COCKBURN
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
TRANSFORMATION TO EXCELLENCE

Cockburn MAT
Social Media Policy

Reviewed by: The Board

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Version	Date	Author	Changes
1.0			

For the purposes of the document;
Cockburn Multi Academy Trust will be referred to as "the trust", "the MAT" or "CMAT".
Cockburn Multi Academy Trust IT Services will be referred to as "CMAT ITS".

All policies are written in line with the Cockburn Multi-Academy Trust's Vision:

Our vision is to create a group of exceptional schools that radically improve students' life chances.

We seek to widen their aspirations; to reach destinations that are attainable and fulfilling. We work to raise attainment and the quality of teaching and learning for all our pupils through high expectations of academic success and behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our trust schools/academies, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation. For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children and young people. The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff in the trust.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Protect the trust from legal risks.
- Ensure that the reputation of the trust, its staff and governors is protected.
- Safeguard all children.
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the trust.

DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE

Definitions and Scope Social networking applications include, but are not limited to:

- Blogs.
- Online discussion forums.
- Collaborative spaces.
- Media sharing services.
- 'Microblogging' applications.
- Online gaming environments. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, KIWI, Windows Live Messenger, YouTube, Flickr, Xbox Live, Blogger, Tumblr, Last.fm, and comment streams on public websites such as a newspaper site.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds. All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the trust's Equalities, Safeguarding & IT Acceptable Use Policies. Within
this policy there is a distinction between use of trust-sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes, and personal use of social media.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- Trust staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with parents/carers or children from trust's school/academy communities in any personal social media whilst in employment at the trust.
- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated person for Child Protection.
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above.
- Members of staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts.
- All email communication between staff and members of the trust's school/academy communities on trust business must be made from an official trust email account.
- Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with members of the trust's school/academy communities on trust business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Executive Headteacher.
- Staff are advised to avoid posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to the trust and members of its community on any social media accounts.
- Staff are also advised to consider the reputation of the trust in any posts or comments related to the trust on any social media accounts.
- Staff should not accept any current student of any age or any ex-student of the trust under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account.

TRUST SANCTIONED USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum and to support student learning.
When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff should set up a distinct and dedicated social media site or account for educational purposes. This should be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff, and ideally should be linked to an official trust email account. trust social media accounts must only be set up further to approval by SLT.
- The URL and identity of the site should be notified to the appropriate Subject Leader or member of the SLT before access is permitted for students.
- The content of any trust-sanctioned social media site should be solely professional and should reflect well on the trust.
- Staff must not publish photographs of children without the consent of parents/carers, identify by name any children featured in photographs, or allow personally identifying information to be published on trust social media accounts.
- Care must be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe.
- Any inappropriate comments on or abuse of trust-sanctioned social media should immediately be removed and reported to a member of SLT.
- Staff should not engage with any direct messaging of students through social media where the message is not public.

- All social media accounts created for educational purposes should include a link to the IT Acceptable Use Policy. This will indicate that the account is officially sanctioned by the trust.