



**LEGRA
ACADEMY
TRUST**

Social Media, Media Relations and Communications Policy

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1 Introduction

The Legra trust is a public body that educates thousands of young people each year; it is comprised of Belfairs Academy, Cecil Jones Academy and Darlinghurst School.

As a public body, the trust will often attract the attention of the media and other organisations and believes that it has a public duty to be open, accessible and accountable to its community. It balances this duty with the need to uphold student and staff confidentiality and will always prioritise the safety and quality of its care for students.

This policy provides a framework for the use of social media, the behaviours expected of staff who identify as working for the Trust when using social media and how to manage media (or related) enquiries. It is intended as an enabling policy to support staff in using social media successfully; engaging, listening to and learning from their audience and maintaining a high reputation for the Trust in both the media and the social media arena and to outline individual duties and responsibilities associated.

This policy is necessary as many staff enjoy sharing their experience and expertise with others with similar roles and responsibilities. The increase in ownership of smartphones and tablet devices means that social media is at users' fingertips at all times, and has become part of normal daily life for many. As a general rule staff should behave, in all interactions with social media, in a manner that upholds the reputation of the Trust and its staff, and does not bring the Trust into disrepute.

All media interest must also be handled in a way that meets our legal duties to parents, students, staff and visitors. The requirement to seek informed consent before the release of any information or photographs, places additional responsibilities on all staff.

The CEO of the Trust plays the lead role in helping the trust to manage its reputation, seeking to ensure that any media coverage we receive is accurate, fair and, wherever possible, positive.

The CEO of the Trust is available at all times, and will liaise with site managers and directors during out-of-hours as required, to ensure that we are able to provide the media with fast and accurate responses to their enquiries, whilst safeguarding student confidentiality and privacy.

2 Purpose

2.1 Media Enquiries:

- This policy sets out the trust's arrangements for dealing with media enquiries, what staff should do if they are contacted by the media, whether in their capacity as a trust employee, as an expert, or as a representative of another body such as a professional organisation, a trade union or a charity.

- The policy applies to all staff and volunteers employed by or working on behalf of the trust. It is the responsibility of all members of the senior leadership team to ensure that staff members are fully aware of the trust's policy when dealing with media enquiries.

2.2 Social Media:

- This policy outlines a framework for use of websites and social media by all staff in a business capacity.
- It also provides guidance to trust staff when using social media in a private capacity.
- It provides direction, processes and parameters for staff wishing to promote their departments using social media.
- This policy applies to all staff, including agency and temporary staff, contractors and volunteers, both while at work and while using social media in a private capacity where they are clearly identifiable as trust staff. Senior leadership teams must ensure that all staff are aware of this policy.

3 Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Website	A location on the internet, defined by its URL or address (such as www.website.co.uk) containing a number of pages that provide information to the public.
Social media	A broad term encompassing online technologies that allows two way communication between users. It is not possible to provide a definitive list of all social media platforms as they are numerous and constantly growing.
Microblogging	Platforms such as Twitter that allow short statements to be posted publicly and allow anyone to respond with similar character limited statements.
Blogging	Platforms such as Blogger and Wordpress that provide an online 'diary' facility, enabling longer essays to be written and allow more lengthy responses from the audience.
Social Networking	Platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Bebo that allow an individual to perform a variety of activities such as create a biography page, make connections with friends and colleagues, post images and status updates and comment on others' activities.
Photo/Video Sharing	Platforms such as Flickr, Instagram and YouTube that allow users to upload and share photographs and videos, and allow other users to comment on them.
Public/private account	Settings on accounts that allow full, limited or no access to members of the public.
Public engagement	Involving, listening to and interacting with members of the local community to raise awareness, and encourage interest and participation in trust activities.

Person Identifiable Information (PID)	Key identifiable data includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person's (staff or student) name, address, full post code, date of birth; • pictures, photographs, videos, audio-tapes or other images of students/staff; • Anything else that may be used to identify a student/staff member directly or indirectly. For example, other family members information.
Media	Collective term for means of mass communication i.e. press, internet etc.
Corporate communications	A set of activities involved in managing and organising all internal and external communications aimed at creating favourable point of view among stakeholders on which the Trust depends.
Public body	An organisation which delivers a public service but is not a government department.
Very Important Person (VIP)	Person of great influence or prestige; especially a high official such as MP or member of royalty
Major incident	An event or situation that threatens serious damage to the academy trust welfare, environment or security.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Duties of the Trust

4.1.1 Members and Directors are responsible for;

- ensuring that all individuals across the trust are aware of this policy
- efficiently managing any reporting of behaviour that contravenes this policy
- periodically reviewing the communications strategy with the CEO of the Trust periodically reviewing this policy with the CEO of the Trust and ensuring it is compliant with all legislation

4.2 Responsibilities of Individuals within the Trust

4.2.1 CEO of the Trust is responsible for;

- ensuring the trust has robust, complete and up to date procedures in place to govern and guide activities so that legal and national requirements are met
- ensuring a culture of protecting and using data is embedded within the trust
- providing a focal point for managing risks and incidents with escalation to the trust board as required
- supporting communication and engagement activities, including acting as spokesperson to staff and other stakeholders
- having a visible presence to parents and students
- have the lead responsibility for managing both reactive and proactive media relation
- being the primary contact for the trust and media for seeking, assessing and

reviewing information

- providing advice and support to staff, parents and governors where required in regards to relationships with the media
- working hard to cooperate with the media wherever possible. However, there are circumstances where this may be inappropriate, for example, for legal reasons where this might prejudice a police investigation or legal proceedings
- briefing and supporting to any member of staff that has agreed to be interviewed, filmed or photographed
- informing site team and making sure appropriate consent has been sought and/or legal agreements are in place should the media wish to attend an academy within the trust
- ensuring that contact with stakeholders is positive; representing the organisation in line with its values and reporting and acting on stakeholder feedback

4.2.2 PA to the Trust is responsible for:

- responding to all media enquiries and requests for proactive interviews within the negotiated deadline, unless urgent student care prohibits this
- efficiently communicating feedback to the Principal/CEO of the Trust so that this can be acted upon/responded to where necessary
- keep up to date with the latest communication messages
- ensuring social media engagement is in accordance with the corporate visions and values
- posting and responding, where appropriate, to all corporate social media accounts in a timely fashion
- reviewing all social media accounts for effectiveness every six months and reporting to the CEO of the Trust to discuss any new strategies
- maintaining a directory of all social media accounts and their passwords
- ensuring that passwords are changed in the event of staff leaving the trust

4.2.3 All Trust Staff are responsible for:

- abiding by the terms of this policy when using social media where their accounts identify them as associated with the trust.
- reporting behaviour that contravenes this policy directly to the CEO of the Trust/Safeguarding Officer.

4.2.4 E-Safety/Safeguarding Officer is responsible for;

- monitoring and reviewing risks and incidents relating to the use of social media
- advising on information governance best practice associated with the use of social media

5 Communications principles

The trust's communications strategy lists the following principles which underpin its approach to communications:

- Simple, clear and concise.
- Honest in the use and sharing of information by ensuring the quality of its work and

published information is accurate

- Open to enquiry and sharing information
- Respectful of privacy, dignity and confidentiality
- Accessible to all members of the public, governors, members and directors of the trust, staff, stakeholders, users, potential users, their carers and families
- Corporate and consistent in style
- Relevant and targeted to the audience(s) by recognising their particular requirements and interests and the different communication needs of diverse communities
- Timely and regular, with publications and announcements following an agreed schedule
- Involving students/parents, the public and communities wherever possible, not simply where required
- Reflective of the trust's corporate objectives and communications priorities
- In keeping with both the spirit and requirements of the Legra Trust

6 Media contact

All media enquiries must be promptly referred to the CEO of the Trust

While on site, members of the media should carry identification and be able to produce this on request. Staff members should challenge any person claiming to be from the media if they state they have clearance to be on site, and are not chaperoned by a recognised member of staff.

Staff should not attempt to answer any questions to the media unless they have been authorised to do so by the CEO of the Trust.

Staff should contact the CEO of the Trust immediately if they have received or forwarded a media enquiry regardless of whether the enquirer intends to contact the CEO of the Trust.

Staff are authorised to discuss any matters with the Principal/CEO of the Trust to help them manage media enquiries.

Staff can contact the Principal/CEO of the Trust at any time for advice and guidance on media relations.

Staff seeking to contact the media, generate interest, promote an issue or publicise a development must seek advice and guidance from the CEO of the Trust first.

Staff who seek or are subject to media interest should be instructed to contact the Principal/CEO of the Trust so that they may be advised and assisted in their media contact and be aware of what the trust will and will not be able to support.

Staff who have media contact in relation to activity unrelated to their work should advise the Principal/CEO of the Trust in case the trust receives enquiries.

Staff may sometimes be contacted to provide expert comment or advice in their professional capacity. This is entirely appropriate, and staff are entitled to provide this comment or advice provided it is unrelated to trust business and activities. However,

the Principal/CEO of the Trust must be informed in case the trust receives resultant enquiries.

The governance team will include the Principal/CEO of the Trust in all Trust responses to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This will ensure the Principals/CEO of the Trust are aware of any potential media coverage.

7 Celebrity/VIP visits

The Principal/CEO of the Trust co-ordinate all VIP/celebrity visits to academies/schools within the trust (this includes Royal visits and visits/official openings from MPs, celebrities and sports people).

In the interests of protecting our students, a member of the SLT will attend all visits.

8 General advice on reactive media relations

As a general rule, the media will make requests for an interview, statement or comment via the Principal/CEO of the Trust. However, if a staff member is contacted directly journalists will not be surprised if you direct them to the PA to the Principal/Trust as a first point of contact - this is usual practice. The PA to the Principal/Trust will find out more about the nature of a media enquiry before contacting the relevant staff and agreeing how we should respond.

Media enquiries need to be responded to quickly, sometimes within the hour. During a major incident or with significant breaking news the response times can be faster.

In all of the above situations the Principal/CEO of the Trust will coordinate the trust's response. Staff across the trust are expected to provide relevant information to the Principal/CEO of the Trust as soon as practicable, and within the deadlines provided to them.

9 Student/Staff confidentiality and consent for all media activity including photography and film

Any photography video of students must only be carried out with the written consent of the individuals parents/guardian.

All trust staff have a duty to protect student and staff confidentiality and privacy. This requirement is paramount, and no information about a student, including their presence at an academy/school, may be disclosed to a non-authorised person without their informed consent. The Principal/CEO of the Trust are authorised officers of the trust in these circumstances to see and discuss student confidential information.

All parents/carers are contacted annually to request permission for their child to be photographed or filmed within the academy/school and trust wide. Prior to receiving this permission, students should always be given explicitly. A parent/carer has the right to withdraw consent at any time.

The Principal/CEO of the Trust reserves the right to confirm, before broadcasting is permitted, that any footage broadcast does not breach confidentiality, and that the content of the broadcast fairly and accurately portrays the organisation and its activities.

If a parent or student wishes to take photographs or video recordings of staff, they must seek consent to do so. A parent or student taking photographs without consent of staff should be requested to stop and informed of this policy. Should they decline to stop recording, staff should inform a member of SLT who may then decide to call the police.

A copy of the trust Media Consent Forms is at Appendix 1.

10 General advice on proactive media relations

Proactive media activity refers to all contact with the media that is initiated by the Principal/CEO of the Trust. As a trust we should seek to identify opportunities for proactive media coverage. This comprises of, but is not restricted to;

- promoting innovative work
- good practice
- general 'good news' stories

The Principal/CEO of the Trust cannot be aware of/promote all relevant activity and relies on colleagues to alert them to such stories.

Colleagues are encouraged to discuss work they feel might interest the media with the Principal/CEO of the Trust who will assess whether it is newsworthy and take appropriate action to try to generate media attention. All proactive media responses are authorised to take place in the following way:

- The Principal/CEO of the Trust works with relevant individuals to draft content, prepare interviews, or other material to be shared with the media.
- The draft content is agreed by the individual, and the Principal/CEO of the Trust. It is authorised for distribution by the CEO of the Trust.
- The Principal/CEO of the Trust (or their PA) issue the information to the media.

11 Interviews

Any requests for an interview with the media will require agreement from CEO of the Trust.

An interview may be requested for print or broadcast media, and may well be used for social and web based media. Interviews are typically pre-recorded, but may be live.

Given the nature of an interview in any of media, where a request for interview has been made, the relevant individual must involve the Principal/CEO of the Trust in the planning of that interview and to be present during it to avoid any difficulties that may arise.

12 Major emergency

Each Academy has a Disaster Recovery Plan in case of a major incident. This should be followed.

13 Brand

Our identity is important. It affects how people think and feel about the Trust. Our identity is largely shaped by what we do but our communications also play an important part in defining who we are.

Across all media and materials, our communications need to express and support our trust values and principles. Through our communications, we also need to reassure people that our trust and government standards are being maintained.

The Principal/CEO of the Trust remains responsible for the use of branding across the trust and advice must be sought prior to publication of student information, literature, signage, presentations or visual media in accordance with the trust's corporate identity guidance.

14 Websites

The Trust owns the following domain names:

www.legraacademytrust.org.uk

www.belfairsacademy.org.uk

www.ceciljonesacademy.org.uk

www.darlinghurst.uk/

These web pages represent the official websites of the trust and its academies/schools.

The websites are managed and administered by:

Source Web Design – CJA and BA

DThree – Darlinghurst

PA to Trust

PA to Principals

All requests for information to be added to the site must be directed through the PA to the Principal/PA to Trust, who will ensure that the information is relevant, grammatically correct and using the right tone before being added to the site.

Under no circumstances should any website be created using the Trust's name or the name of any ward or department within the trust in its URL (web address). Members of staff **must not** set up a website about the Trust or any of its departments without consulting the Principal/CEO of the Trust.

15 Corporate Social Media Accounts

Corporate accounts are used for general Trust business. The Trust currently maintains the following corporate social media accounts:

@BelfairsAcademy

@CJAcademy

@DarlinghurstSch

15.1 Twitter

Twitter is used for public engagement, promotion of charity events, posting of press releases and items of interest. Engagement with the public includes answering questions, where appropriate and referring queries/complaints to the Principal/CEO of the Trust or other relevant department. Compliments received through this medium will be forwarded to individual departments or relevant staff members.

Negative comments are acknowledged if recognition is possible.

15.2 Facebook

Facebook is used for Darlinghurst School and the group is a closed group for members only.

Conversation and discussion points are initiated by the members and monitored by the School Principal – Nicky Patrick to ensure that the topics of discussion are appropriate and productive.

Negative or derogatory comments are responded to with the standard Trust message asking the commenter to contact the Principal.

“Thank you for your post. We hope you understand that we cannot discuss individual student cases or release confidential information here. Please contact the school directly on 01702 478379 between 08.00 and 16.00, Monday to Friday to discuss any issues you might have.”

Positive comments are responded to with acknowledgement and thanks are passed on to the department or team concerned.

15.3 YouTube

YouTube is a private account for hosting of corporate videos to be embedded on to the website.

The YouTube account is private and comments are disabled comments are difficult to moderate and notoriously vitriolic, therefore YouTube is not a platform on which to engage with our audience.

15.4 Access

Access to all of these accounts is restricted by username and password, a central register of which is held securely by:

- CEO of the Trust
- Principal
- PA to Principal
- PA to Trust

When a member of the listed staff leaves the trust, all passwords are changed to prevent unauthorised use.

The listed staff are authorised to use corporate social media accounts on their private handheld devices, and to use corporate social media accounts on Trust equipment and wifi networks for the purpose of Trust business.

15.5 Unauthorised Accounts

Unauthorised accounts will be investigated and the owners requested to remove the account. If this is not possible, the social media platform will be contacted, informed of the unauthorised use of the Trust's name and/or branding (the intellectual property of the Trust), and asked to close the account.

Social media managers must remove individual access to social media if a member of staff leaves the trust or, if this is not possible, change the password to the account and notify the Principal/CEO of the Trust of the change.

The Principal/CEO of the Trust have the authority to suspend accounts at any time if misuse is suspected or observed, or if departmental owners leave the Trust.

15.6 Personal Use of Social Media

Staff often identify themselves as employees of either the Trust or the individual academy/school in their social media profiles; where this is the case, staff must ensure that they uphold the vision and values of the trust in all social media interactions.

Staff who do not directly identify themselves as Trust employees must be aware that the content they post to social networking sites or other social media during their personal use may still be considered as relevant to their employment.

Use of social media on Trust computing equipment is not generally permitted, although the use of personal handheld devices, such as smartphones and tablets is not prohibited.

Staff are permitted to use social media on their personal devices during their work breaks.

When using social networking sites, staff must respect their audience and be mindful of any detrimental comments made about colleagues whilst using these sites. This includes, but is not limited to, showing dignity at work and not using discriminatory

language, personal insults, harassment or obscenity. These examples are not exhaustive and breach of this policy may be considered a disciplinary matter.

The Trust may also take disciplinary action, if necessary, against any staff member who brings the organisation into disrepute by breach of confidentiality or inappropriate disclosure. This includes comments on or photographs of colleague or students on social networking sites or personal internet sites that are defamatory about the Trust, Trust staff/students or reveal confidential information.

16 Monitoring Compliance

Aspect of compliance or effectiveness being monitored	Monitoring Method	Individual department responsible for the monitoring	Frequency of the monitoring activity	Group / Committee / forum which will receive the findings / monitoring report	Committee / individual responsible for ensuring the actions are completed
Engagement with our audience (corporate accounts)	Audit	CEO of the Trust/SLT	Six monthly	PA to Trust/SLT	PA to Trust/CEO of the Trust

17 Associated Documents

This policy is linked to the following policies and legislation;

Policies:

- Disaster Recovery Plan
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information
- E-Safety
- Internet Acceptable Use
- Photo/Video Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Single Equality Scheme

Legislation:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1988
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Defamation Act 1996
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005
- Equality Act 2010

Appendix 1 – Acceptable Use Form

Permission Form

Please review the attached Academy Internet Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this permission form to your tutor.

Name of student: _____

Tutor Group: _____ College: _____

Student:

I agree to follow the Academy's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the Academy

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Carer

As the parent or carer of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my son /daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet. I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the Academy to provide for online safety but the Academy cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph I do not accept the above paragraph

In relation to the Academy website, I accept that, if the Academy considers it appropriate, my child's work / photo may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing children's work on the Academy website.

I accept the above paragraph I do not accept the above paragraph

Parent/Carer Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2: Social Media Guidance

Please note the social media lead does not need to be the Principal or CEO of the Trust but can be someone who has the time to commit to taking a leading role in overseeing its use. However you need to fill in details of your line manager, as they will need to be involved, even if it is just to be aware of the use of social media and follow up its success.

Part 1: overview

Although this section is part 1 it may be better to leave it until the end as the other parts will help you think about what you put in this section. The key things to keep in mind for the overview are

- Why do you want to engage with social media?
- How will it improve engagement with your audience or service users?
- Why is social media the way to meet your requirements?
- Does social media enhance the ways that you currently engage with your audience?
- Do you need to do some other work before launching social media, e.g. parent information leaflets?

Part 2: research

- Have you looked at similar services to see how they are using social media, what works – and does not work – for them?
- How can you extend and build on what others are doing already?
- Are there any types of conversation or content that are getting good responses from the same audience that you want to engage?
- Are there any examples that really stand out for you?
- Have you thought about partners that you need or would like to involve in your social media plan?
- Are there organisations that you would like to link with and could provide supporting information for your audience?

Part 3: key messages

All staff using social media are required to ensure that the Trust's vision and values are reflected in their messages. It is also important to ensure that you have a focus for your engagement through social media; this may be as simple as 'promote the service' or something more specific.

Key messages help you keep on track with your interactions.

Part 4: who will be responsible?

It is essential that you have at least two members of staff who will take responsibility for ensuring the social media account is monitored during normal service hours.

The responsible staff will ensure that the account is run in accordance with the social media policy, including corporate responses to complaints or negative comments.

Part 5: launch

Think about the logistics of launching a single or multiple accounts. Consider whether you will have the time to launch more than one social media account at the same time or whether you should stagger launches.

Part 6: evaluating your success

It is important to evaluate your successful use of social media, and before you start is the time to set out how you will do this.

- Will it be how many followers you have?
- How many 'likes' or 'favorites'?
- A certain number of discussions with your audience?

Evaluation of success is the only way to determine whether the valuable time you spend on social media is worthwhile.

Part 7: risk assessment

Opening up a public communication channel has inherent risk, as social media invites individuals to comment and take part in discussions and provides a public platform on which to do it. This is a great opportunity, but there will be times when it doesn't go as you'd like it to, e.g. a service user may use your platform to complain about another service. When these instances occur, you must be ready to respond to them quickly and appropriately. Thinking about risks will help you to plan for those eventualities.