



KITE COLLEGE

Kent Inclusive Technical Education

Social Media Policy

| Version | | Signature |
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| Authorised Principal: Sarah Miller | September 2025 | |
| Approved Chair of Trustees: | | |
| Learning & Inclusion Committee | | |
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1. Policy Aims and scope

This policy has been written by KITE college, involving staff, learners and parents/carers, building on The Education People's social media policy template with specialist advice and input as required, taking into account the DfE statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018 and the local Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership (KSCMP) procedures.

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all members of the KITE community when using social media.

KITE recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to ensure that all learners and staff are protected from potential harm when using social media.

As outlined in our child protection policy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Principal is recognised as having overall responsibility for online safety.

The policy applies to all use of social media; the term social media includes, but is not limited to, blogs, wikis, social networking sites, forums, bulletin boards, online gaming, apps, video/photo sharing sites, chatrooms and instant messenger apps or other online communication services.

This policy applies to learners, parents/carers and all staff, including the Trustee board, leadership team, teachers, support staff, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of the setting (collectively referred to as "staff" in this policy).

2. General social media expectations

All members of the KITE community are expected to engage in social media in a positive and responsible manner.

All members of the KITE community are advised not to post or share content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others on any social media service.

KITE will control learner and staff access to social media whilst using college/setting provided devices and systems on site.

Inappropriate or excessive use of social media during college hours or whilst using college devices may result in removal of internet access and/or disciplinary action.

Concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of KITE community on social media will be taken seriously. Concerns will be managed in accordance with the appropriate policies, including Anti-bullying, Allegations against Staff (including low-level concerns), Behaviour, Staff Code of Behaviour policy, Acceptable Use policies, and Child Protection & Safeguarding policy and Adult Protection policy.

3. Staff use of social media

The use of social media during college hours for personal use is permitted for staff when not interfacing with learners, during breaks only.

Safe and professional online behaviour is outlined for all members of staff, including volunteers, as part of our Staff Code of Behaviour and Acceptable Use of Technology (Staff) policy.

The safe and responsible use of social media sites will be discussed with all members of staff as part of staff induction. Advice will be provided and updated via staff training and additional guidance and resources will be shared with staff as required on a regular basis.

Any complaint about staff misuse of social media or policy breaches will be taken seriously in line with our Child Protection & Safeguarding policy and Allegations Against staff (including low-level concerns) policy.

4. 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 college and wider 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 to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Setting appropriate privacy levels on their personal accounts/sites
- Being aware of the implications of using location sharing services
- Opting out of public listings on social networking sites
- Logging out of accounts after use
- Using strong passwords
- Ensuring staff do not represent their personal views as being that of the College/setting
- Using an alternative name so they are not easily identifiable by learners

Members of staff are encouraged not to identify themselves as employees of KITE on their personal social networking accounts; this is to prevent information being linked with the setting and to safeguard the privacy of staff members.

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

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

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

5. Communicating with learners and their families

Staff will not use any personal social media accounts to contact learners or their family members.

All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add any current or past learners or their family members, as 'friends' on any personal social media accounts.

Any communication from learners and parents/carers received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the DSL/Principal.

Any pre-existing relationships or situations, which mean staff cannot comply with this requirement, will be discussed with the DSL/Principal. Decisions made and advice provided in these situations will be formally recorded to safeguard learners, members of staff and the setting.

If ongoing contact with learners is required once they have left the setting, members of staff will be expected to use official settings provided communication through email.

6. Learners' use of social media

The use of social media during college hours for personal use is permitted for learners. Learners are only permitted to use mobile phones during break and lunch times.

KITE will empower our learners to acquire the knowledge needed to use social media in a safe, considered and respectful way, and develop their resilience so they can manage and respond to online risks. Safe and appropriate use of social media will be taught to learners as part of an embedded and progressive safeguarding education approach using age-appropriate sites and resources.

Learners will be advised:

- to consider the benefits and risks of sharing personal details or information on social media sites which could identify them and/or their location
- to only approve and invite known friends on social media sites and to deny access to others, for example by making profiles private
- not to meet any online friends without a parent/carer or other appropriate adults' permission, and to only do so 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
- how to report concerns on social media, both within the setting and externally

Any concerns regarding learner's use of social media will be dealt with in accordance with appropriate existing policies, including Anti-Bullying, Child Protection & Safeguarding policy, Adult Protection policy and Behaviour policy.

The DSL will respond to social media concerns involving safeguarding or child & adult protection risks in line with our Child Protection & Safeguarding policy, Adult Protection policy and Behaviour policy.

Sanctions and pastoral welfare support will be implemented and offered to learners as appropriate, in line with our Child Protection & Safeguarding policy, Adult Protection policy and Behaviour policy.

Concerns regarding learners use of social media will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate.

7. Policy monitoring and review

Technology evolves and changes rapidly. KITE will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local concerns and/or any changes to our technical infrastructure.

We will regularly monitor internet use taking place via our provided devices and systems and evaluate online safety mechanisms to ensure that this policy is consistently applied. Any issues identified will be incorporated into our action planning.

All members of the community will be made aware of how the college will monitor policy compliance through AUPs, staff training, classroom management, online filtering & monitoring.

8. Responding to policy breaches

All members of the community are informed of the need to report policy breaches or concerns in line with existing college policies and procedures.

After any investigations are completed, leadership staff will debrief, identify lessons learnt and implement any policy or curriculum changes, as required.

We require staff, parents/carers and learners to work in partnership with us to resolve issues.

All members of the community will respect confidentiality and the need to follow the official procedures for reporting concerns.

Learners, parents and staff will be informed of our complaints procedure and staff will be made aware of the whistleblowing procedure.

If we are unsure how to proceed with an incident or concern, the DSL/Principal will seek advice from a Safeguarding Service or other agency in accordance with our Child Protection & Safeguarding policy, Adult Protection policy and Behaviour policy.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links with several other policies, practices and action plans, including but not limited to:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
- Behaviour Policy
- Discipline & Conduct Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Adult Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Behaviour
- Curriculum policies, such as: Computing, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
- Data Protection & GDPR Policy
- Mobile and Smart Technology Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Searching, screening and confiscation Policy