



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This is a guide for staff on using social media to promote the work of Westfield School and in a personal capacity.

What is Social Media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, X (Twitter) and Instagram.

Why do we use Social Media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Westfield School's work. It is important for some staff to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of our work to demonstrate meeting our charitable aims.

Why do we need a Social Media Policy?

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you are discussing issues relating to Westfield's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all staff and volunteers (including elected Sixth Formers) and applies to content posted on both a school device and a personal device. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, staff must read this policy.

Setting out the Social Media Policy

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Westfield, and the use of social media by staff in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help staff support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the school and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

Point of Contact for Social Media

Our Marketing Officer is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to the Marketing Officer. Only select staff members can post content on Westfield's official channels.

Managing the Account(s)

The Marketing Officer is responsible for reviewing and moderating content on a weekly basis. The Marketing Officer and the Head's PA and Headmaster can delete content in circumstances where it is necessary for swift action. Staff will be given appropriate training to keep up to date with new developments.

Which Social Media Channels do we use?

Facebook, X, Instagram

Using Westfield's Social Media Channels — Appropriate Conduct

- The Marketing Officer is responsible for setting up and managing Westfield's social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the Headmaster will have access to these accounts.

- Be an ambassador for our brand. Staff should ensure they reflect Westfield's values in what they post and use our tone of voice and ensure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for Westfield, and accurately reflects us correctly.
- Staff shouldn't post content about supporters or service users without their express permission. If staff are sharing information about supporters, service users or third party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from Westfield. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, staff must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.
- Always check facts. Staff should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.
- Staff should refrain from offering personal opinions via Westfield's social media accounts, either directly by commenting, or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about Westfield's position on a particular issue, please speak to the Marketing Officer.
- Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, X accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of Westfield. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, the Marketing Officer can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.
- If a complaint is made on Westfield's social media channels, staff should seek advice from the Marketing Officer before responding. If they are not available, then staff should speak to the Headmaster.

Use of Personal Social Media Accounts — Appropriate Conduct

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. Westfield staff are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with Westfield's values and policies, both online and in real life.

All staff will:

- Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive Westfield. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Westfield. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about Westfield's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Westfield's positions, policies or opinions."
- Staff who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at Westfield should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their Head of Faculty or the Headmaster. Similarly, staff who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for Westfield should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their Head of Faculty or Headmaster.
- Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with Westfield and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to all stakeholders.
- From time to time, Westfield may work with high profile individuals or organisations, including celebrities. Please don't approach high profile people from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the school, as this could hinder any potential relationships that are being managed by Westfield. This includes asking for retweets about the school.
- If you have any information about high profile people that have a connection to our cause, or if there is someone who you would like to support the school, please speak to the Marketing Officer to share the details.
- If a staff member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to Westfield, they should talk to the Marketing Officer and SLT immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.
- Westfield is a charitable organisation and therefore must not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing Westfield, staff must hold to Westfield's position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from Westfield and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
- Never use Westfield's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so.

- Always protect yourself and the school. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. When you are using social media sites at work, it is important that you do so safely. You can find more information on your responsibilities when using our computer systems in the IT Policy
- Think about your reputation as well as the school. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.
- Westfield will ensure that we are compliant with all the relevant laws including GDPR, privacy, copyright, defamation, equality and human rights law. We fully understand the implications that some posts can be criminal, where they constitute hate crime or are malicious or threatening.

Personal Social Media Accounts of Staff, Employees, Volunteers and Governors:

The above mentioned will adhere to our policy that:

- Any posts from personal accounts, if they choose to disclose their place of work, are aware of the consequences of their posts if it negatively impacts on us as a school.
- Any posts from personal accounts, if they choose to disclose their place of work should take particular care as personal views may be misinterpreted as being the views of the school.
- Westfield will take appropriate action where others post inappropriate or illegal content on our social media pages, including blocking users or reporting it to the police.

Further Guidelines

Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether staff are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring Westfield into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright law

It is critical that all staff abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

Confidentiality

Any communications that staff make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that Westfield is not ready to disclose yet or a news story that is embargoed until a particular date.

Discrimination and Harassment

Staff should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Westfield's social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

Protection and Intervention

The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook.

However, if a staff member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Marketing Officer and the DSL immediately.

Under 18s and Vulnerable People

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, staff should ensure the online relationship with Westfield follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Staff should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. Staff should also ensure that any site being visited is suitable for the young person and Westfield's content and other content is appropriate for them

Responsibilities and Breach of Policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of Westfield is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For staff, breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Please refer to our Disciplinary Policy (Employees) for further information on disciplinary procedures. Staff who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Deputy Head

Public Interest Disclosure

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, if a staff member releases information through Westfield's social media channels that is considered to be in the interest of the public, *the Whistleblowing Policy* must be initiated before any further action is taken.

Moderating Third Party Content

Any post related to third party content will be regulated and monitored by the Marketing Officer to ensure that it is of benefit to Westfield School.

Responding to Incidents

The Marketing Officer, the Head's PA and Headmaster can delete content in circumstances where it is necessary for swift action.

The Marketing Officer regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of Westfield so we can catch any issues or problems early. If there is an issue that could develop or has already developed into a crisis situation, the SLT and Marketing Officer will refer to the crisis management plan.