policy.

This policy is intended to help staff make appropriate decisions about the use of social media in all forms including blogs, wikis, social networking websites, podcasts, forums, message board or comments on web-articles or any other internet postings such as Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, TikTok and Wikipedia.

This policy outlines the standards staff are required to observe when using social media for both work and personal purposes, whether during work hours or otherwise, the circumstance in which the Trust may monitor staff use and the action the Trust may take in respect to breaches of this policy. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using Trust's IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.

This policy does not form part of the terms and conditions of an employee's employment with the Trust and is not intended to have contractual effect. It does however set out the Trust's current practices and required standards of conduct and all staff are required to comply with its contents. Breach of the provisions of this policy will be treated as a

disciplinary offence which may result in disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal in accordance with the LT2 Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether the Trust's equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with the investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

This policy may be amended from time to time and staff will be notified of any changes no later than one month from the date those changes are intended to take effect.

Staff 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 in itself result in disciplinary action.

1.2 Guidance under this Policy

The HR Officer is responsible for providing advice and guidance under this policy and reviewing and updating the policy as required.

1.3 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees, as a corporate body, has the responsibility to set the strategic direction and objectives of all matters across the Trust.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that high standards of corporate governance are maintained.

The Chair of the Trust is responsible for managing the CEO, Trustees and Governors under this policy.

1.4 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO of Learning Today Leading Tomorrow Trust (LT2):

- Takes overall responsibility for the implementation of policies and procedures
- Must provide reports as appropriate to Trustees in relation to this policy
- Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated and authorised within the organisations budget to meet statutory procedures and standards across the Trust
- Is responsible for managing the Headteachers and centrally appointed staff under this policy

1.5 Headteachers

Headteachers of LT2 Schools are responsible for:

- The implementation of and compliance with this policy within their School ensuring competence in those staff who are responsible for and involved in the operation of this policy and associated guidance
- Identifying training needs
- Communicating this policy to all relevant people within the School
- Managing School-based teaching and associate staff under this policy

1.6 Senior and Middle Leaders (and other Supervisory Roles)

Although the Headteacher is responsible overall for the implementation of this policy in their school, managers have some specific responsibilities:

- Applying this policy within their own department and area of work
- Resolving any issues members of staff refer to them, informing the Headteacher of any issues to which they cannot achieve a satisfactory solution with the resources available to them
- Where required, conduct formal meetings, undertake relevant training in relation to this policy and ensure effective and competent operation of this policy

1.7 Other Employee Duties

All employees have a responsibility to:

- Comply with this policy and to co-operate with the schools' leadership and management on all matters relating to it
- Undertake any training recommended by their Line Manager

1.8 Related Policies and Procedures

- LT2 Information Security and Acceptable Use Policies
- LT2 Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- LT2 Monitoring Policy
- LT2 Code of Conduct
- LT2 Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- LT2 Data Protection Policy

1.9 Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

These procedures have been agreed by the Board of Trustees, who will approve them whenever reviewed.

2. Purpose of this Policy

The Trust and its Schools respect privacy and understand that staff and pupils/students may use social media networks in private lives. However, personal communications likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or the Trust's/Schools reputation are within the scope of this policy. Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of Trust policies. Any internet post could breach any of our policies in forums. For example, staff are prohibited from using social media to:

- Breach the LT2 Information Security Policy and Acceptable Use Policies
- Breach Trust obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies
- Breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality or disclose sensitive data

- Breach disciplinary rules
- Defame or disparage the Trust, its staff, pupils or parents, affiliates, partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders. Under no circumstances should school pupils or parents, past or present, be added as friends, unless known to you as a friend or relative prior to appointment.
- Upload photographs to your social networking sites of yourself or any other employee taken in a work situation. No defamatory comments, photographs, images or conversations about the Trust should be made on such sites at any time.
- Breach the LT2 Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy by commenting on such sites which amount to bullying, harassment or any other detriment towards members of staff or any other individual working in connection with the Trust.
- Unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties or breach the LT2 Equal Opportunities Policy
- Breach our Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague 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)

Staff should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the Trust and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.

Staff who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, the consequences will be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate procedures. Serious breaches could result in the dismissal of the employee. Where conduct is considered to be unlawful, the school will report the matter to the police and other external agencies.

The seriousness of the breach will be considered including the nature of the content, how long the content remained visible on the social media site, the potential for recirculation by others and the impact on the School/Trust or the individuals concerned.

3. Personal Use of Social Media

Personal use of social media is never permitted during working time or by means of the Trust's computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems. Access to email and the internet is provided during working hours for the purpose of effectively completing work and use must comply with all Trust policies and procedures.

The Trust will not tolerate employees using social networking sites for unofficial or inappropriate uses.

Security settings should be maintained at the highest level in order to prevent members of the public seeing any of your personal information.

Where applications allow the posting of messages online, users must be mindful that the right to freedom of expression attaches only to lawful conduct.

The Local Authority expects that users of social networking applications will always exercise the right of freedom of expression with due consideration for the rights of others and strictly in accordance with these Terms of Use.

4. Monitoring

Staff should be aware that any use of social media websites (whether or not accessed for work-related purposes) may be monitored and, where breaches of this policy are found, action may be taken under our Disciplinary Procedure. Misuse of social media websites can, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence or otherwise give rise to legal liability against the staff member and the Trust.

In particular, uploading, forwarding or posting a link to any of the following types of material on a social media website, whether in a professional or personal capacity, will amount to gross misconduct (this list is not exhaustive):

- Pornographic material (that is, writing, pictures, films and video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature)
- A false and defamatory statement about any person or organisation
- Material which is offensive, obscene, criminal discriminatory, derogatory or may cause embarrassment to Trust, staff, students, parents/carers or the wider community
- Confidential information relating to any of the activities of the Trust or its staff (which the staff member does not have express authority to disseminate)
- Any other statement which is likely to create any liability (whether criminal or civil, and whether for the staff member or Trust)
- Material in breach of copyright or other intellectual property rights, or which invades the privacy of any person

Any such action will be addressed under the Disciplinary Procedure and is likely to result in summary dismissal.

The contents of IT resources and communications systems are the Trust's property. Therefore, staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post conversation or message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on any Trust electronic information and communications systems.

The Trust reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes. This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, logins, recordings and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network monitoring technologies.

The Trust may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time after they are created and may delete such copies from time to time without notice. Destruction of any records will be completed in line with the LT2 Records Management Policy.

All Staff are advised not to use Trust IT resources and communications systems for any matter that they wish to be kept private or confidential from the Trust.

Where evidence of misuse is found the Trust may undertake a detailed investigation in accordance with the LT2 Disciplinary Procedure, involving the examination and disclosure of monitoring records to those nominated to undertake the investigation and any witnesses or managers involved in the investigation. If necessary, such information may be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.

If a staff member notices any use of social media by other members of staff in breach of this policy, they should report it to the Headteacher or CEO.

School/Trust media accounts must be monitored regularly and frequently. Any comments, queries or complaints made through those accounts must be responded to within 48 hours during term-time (or on the next working day if received at a weekend) even if the response is only to acknowledge receipt. During school holidays, an automated message should be in place to state when the account will next be monitored and how to get in contact in the case of an emergency. Regular monitoring and intervention are essential in case a situation arises where bullying or any other inappropriate behaviour arises on a school social media account.

5. Educational or Extra Curricular Use of Social Media

The Trust recognises the importance of the internet in shaping public thinking about the Trust and its Schools. The Trust also recognises the importance of staff joining in and helping shape industry conversation and direction through interaction in social media.

Before using work-related social media, staff must:

- Have sought express written approval for such communication/creation of a social media channel from the Headteacher/CEO in advance
- Have read and understood this policy and the LT2 Code of Conduct
- Ensured the profile meets the required standard as set in this document.

Trust Strategic IT Manager holds a register of approved sites (e.g., Facebook and LinkedIn). The Trust performs due diligence against an agreed checklist of safeguards before adding an approved site to the checklist.

If a staff member's duties require them to speak on behalf of the Trust in a social media environment, they must still seek express, written approval for such communication from the Headteacher in advance who may require that they undergo training before they do so and impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to their activities.

Likewise, if a staff member is contacted for comments about the Trust for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, they must direct the inquiry to the Headteacher and must not respond without advanced written approval.

5.1 Non-approved Sites

Approved sites are those above. On non-approved sites Learning Today Leading Tomorrow should not be mentioned or company profiles created without express permission of the Headteacher/CEO. Any breach of this policy is considered damaging to the Trust and its public image and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

If a staff member notices any content posted on social media about the Trust or School (whether complementary or critical), they should report it to the Headteacher/CEO.

Do not upload, post, forward or post a link to any abusive, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory or defamatory content.

Any member of staff who feels that they have been harassed or bullied or are offended by material posted or uploaded by a colleague onto a social media website should inform the Headteacher/CEO.

Never disclose commercially sensitive, anti-competitive, private or confidential information. If a staff member is unsure as to whether the information, they wish to share falls within one of these categories, they should discuss this with their Line Manager or Headteacher.

6. Recruitment

The Trust may use internet searches to perform pre-employment checks on candidates in the course of recruitment. Where the Trust does this, it will act in accordance with its data protection and equal opportunities obligations.

The recruitment process are increasingly utilising social media as a method of engaging jobseekers.

7. Rules for use of social media for School/Trust accounts

Whenever staff use social media, they should adhere to the following general rules:

7.1 Use of approved sites:

If a staff member is running a social media account on behalf of the Trust on an approved site, the following structure must be adhered to:

- The company details must be displayed in line with the approved Trust/School style guides
- The official Trust/School communication channel details must be included and not the staff members own company contact details unless express permission is granted by the Headteacher/CEO.
- The following text must be included under the Trust/School details:
Address of Registered Office:
Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow Trust (LT2),
Rugby Free Secondary School, Anderson Avenue Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 5PE
A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No: 09027131
- Use an approved stock image of the Trust/School's logo

7.2 Photographs for use of Social Media:

Any photos for any school-related social media posts may only be taken using school cameras/devices or devices that have been approved in advance by the CEO, Headteacher or Trust Strategic IT Manager. Where any device is used that

does not belong to the Trust all photos must be deleted immediately from the device, once the photos have been uploaded to a device belonging to the School/Trust.

7.3 Staff Protocol for use of Social Media:

Where any post is going to be made on the Trust/School's own social media the following steps must be taken:

1. Ensure that permission from the child's parent has been sought before information is used on social media. Usually, these permissions are sought in the school's general consent forms. Staff should check the forms in the student's school folder.
2. Ensure that there is no identifying information relating to a child/children in the post - for example any certificates in photos are blank/without names or the child's name cannot be seen on the piece of work.
3. The post must be a positive and relevant post relating to the children, the good work of staff, the school or any achievements.
4. Under no circumstances should staff share or upload student photos online other than via school owned social media accounts.
5. Social Media can also be used to issue updates or reminders to parents/guardians and the Headteacher will have overall responsibility for this. Should a staff member wish for any reminders to be issued they should contact the Headteacher to ensure that any post can be issued.
6. The proposed post must be presented to Headteacher for confirmation that the post can 'go live' before it is posted on any social media site.
7. The designated staff member who oversees the account will post the information, but all staff have responsibility to ensure that the Social Media Policy has been adhered to.
8. Departmental accounts should not be created, and everything should be posted through the school's main social media profiles. This can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, but it is important that departmental accounts do not detract from the main school profiles.

8. General rules for use of social media and to protect the reputation of the Trust

On Trust/School accounts staff must:

- Before including a link to a third-party website, check that any terms and conditions of that website permit it to be linked. All links must be done so that it is clear to the user that they have moved to the third party's website
- When making use of any social media platform, read and comply with its terms of use
- Not post, upload, forward or post a link to chain mail, junk mail, cartoons, jokes or gossip when using Trust or School accounts

On both Trust/School accounts and on personal social media accounts staff must:

- Always consider others' privacy and avoid discussing topics that may be inflammatory e.g., politics and religion.
- Should make it clear in any social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. Staff should write in the first person and use a personal rather than Trust e-mail address when communicating via social media. If

staff disclose whether directly or indirectly their affiliation to the Trust as a member of staff whether past, current or prospective, they must also state that their views do not represent those of the Trust.

- Avoid publishing personal contact details where they can be accessed and used widely by people, they did not intend to see them, and never publish anyone else's contact details
- Activity on social media websites during office hours should complement and/or support the staff member's role and should be used in moderation.
- Staff must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:
 - The Trust or its Schools
 - Current, past or prospective staff as defined in this policy
 - Current, past or prospective pupils
 - Parents, carers or families of any current/past/prospective students
 - The Trust's suppliers and services providers
 - Other affiliates and stakeholders
- Avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the Trust's reputation, even indirectly.
- Ensure that their profile and any content posted are consistent with the professional image they are required to present to colleagues, pupils and parents.

Avoid posting comments about confidential or sensitive School related topics. Even if staff make it clear that their views on such topics do not represent those of the Trust, such comments could still damage the Trust's reputation and incur potential liability

Staff are personally responsible for the content they publish and should be mindful of the impact their contribution might make to people's perceptions of the Trust as a company. If a staff member makes a mistake in a contribution, they should be prompt in admitting and correcting it. Staff should remember that what they publish might be available to be read by the public and may be available for many years. Staff should keep this in mind before they post content.

If a member of staff is uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, they should refrain from making the communication until they have discussed it with their Line Manager or Headteacher.

If a member of staff sees content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the Trust, it's staff, pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders, they are required to report this in the first instance to the Headteacher without unreasonable delay. All staff are responsible for protecting the Trust's reputation.

8.1 Respecting intellectual property and confidential information:

Staff should not do anything to jeopardise Trust confidential information and intellectual property through the use of social media.

In addition, staff should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property of other Trusts, organisations, companies and individuals, which can create liability for the Trust, as well as the individual author.

Staff must not use the Trust's logos, brand names, slogans or other trademarks, or post any of our confidential or proprietary information without express prior written permission from the Headteacher.

To protect the staff member and the Trust against liability for copyright infringement, where appropriate, staff should reference sources of particular information they post or upload and cite them accurately. If a staff member has any questions about whether a particular post or upload might violate anyone's copyright or trademark, ask the Headteacher/CEO in the first instance before making the communication.

8.2 Respecting colleagues, pupils, parents, clients, service providers and stakeholders

If any colleagues, pupils, parents, clients, service provider or stakeholder have access to a school learning platform where posting or commenting is enabled, the colleagues, pupils, parents, clients, service provider or stakeholder will be informed about acceptable use.

Staff must not post anything that their colleagues, the Trust's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders may find offensive, including discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity.

Staff must not post anything related to colleagues, the Trust's past, current or prospective pupils, parents, service providers or stakeholders without their advanced written permission.

In the event of any offensive or inappropriate comments being made, the school will ask the colleagues, pupils, parents, clients, service provider or stakeholder to remove the post and invite them to discuss the issues in person. If necessary, refer colleagues, pupils, parents, clients, service provider or stakeholder to the Trust's complaints procedures to raise an issue or complaint.