

North Ayrshire Council Education Social Media Guidelines

May 2024

Social media offers schools the opportunity to share information and celebrate achievements relating to their school community. It allows schools to broadcast news about the school to a wide group of followers which can include pupils, parents, local parishes, external partners and other interested parties.

Responsible use of social media allows schools to demonstrate its safe use to pupils and students. At present only whole school or departmental Twitter and Facebook accounts will be approved

A statement on the effective use of social media is required to ensure expectations of use are clear, while empowering schools to engage with it in a way which enables and enhances a school's ethos.

Guidelines

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list and account users are expected to use their professional judgement when making use of a school account. Regardless of the medium used, it is essential that all members of staff ensure they communicate in a consistently professional manner. As a rule of thumb always remember that if it's not appropriate for the classroom then it's not appropriate for social media.

It is vitally important that at all times professional and personal activities on social media are kept totally separate. There should be no blurring of the lines between both. This not only protects our children and young people, but protects staff from any issues that may arise from tweets and posts.

It is not permissible to post photos of pupils on your own personal Twitter or Facebook account. Neither is it permissible to express your own opinions on school Twitter or Facebook accounts. Protect your reputation and that of your school at all times.

- ◆ A limited number of people should have log in details for the account
- ◆ Log in details should not restricted to one person
- ◆ The password should be changed when a member of staff with the login details leaves the school
- ◆ Log in details should be given to the Head Teacher for safe keeping and should they change, the Head Teacher should be notified

- ◆ It is the responsibility of the main account user to ensure only authorised school members can access the account. This includes ensuring the account is not left open on school or domestic machines
- ◆ The account should be created with a work e-mail or specially created e-mail account that is never used for personal reasons. If it is a Facebook account, it should be created from a newly created personal Facebook account that is not used by anyone and **not** created from someone's own personal account
- ◆ The account follows a naming convention eg @garnockmaths @ardacadbio and individuals' names or initials are not in the name of the account
- ◆ Followers should be regularly checked - if they are individuals, check that they post 'appropriately' and responsibly
- ◆ The accounts that are being followed should be checked regularly, especially if they belong to individuals – check that their posts are educational, appropriate and responsible. School accounts should only follow those accounts that are considered to be of interest to pupils and parents or those which enhance the professional learning of staff
- ◆ Only council devices are used to take and post photos
- ◆ Only pictures and video of pupils who have permission for their likeness should be used for promotional reasons should be published online. The intention to use an image online should be clearly articulated before any picture is taken or video is recorded
- ◆ Accounts should be used to promote the school and/or to provide important information to followers. All tweets/posts should be presented in a professional and responsible manner
- ◆ Accounts should not be used to communicate directly with followers either publicly or via Direct Message. Any direct tweets from followers or comments on Facebook posts should not be replied to. People who comment should be reminded to contact the school through the usual channels i.e. in person during the school day, telephone, email or letter
- ◆ The Head Teacher, or a Depute Head Teacher, if the Head Teacher is not available, should be informed immediately should there be any concern regarding any school social media account
- ◆ All online activity should adhere to the GTCS guidance - [Engaging Online](#)