



# Social Media Policy

**St Laurence School Academy  
Trust**

<b>Date of last review:</b>	September 2022 Approved C&E 03 10 22	<b>Review period:</b>	1 year
<b>Date of next review:</b>	September 2023	<b>Owner:</b>	Assistant Headteacher

## **Introduction**

This policy is not statutory but reflects the commitment of St Laurence School to the safeguarding of all in its community, in line with our mission statement that 'People are our Treasure'.

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'Social Media' is used to describe dynamic and socially interactive, networked information and communication. Example sites include, but are not limited to:

- Multimedia and social networking sites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok and
- Internal or external blogs and micro-blogs, including any Twitter community discussion forums such as Yahoo!
- Groups and Google Groups Review or ratings forums such as TripAdvisor or BBC Have Your Say etc.
- Wikis, such as Wikipedia
- Any sites where you can post text, photos and video, such as Pinterest, Flickr, Google+, Tumblr

## **Aims**

This policy aims to:

- provide advice and guidance to the St Laurence School community who are using (or considering using) social media in any capacity.
- support the community to understand the reputational, legal and ethical implications of engaging in social media and what can happen if it is misused.
- safeguard students' wellbeing, personal security, current/future career prospects and the reputation of the School.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Governors**

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for monitoring this policy and holding the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Community and Ethos Committee (C&E) will co-ordinate regular meetings with appropriate staff to discuss online safety, including social media, and will monitor online safety logs via MyConcern as provided by the Designated Safeguarding Leads (D/DSL).

All governors will:

- ensure that they have read and understand this policy;
- agree and adhere to the terms.

### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that staff understand this policy, and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.

### **The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for online safety**

Details of the school's DDSL for Online Safety are set out in the child protection and safeguarding policy as well as relevant job descriptions.

The DDSL For Online Safety takes lead responsibility for online safety in school, in particular:

- Supporting the Headteacher in ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school

- Working with the Headteacher, ICT manager and other staff, as necessary, to address any social media issues or incidents
- Managing all social media issues and incidents in line with the school child protection policy
- Ensuring that any social media incidents are logged on MyConcern and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy
- Updating and facilitating staff training on their own use of social media
- Liaising with other agencies and/or external services if necessary
- Providing regular reports on online safety in school to the Headteacher and/or governing board

### **The ICT Manager**

The ICT Manager is responsible for:

- Blocking access to social media sites for students where possible.
- Ensuring that any social media incidents from students are reported to the DDSL for Online Safety.
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are reported to the DDSL for Online Safety.

### **All staff and volunteers**

All staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Maintaining an understanding of this policy
- Implementing this policy consistently
- Attending the relevant training on social media
- Ensuring that any use of social media is carried out in line with this and other relevant policies
- Working with the DSL/DDSL to ensure that any social media incidents are logged on MyConcern and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy

### **Parents**

Parents are expected to:

- notify a member of staff or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding this policy;
- ensure their child understands how to stay safe on social media and uses the school's guidance to talk to their child about appropriate use of social media

Parents can seek further guidance on keeping children safe online on the school website in the Online Safety section and via the Parent/Carer bulletin.

### **Visitors and members of the community**

Visitors and members of the community who use the school's ICT systems or internet will be made aware of this policy, when relevant, and expected to read and follow it.

## **Staff Personal Use of Social Media**

The safe and responsible use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites will be discussed with all members of staff as part of staff induction and will be revisited and communicated via regular staff training opportunities.

Safe and professional behaviour will be outlined for all members of staff (including volunteers) as part of our Code of Conduct.

## **Reputation**

All members of staff are advised that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the school and community. Civil, legal or disciplinary action may be taken if staff are found to bring the profession or institution into disrepute, or if something is felt to have undermined confidence in their professional abilities.

All members of staff are advised not to publish specific and detailed private thoughts, concerns, pictures or messages on any social media services, especially content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others.

All members of staff are advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media sites. Advice will be provided to staff via staff training and by sharing appropriate guidance and resources on a regular basis.

This will include (but is not limited to):

- Setting the privacy levels of their personal sites.
- Being aware of location sharing services.
- Opting out of public listings on social networking sites.
- Logging out of accounts after use.
- Keeping passwords safe and confidential.
- Ensuring staff do not represent their personal views as that of the school.

Members of staff are encouraged not to identify themselves as employees of St Laurence School on their personal social media accounts; this is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school, and to safeguard the privacy of staff members.

All members of staff are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post online and to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance our policies and the wider professional and legal framework.

Information and content that staff members have access to as part of their employment, including photos and personal information about students and their family members or colleagues will not be shared or discussed on social media sites.

Members of staff will notify the Senior Leadership Team immediately if they consider that any content shared on social media sites conflicts with their role.

## **Communicating with students and parents and carers**

All members of staff should not communicate with or add as 'friends' any current students or their family members via any personal social media sites, applications or profiles. If a member of staff has a particular concern, then they should speak to the Headteacher.

Staff will not use personal social media accounts to contact students or parents, nor should any contact be accepted, except in circumstance whereby prior approval has been given by the headteacher/manager.

Any communication from students and parents received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the Headteacher.

## Student Personal Use of Social Media

Any concerns regarding students use of social media will be dealt with in accordance with existing policies, including anti-bullying, behaviour and Acceptable Use Policies.

Safe and appropriate use of social media will be taught to students as part of an embedded and progressive education approach, via age appropriate sites and resources.

- Social media sites should not be used for raising and escalating concerns relating to the School or any members of the School.
- Ensure that you do not reveal confidential information about the School or its staff or students.
- Ensure you do not use your site or pages in any way that may compromise your current or future fitness to practice or employability.
- Be aware that third parties including the media, employers and Police can access profiles and view personal information. This includes pictures, videos, comments and posters. Inappropriate material found by third parties affects the perception of the student and the School and can have a negative impact on a student's future prospects.
- Communications made through social media must not:
  - be unlawful – i.e. breach any UK criminal and/or civil legislation,
  - include anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual. This includes making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age
  - use social media to harass another individual or
  - include images that are discriminatory/offensive or links to such content.
  - encourage illicit drug-related activity. This includes but is not limited to posting pictures, videos or comments that promote or portray the personal use of drugs and drug paraphernalia
  - depict or encourage unacceptable, violent, illegal or dangerous activities e.g. sexual harassment or assault, fighting, vandalism, academic dishonesty, drunk and disorderly behaviour, drug use etc through posting pictures, videos or comments
  - breach copyright eg using someone else's images or content without permission; failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something
  - breach confidentiality eg revealing confidential information owned by the School; giving away confidential information about an individual or organisation
  - use the School's logo on personal social media sites

Concerns will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate, particularly when concerning underage use of social media sites, games or tools and the sharing of inappropriate images or messages that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others.

Students will be advised:

- To only approve and invite known friends on social media sites and to deny access to others by making profiles private.
- Not to meet any online friends without a parent/carer or other responsible adult's permission and only when a trusted adult is present.
- To use safe passwords.
- To use social media sites which are appropriate for their age and abilities.
- How to block and report unwanted communications.

## Official School Use of Social Media

The official use of social media sites only takes place with clear educational or community engagement objectives, with specific intended outcomes.

- The official use of social media as a communication tool has been formally risk assessed and approved by the Headteacher.
- Leadership staff have access to account information and login details for our social media channels, in case of emergency, such as staff absence.
- Official social media channels have been set up as distinct and dedicated social media sites or accounts for educational or engagement purposes only.
- Staff use setting provided email addresses to register for and manage any official social media channels.
- Official social media sites are suitably protected and linked to our website.
- Official social media use will be conducted in line with existing policies, including: anti-bullying, image/camera use, data protection, confidentiality and child protection.
- All communication on official social media platforms will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny.
- Any official social media activity involving students will be moderated if possible.
- Parents and carers will be informed of any official social media use with students; written parental consent will be obtained, as required.
- We will ensure that any official social media use does not exclude members of the community who are unable or unwilling to use social media channels.

Members of staff who follow and/or like our official social media channels will be advised to use dedicated professional accounts to avoid blurring professional boundaries.

### Links with other policies

This social media policy is linked to our:

Online Safety Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

Behaviour policy

Staff disciplinary procedures

Data protection policy and privacy notices

Complaints procedure

Acceptable Use Policy

Mobile Device Policy

## Appendix A – Guidance and Support

At St Laurence School, we have subscribed to a new online resource for the whole community. **‘National Online Safety’** is a comprehensive online safety programme with resources on:

- setting up parental controls for all models of phone and other devices;
- online safety guides to all social media platforms;
- online gaming;
- how to report a problem.

In order to create a personal account, please use this link:

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/enrol/st-laurence-school>

You can find out more about how children use social media, the apps they use, the risks they face, how to use privacy settings, and advice and tips about how to talk to your children at:

- [www.childnet.com/sns](http://www.childnet.com/sns)
- [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)
- [www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety)
- [www.parentzone.org.uk](http://www.parentzone.org.uk)
- [www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/parents](http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/parents)
- [www.askaboutgames.com](http://www.askaboutgames.com)

### To make a report

If you are concerned about online grooming or sexual behaviour online?

Contact CEOP:

[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

If you stumble across criminal sexual or obscene content on the internet you should report it to the Internet Watch Foundation:

[www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)

### Social Media Age Restrictions

13 – Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, google+, Tumblr, reddit, Snapchat, Secret

14 – LinkedIn

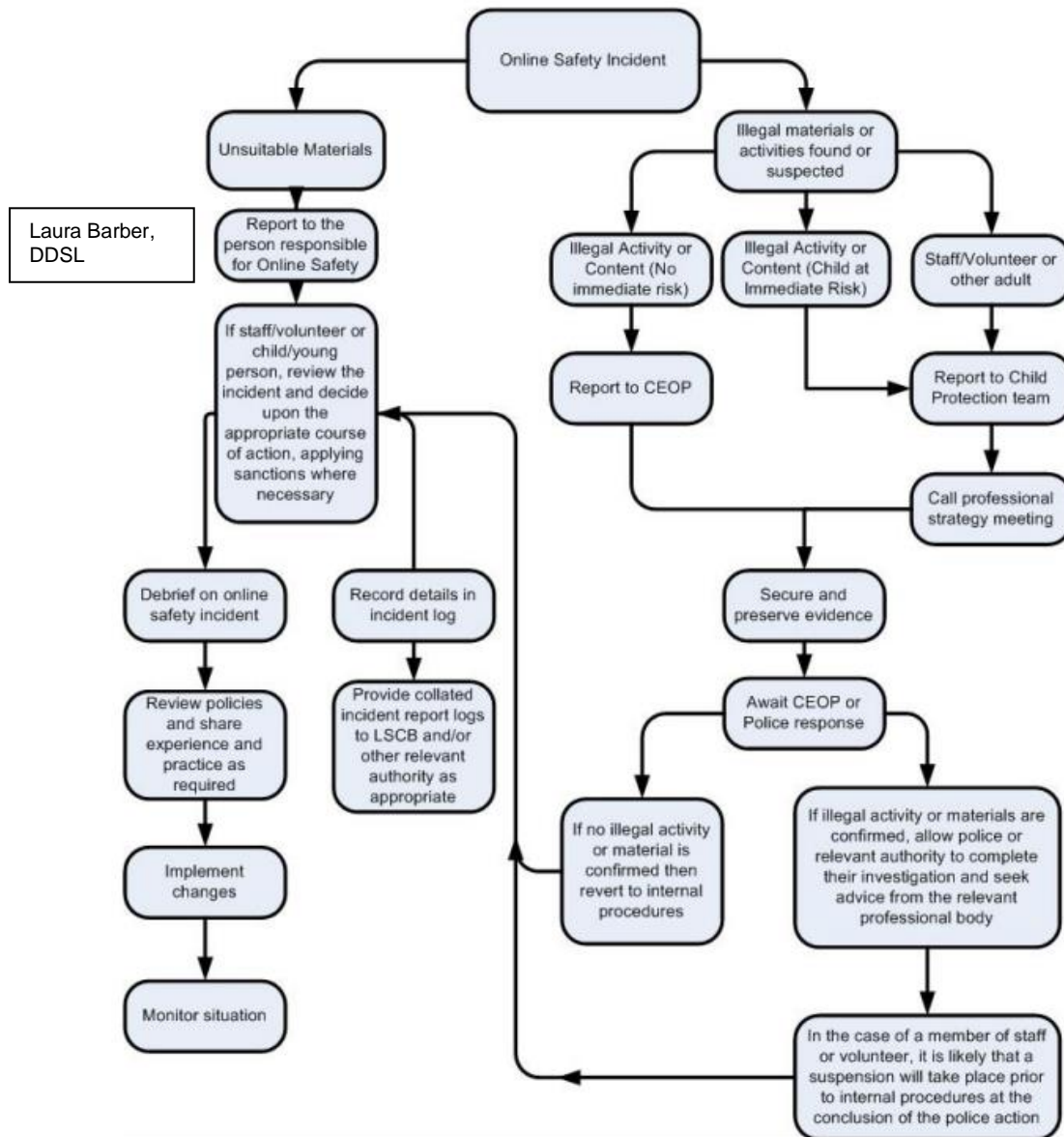
16 – Whatsapp

17 – Vine, Tinder

18 – Path

18 (13 with parental permission) – YouTube, Keek, Foursquare, WeChat, Kik, Flickr

## Appendix B – Online Safety incident Flow chart



**Key:**  
 CEOP Child Exploitation and Online Protection.  
 LSCB Local Safeguarding Children Board.