SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Version	3
Reviewed By:	Director of Admissions & Marketing
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SCOPE

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Dover College Online Safety Policy.

Dover College recognises the benefits that social media provides as an effective platform to connect with people and organisations, this policy sets out the principles that pupils, staff and the wider College community are expected to follow when using social media. It is crucial that all stakeholders in Dover College, including pupils, parents, staff and the public at large have confidence in the College. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that the use of social media is responsibly undertaken and that confidentiality of pupils and staff and the reputation of the College are safeguarded.

This policy covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official College purposes, including sites hosted and maintained on behalf of the College. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media – the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium.

This policy applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during working hours or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using Dover College IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff or any other IT equipment.

All members of the College community must be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate. All users are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it.

WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

A social media or social networking site is any website or application, which enables its users to create profiles, form relationships and make posts or share information or media with other users. It also includes sites which have online discussion forums, chat-rooms, media posting sites, blogs and any other social space online. It includes but is not limited to, sites such as Facebook, Bebo, Ping, Twitter, YouTube and Wikipedia. This policy is not intended to affect your ability to use LinkedIn for purely professional purposes. Dover College accepts that some sites may be used for professional purposes to highlight a personal profile with summarised details, e.g. Linkedin. The College would advise that care is taken to maintain an up to date profile and a high level of presentation on such sites if Dover College is listed.

It is not Dover College's intention to control aspects of a staff member or pupil's life when they are outside of work or the College. However, if the reputation of the College or our affiliates, parents, staff, pupils or other stakeholders could be potentially damaged by a user's comments on social media, even if done in their own time, this will be taken seriously. This could include comments that could be interpreted as representative of the opinions of Dover College, or conduct that becomes associated with Dover College by virtue of that person's employment or connection with the College. It is therefore worth bearing in mind that your conduct must not unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties.

PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONSIBLE AND RESPECTFUL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- Users of social media should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between the College and their personal interests;
- Users should not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Dover College into disrepute;
- Users should not represent their personal views as those of Dover College on any social medium;
- Users should not discuss personal information about other pupils, staff, Dover College and the wider community they interact with on any social media;
- Users should not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations or Dover College;
- Behaviour online can be permanent and so users must be extra cautious about what they say as it can be harder to retract.

Staff must be aware that their role comes with particular responsibilities and they must adhere to the College's strict approach to social media.

Staff must:

- Be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional/College lives separate;
- Ensure that wherever possible their privacy settings on social media sites are set so that pupils cannot access information relating to their personal lives;
- Obtain the prior written approval of the Headmaster, to the wording of any personal profile which you intend to create where the College is named or mentioned on a social networking site;
- Seek approval from the Headmaster before they speak about or make any comments on behalf of the College on the internet or through any social networking site;
- Report to their Line Manager immediately if they see any information on the internet or on social networking sites that disparages or reflects poorly on the College;
- Immediately remove any internet postings which are deemed by the College to constitute a breach of this or any other College policy;
- Consider whether a particular posting puts their effectiveness as a staff member at risk;
- Post only what they want the world to see.

Staff must not:

- Provide references for other individuals, on social or professional networking sites, as such references whether positive or negative can be attributed to the College and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the College;
- Post or publish on the internet or on any social networking site, any reference to the College, your colleagues, parents or pupils;
- Use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous. Staff must exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colourful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characteristics;
- Discuss pupils or colleagues or publicly criticise the College or staff;
- Post images that include pupils;
- Initiate friendships with pupils on any personal social network sites;
- Accept pupils as friends on any such sites; staff must decline any pupil-initiated friend requests;
- Use social networking sites as part of the educational process e.g. as a way of reminding pupils about essay titles and deadlines.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA - OUTSIDE OF DOVER COLLEGE

- Pupils should not have contact through any personal social medium with any member of staff, whether from Dover College, other than those mediums approved by the Headmaster, Bursar or the Registrar unless the staff concerned are family members. If pupils and members of the wider College community wish to communicate with staff, they should only do so through official College sites / methods created for this purpose;
- Information that staff and pupils and members of the wider community have access to as part of their involvement with Dover College, including personal information, should not be discussed on their personal social media;
- Photographs, videos or any other types of image of pupils and their families or images depicting staff members, clothing with College logos or images identifying College premises should not be published on personal or public social media without prior permission from the College;
- Staff and pupil College email addresses should not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media;
- All staff, parents, pupils and members of the wider community are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy;
- All staff, parents, pupils and members of the wider community should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online;
- Parents are not in breach of data protection regulations if they video or capture images from College plays and events but the College asks parents to be considerate of the wishes of others and refrain from posting images and videos on public social media sites or on the internet;
- Staff who run blogging/microblogging sites which have a professional and/or educational status are advised to seek guidance and advice from the Registrar regarding prudence and endorsement of views if there is any link referencing Dover College.

THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR COLLEGE PURPOSES

- The Admissions and Marketing team have full responsibility for running the College's official social media sites. No other social media platforms may be set up by any member of the College community which have a direct or indirect connection with Dover College;
- Social media should not be used for purposes relating to the College's business or the delivery of its curriculum to pupils unless the prior authority of the Admissions and Marketing team has been obtained and if usage is authorised, this Policy must be followed;
- Any social media accounts (including blogs, forums, twitter etc.), sites or pages used or set up for the purpose of furthering the College's business or facilitating the

provision of the curriculum to its pupils shall remain the property of the College and the IT Manager must have access to it.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AT WORK OR DURING THE COLLEGE DAY

- Personal use of social media by means of our computers, networks and other IT Resources and communication systems is never permitted;
- Dover College only permits limited personal use of social media by pupils during the College day and at certain times during the evenings;
- We appreciate where staff may work long hours that they may wish to engage in personal use of social media on a personal device during breaks and this is acceptable so long as it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content and does not interfere with your employment responsibilities or productivity.

THE MONITORING OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The contents of IT resources and communications systems are Dover College property. Therefore, staff nor pupils should have 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 created on, transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems. Employees are not permitted to use Dover College IT property for their personal use. Therefore, do not use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that you wish to be kept private or confidential from the organisation as monitoring can be implemented without prior notice.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE END OF EMPLOYMENT

If a member of staff's employment with the College should end for whatever reason you must;

- Amend immediately any personal profiles on social networking sites to reflect the fact that you are no longer employed or currently associated with our College;
- Provide to the IT Manager any relevant passwords and other information to allow access to any social media site, page or account which has been used or set up for the purpose of furthering the College's business or facilitating the provision of its curriculum;
- Relinquish any authority you may have to manage or administer any such site, page or account.

All professional contacts that a member of staff has made through their course of employment with us belong to the College, regardless of whether or not the member of staff has made social media connections with them.

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

Any breach of this policy may result in legal action, disciplinary action or sanctions in line with the published College policies for staff and pupils.

Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working or school hours, and regardless of whether our equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach. Any user suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to cooperate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details so far as this is consistent with the right of an individual to private and family life. Users may also 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.

The Bursar has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy, but has delegated day to day responsibility for its operation to the IT Manager. Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risk also lies with the IT Manager. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the IT Manager or your Line Manager in the first instance.

Guidance for safe social media usage can be found on the following websites:
http://www.staysafeonline.org/stay-safe-online/protect-your-personal-information/social-networks

http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/onlinesafety/pages/socialnetworking.asp
http://www.getsafeonline.org/social-networking/social-networking-sites/#.Ug7_0lPs084