

# Social Media Policy

*Integrity, Innovation, Passion, Sustainability*



## Our Mission

To inspire learners to recognise and achieve their full potential

## Our Values

Excellence, Passion, Team Work, Integrity, Innovation,  
Sustainability, Valuing Others and Supportiveness

## Sparsholt College Hampshire, incorporating Andover College

The *Social Media Policy* was approved by the Board of Governors in March 2017 and is effective from 30 March 2017.

Equality Impact Assessment	Conducted: May 2012
Originator:  Deputy Principal	Located:
	College Intranet
	College Website
	Managers Tool Kit
Date of next scheduled review: <i>February 2019</i>	

# **Social Media Policy**

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## **1. Scope**

1.1. The Policy covers use of social media in all contexts and forms at Sparsholt College and Andover College (“the College”) and the:

- use and set-up of official College social media sites used for communication with all stakeholders and promotion of College provision and facilities
- appropriate use of sites
- general use of social media by students

1.2. Social media includes, but is not limited to, social networking, blogs, forums, micro-blogging, social network aggregation, wikis, Instant Messaging, social bookmarking and tagging, photo sharing, video sharing, and virtual worlds. It is acknowledged that this policy will continue to evolve as new technologies and tools become available and therefore that this is not an exhaustive list.

## **2. Background to the Policy**

2.1. The now widespread use of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, You Tube and Twitter, amongst many others, raises potential areas of concern for the College. Digital interactions between all members of the College community, for example students, staff, contractors and visitors need to be appropriate and professional at all times.

2.2. For these reasons this policy has been developed to:

- Provide appropriate guidance to members of the College community so they can use social media responsibly
- Make clear to the College community the limits of ‘free speech’ on the internet
- To be mindful of our Safeguarding responsibilities
- To be mindful that communication on the internet must be considered to be in the public domain and is almost impossible to remove.

## **3. Policy Statement**

3.1. The College is committed to enabling appropriate access to and responsible use of social media within the realms of our Safeguarding Learners Policy and Procedures.

3.2. The Marketing team will periodically review sites to ensure College protocols are followed and that the pages are being produced in accordance with the best interests of the College. Exceptions and issues will be reported to the Head of Student Support, to advise on safeguarding issues, and to the

Marketing Manager. The College reserves the right to instruct relevant parties to remove unauthorised sites. Any information posted on social media sites must comply with all legislation e.g Data Protection Act, Copyright law, Obscene Publications Act, and the Protection of Children Act.

#### **4. Copyright and Sharing Other People's Material**

4.1. If employees, as part of their employment, contribute on work related matters in their working hours or by using the College's IT Infrastructure outside working hours, the content they contribute will belong to the College.

#### **5. Social Media in Relation to Staff**

5.1. Staff should only interact with students online in a professional capacity and using platforms and channels approved by the College's Wellbeing Committee. The list of approved platforms is annexed to this policy and will be reviewed annually by the Wellbeing Committee. Inappropriate behaviour on social media sites could represent a breach of the Staff Charter and Code of Conduct and could result in disciplinary procedures being undertaken.

5.2. Please note that the College has the right to monitor any and all aspects of its computer/communication systems that are made available to staff and students and to monitor, intercept and/or record any communications made by staff/students, including any type of telephone, e-mail or internet communications, for any purposes authorised under the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000 and any amending or supplementary legislative or regulatory requirements.

5.3. Any abuse of social media will be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate policies as posted on the College website.

5.4. It would be inappropriate of staff to:

- post any material critical of the College, students, staff or any organisation it provides a service to on any social media site
- post comments that run counter to the College's Values and / or its Equality and Diversity policies.
- post comments that condone, or appear to recommend, law-breaking of any kind
- post comments that exhibit, or appear to endorse, behaviour that could be argued to encourage 'copycat' behaviour by students. This would include, for example, dangerous driving, alcohol or drug abuse
- communicate with students or parents/guardians via the internet other than by emails sent from an @ac.uk address or via an official College social media site for College communication purposes

- allow students to see their personal social networking sites where permission is required to see those sites
- look at the personal social networking sites of students, unless part of an official SLT approved investigation
- post information onto a site that might bring the College into disrepute, breach confidentiality or damage working relationships between members of the community.

This list is not exhaustive. If there is any doubt about whether a particular activity is acceptable, then guidance should be sought from your line manager.

5.5. It is imperative that staff adhere to the Safeguarding Learners Policy which reminds staff that they must not abuse the trust relationships they have with young people or vulnerable adults. Staff should not converse with a student over the internet, via any means other than the College approved methods. Communications must only be related to College business. Staff must not initiate or accept “friend” requests from current students. However, there may be rare exceptions to this which must be raised and agreed with your line manager.

5.6. Staff may establish “friend” relationships with other College employees but comments must not bring the College into disrepute. Social media is not the accepted method for conducting College business. College business should only be conducted via College based electronic systems.

5.7. Staff must use extreme care when posting information online to ensure that no posted information reflects adversely on the College or members of our College community.

## **6. Social Media in Relationship to Students**

6.1. Students are members of a wider College community and as such must follow all policies and procedures which are posted on the College website.

6.2. Information and advice will be offered at induction to ensure students are aware of the issues relating to social media, such as the posting of material on the internet which can be very hard to remove. Students will be made aware that, if they are subject to online bullying, they should report this to their tutor or to Student Services, who can offer further advice and support.

6.3. Lecturers/staff can have professional Instagram and/or Twitter accounts that they use to post images tagging the College, but must remain professional, have permission from the students and avoid posting pictures of under 18s.

## 7. Approved Social Media Channels

7.1. The following social media channels are maintained by the College's Marketing department:

- Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SparsholtCollege>

<https://www.facebook.com/AndoverCollege>

7.2. Other Facebook pages may represent the commercial activity of the College.

- Twitter:

@AndoverCollege

@Sparsholt\_Coll

- Instagram:

Sparsholt\_Coll

Andover\_college

- Wambiz: [sparsholt.wameducation.com](http://sparsholt.wameducation.com)

## 8 Procedures Associated with the Policy

8.1 Setting up a College social media presence:

The setting up of any College social media site must be referred to the Marketing Manager.

8.2 Process for identifying inappropriate content on or use of Social Media sites:

The College community should raise any inappropriate use of or content on social media or other internet sites with their tutor or line manager.

## Appendix - Approved Platforms for Staff-Student Communications

- College E-mail
- Linked-In
- WAMBiz