

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



Policy Title	Social Media Policy
Policy Created	Jun 2018
Policy Reviewed and updated	Jan 2024
Date of next review:	Jan 2026

This policy will be subject to ongoing review and may be amended prior to the scheduled date of the next review in order to reflect changes in legislation where appropriate.

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INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of this policy, social media is any type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or share data in a public forum. This policy includes online social forums such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs and video and image-sharing websites such as YouTube, TikTok, and Flickr.

Whilst recognising the benefits of social media and the opportunities for communication this provides, this policy sets out the principles which staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to follow when using social media to ensure Phoenix Rising upholds the highest possible standards of confidentiality and accountability and to ensure that its reputation and that of its members is safeguarded at all times.

All staff working within Phoenix Rising are in a position of trust; they are therefore required to familiarise themselves with this policy and raise any concerns where they may arise to safeguard children and protect staff.

Caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be "friends" on personal social networking sites; Social networking sites blur the line between work and personal lives, and it may be difficult to maintain professional relationships, or it might be embarrassing if too much personal information is known in the workplace.

Staff should be aware that there are many more examples of social media than can be listed here, and this is a constantly changing area.

Staff should follow these guidelines in relation to any social media that they use both at work and in their private lives.

The recognised trade unions have been consulted.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff working in Phoenix Rising, including volunteers, the Board of Trustees and contractors.

The aim is to advise staff and others of the expectations of working in the Phoenix Rising environment when using social media and highlighting:

1. The importance of ensuring that relevant privacy settings are activated and regularly reviewed.
2. The restrictions of maintaining a professional relationship and professional conduct are adhered to.
3. Guidance on what is acceptable and what is unacceptable when using social media.

And to identify the responsibilities of Phoenix Rising and its staff in line with the relevant policies, including:

1. I.C.T. Usage
2. Anti-Bullying & Harassment
3. Code of Conduct.

POLICY

Using Social Media on behalf of Phoenix Rising

Staff members must at all times act in the best interests of children and young people when creating, participating in, or contributing content to social media sites.

Only official Phoenix Rising sites must be used for communicating with members or to enable members to communicate with one another. There must be a strong pedagogical or business reason for creating official Phoenix Rising sites to communicate with members or others, and written consent from the C.E.O. must be obtained. Sites created must not breach the terms and conditions of social media service providers, particularly with regard to minimum age requirements. Staff must not create sites for trivial reasons which could expose Phoenix Rising to unwelcome publicity or cause reputational damage.

Staff are not allowed to access social media websites from Phoenix Rising's computers or devices at any time unless written consent has been obtained from the C.E.O., including any portable devices, e.g. tablets, smartphones, etc., provided by Phoenix Rising for work purposes. As such, steps have been taken to restrict access to sites such as Twitter, Facebook and other social media websites on its computers.

Any recording devices, e.g. cameras, video cameras, mobile phones, etc., must only be used for specified purposes as directed by Phoenix Rising.

Phoenix Rising understands that staff may wish to use their personal computers or devices, such as laptops and smartphones, to access social media websites while they are at work. Staff must limit their use of social media on their personal equipment to their official rest breaks, such as their lunch breaks.

Staff using social media in a personal capacity outside of Phoenix Rising environment must recognise that whilst they are not acting on behalf of Phoenix Rising, Phoenix Rising may be adversely affected if Phoenix Rising is identified as the staff members' place of work and negative or inappropriate comments are made. Staff are permitted to say that they work for Phoenix Rising, which recognises that it is natural for its staff to sometimes want to discuss their work on social media. However, the staff member's online profile (for example, the name of a blog or a Twitter name) must not contain Phoenix Rising's name.

Staff must also be mindful of the information they put on social media and consider how this will reflect on Phoenix Rising, its staff, members and their families:

- **It should not bring the organisation into disrepute, for example by:**
 - Maintaining any relationship with members on social media, e.g. staff should decline 'Friend' requests unless the pupil(s) are immediate family members. If requests are received from members who are not family members, this must be raised with the C.E.O. or another member of the Senior Management Team. Measures will then be taken to communicate to students that such connections should be with Phoenix Rising's official site where appropriate;
 - Having any contact with members' family members through social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity;
 - Criticising or arguing with parents, colleagues, etc;
 - Making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups;
 - Posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;
 - Giving personal contact details to children or young people, including their mobile telephone number or personal email address;
 - Using personal equipment (e.g. mobile phone device) to communicate with children or young people;

- Not having the relevant written permission from parents for communication, using Phoenix Rising's equipment. Permission must detail the specific reasons why this communication is required;
 - Making contact for personal reasons;
 - Using the internet or other communication channels to send personal messages to children/young persons;
 - Responding to/requesting personal information from a child or young person other than that which might be appropriate as part of your professional role;
 - Mentioning negatively, Phoenix Rising its members, parents or colleagues;
 - Commenting on any incidents that occur or have occurred within Phoenix Rising;
 - Posting photographs, videos or any other type of image of members and their families.
- **Breach confidentiality, for example, by:**
 - Discussing confidential or personal information about an individual (such as a colleague or pupil) or organisation (such as a supplier of services);
 - Discussing Phoenix Rising's internal workings (such as ongoing Personnel issues or its future business plans that have not been communicated to the wider public);
 - Phoenix Rising does not expect staff members to discontinue contact with their family members via personal social media once Phoenix Rising starts providing services for them. However, any information staff members obtain in the course of their employment must not be used for personal gain nor be passed on to others who may use it in such a way;
 - Phoenix Rising or email addresses and other official contact details must not be used to set up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
 - **Do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example, by:**
 - Making offensive or derogatory comments relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation;
 - Using social media to bully another individual (such as a staff member of Phoenix Rising) or
 - Posting images that are or are likely to be considered discriminatory or offensive;
 - Using social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame members, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, and other organisations.
 - **Breach copyright, for example, by:**
 - Using someone else's images or written content without permission;
 - Failing to acknowledge where permission has been given to reproduce something.
 - **Other**
 - No contact should be made via social media with members unless they are immediate family members.

RAISING CONCERNS

Any concerns should be raised with the Line Manager or the C.E.O.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All staff within Phoenix Rising are required to adhere to this policy.

Staff should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action. Serious breaches of this policy, for example, incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity causing serious damage to Phoenix Rising, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

When a contractor becomes aware that one of their employees has breached this policy, they will need to notify Phoenix Rising and ensure that appropriate action is taken against the employee.

MONITORING

All Phoenix Rising I.C.T. systems may be monitored in accordance with Phoenix Rising's I.C.T. Usage Policy, so personal privacy cannot be assumed when using Phoenix Rising hardware.

Phoenix Rising can monitor the usage of its own internet and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users (staff, contractors and members) when justifiable concerns have been raised regarding electronic communication.

All staff are required to complete, sign and return to Phoenix Rising the "Statement of Acceptance of the Terms and Conditions of the Social Media Policy" (**Appendix 1**).

APPENDIX 1

Statement of Acceptance of the Terms and Conditions of the Social Media Policy

I agree to follow the rules set out in the Social Media Policy.

I will use all relevant social media and Phoenix Rising's network and I.C.T. facilities responsibly so as to preserve and protect the interest of Phoenix Rising at all times and will observe all the restrictions explained in the policy. If I am in any doubt, I will consult *(name of C.E.O./designated authorised I.C.T. person)*.

I agree to report any misuse or breach of this policy to *(name of C.E.O./designated authorised I.C.T. person)*.

I understand that any breaches of the policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against me.

Name of Employee: _____

Signature of Employee: _____

Date: _____