

Stephen Perse

Foundation

Social Media Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This is the Social Media Policy of the Stephen Perse Foundation (the **School**).
- 1.2. The School is also a charity and, as such, is required by the Charity Commission (England and Wales) to have a social media policy which complies with its [Charities and social media guidance](#) (updated April 2026).
- 1.3. Social media is a fast-moving online world, where nuance and context can be easily lost. While social media brings the School to a wide audience, it can also present risks. We want to ensure that all staff using social media represent and reflect the School in the best way possible. It is also important to mitigate risks (such as reputational or legal issues) associated with the use of social media to protect our supporters, staff and volunteers, work and reputation.

2. Scope and Application

- 2.1. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers (including the School's governors) and other third parties working for or on behalf of the School. Before engaging in social media activity, you must read this policy, which contains guidance that will help you adhere to our standards.

3. Publication and availability

- 3.1. This policy is published on the School website and is also available in hard copy on request.
- 3.2. A copy of the policy is available for inspection from the relevant School office during the School day.
- 3.3. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1. The Chief Information Officer is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy. The policy must be approved by the governors and reviewed annually, unless a significant change requires the School to update the policy before the next review date. All staff will be notified of any updates.
- 4.2. The Head of Marketing and Communications is responsible for the Marketing department and strategy.
- 4.3. The Creative Director is responsible for day-to-day content publishing and ongoing monitoring and management of our social media channels. They are also the first point of contact for social media questions from stakeholders.

5. Definition of social media

- 5.1. Social media is the collective term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create, share and interact with content (words, images, graphics and video content), as well as network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media platforms include Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, Twitch, TikTok and some features of WhatsApp.

6. Why we use social media and what we use it for

- 6.1. Social media is essential to the success of communicating about the School, its activities and work. It is important for designated staff to participate in social media to engage with our audiences and stakeholders, contribute to relevant conversations, and raise the profile of the School using the charity's corporate social media accounts. Many staff and volunteers will have social media accounts for personal use.
- 6.2. Social media helps us to:
- Promote our marketing campaigns
 - Share our news and updates with our audiences
 - Increase engagement with all stakeholders including alumni
 - Celebrate our successes
 - Assist in generating admissions enquiries
 - Advertise job and volunteering opportunities
 - Support our fundraising activities
 - Build an online supportive community
 - Raise our public profile and strengthen our reputation

7. The social media platforms we use

- 7.1. The School has official social media accounts on the following social media platforms:
- [Facebook](#)
 - [Instagram](#)
 - [LinkedIn](#)
 - [YouTube](#)
- 7.2. The School maintains an official account on X which it uses to direct users to its other social media platforms.
- 7.3. The School uses these channels to share news, celebrate our pupils' successes, fundraise with our community, engage with our current and prospective parents and students, our alumni and supporters and raise awareness and interest in our School

8. Who can access the School's official social media accounts?

- 8.1. Our Creative Director is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have questions about any aspect of these channels, please speak to the Creative Director.
- 8.2. Only those within the Marketing team are permitted to post content on the School's official accounts, respond to comments from these accounts and/or change account settings. In addition, no other person is permitted to set up any other accounts on behalf of the School.

9. Using the School's social media channels - appropriate conduct

- 9.1. Annex 1 below sets out the School's expectations regarding staff use of the School's social media channels.

10. Use of personal social media accounts - appropriate conduct

- 10.1. Annex 2 below sets out the School's expectations regarding the use of personal social media accounts by staff and volunteers.

11. Additional laws and guidelines

11.1. Defamation

[Defamation](#) is when a false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published in print (such as in media publications) or online (such as Instagram Story, Facebook Live, Snapchat post). Whether staff or volunteers are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring the School into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

11.2. Copyright law

It is critical that all staff or volunteers abide by [the laws governing copyright](#), under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, when representing the School. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

11.3. Confidentiality

Any communications that staff and volunteers make must not breach confidentiality. This includes information meant for internal use only or information that the School is not ready to disclose yet - for example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date, or information from people who the School has worked with which is private.

11.4. Discrimination and harassment

Staff and volunteers should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official School social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- Making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.
- Using social media to bully another individual.
- Posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content.

11.5. Accessibility

We endeavour to ensure our social media is as accessible as possible. This includes:

- Using plain English, accessible fonts and avoiding small text sizes
- Using contrasting colours
- Using subtitles where appropriate
- Following our brand guidelines which have been designed to be accessible.

11.6. Use of social media in the recruitment process

Recruitment should be carried out in accordance with the School's Safer Recruitment Policy and associated procedures and guidelines. Any advertising of vacancies should be done through HR and promoted through approved channels.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (DfE, September 2026) social media checks are required to be conducted on shortlisted candidates. Please see our Safer Recruitment Policy for further information.

11.7. Use of social media to support fundraising activities

Our social media platforms play a key role in our fundraising efforts and engaging with our donors and supporters. Before using our social media channels for fundraising purposes, staff and volunteers should read our Fundraising Policy, Gift Acceptance Policy and Dealing with People in Vulnerable Circumstances Policy which are available on our [website](#) and adhere to [The Code of Fundraising Practice](#).

11.8. Protection and intervention

The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. However, if a staff member or volunteer considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Marketing team immediately and follow the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

11.9. Under 18s and vulnerable people

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming or radicalisation. Where known, staff should avoid communicating with vulnerable or young people under 18-years-old via the School's official social media channels. Staff should also refer to the Staff Code of Conduct for further information and guidance.

Staff and volunteers should be aware that, currently, children under the age of 13 should not be encouraged to create their own personal social media accounts or engage with others and are not legally allowed to use social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram or X. The School will monitor any changes to legislation in this area and update this policy once those changes are confirmed.

All staff members and volunteers have a responsibility to do everything possible to ensure that vulnerable and young people are kept safe from harm. If you come across anything online that could mean someone is at risk, you should follow the School's Safeguarding Policy.

11.10. Enforcement

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. We believe that by following these guidelines, staff can share experiences and achievements while safeguarding our collective work and reputation.

Breaches of this policy will be investigated in line with the School's disciplinary procedures (see the Employee Handbook). You should be aware that if actions on social media are considered gross misconduct, this may lead to your dismissal.

Staff who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Chief Information Officer or the Chief Compliance Officer.

12. Final note

- 12.1. While we have sought to cover an extensive range of situations, it is possible that this policy may not cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the standards outlined in this document.
- 12.2. It is expected that in these circumstances staff will always consult with the Chief Information officer or Chief Compliance Officer.

13. Monitoring and review

- 13.1. This policy will be monitored and reviewed at least annually or earlier if required.

14. Related policies

- Technology Acceptable Use Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaint Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Fundraising Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Version Control

Date of adoption of this policy	1 September 2026
Date of last review of this policy	June 2026
Date for next review of this policy	June 2027
Policy owner	Chief Information Officer
Authorised by	Governing Body

Annex 1: Using the School's social media channels — appropriate conduct

1. Know our social media guardians

The Chief Information Officer, Head of Marketing and Communications and Creative Director are responsible for setting up and managing the School's social media channels. The Creative Director has overall ownership of these accounts and only those authorised to do so by the Chief Information Officer outside of the Marketing team will have access to these accounts.

The Marketing team will uphold best practices for channel security with secure passwords that regularly change. Never give out the passwords for our channels without express permission from the Chief Information Officer.

2. Be an ambassador for our brand

The Marketing team must ensure they reflect the School's values in what they post and use our tone of voice, and only they can post content on the School's social media channels, and respond to comments on posts on behalf of the School. All posts and comments should be attributed to the School and not an individual.

3. Always pause and think before posting

When posting from the School's social media accounts, authorised staff members must respond to comments in the voice of the School and not allow their own personal opinions to influence responses. Staff must not reveal their personal opinions via our School accounts by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'reposting' as the School, unless it is part of an approach agreed with the Head of Marketing and Communication. If you are in doubt about the School's position on a particular issue, please speak to the Chief Information Officer.

4. Ensure brand consistency

Staff must not create or manage any other social media channels, groups or pages on behalf of the School. Express permission from the Chief Information Officer must be sought before creating any new official School social media channel. This is to ensure brand consistency for users and the appropriate safeguarding and monitoring processes are in place.

5. Remember the bigger picture and focus on the benefit

Staff must make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for the School to further our charitable purposes. All content must accurately reflect the School's agreed position.

6. Bring value to our audience(s)

Those responsible for the management of our social media accounts should answer questions as swiftly as possible to help and engage with our service users and supporters.

7. Refer enquiries

When enquiries are received from press, potential partners, contractors, or others for whom a response from another team member would be appropriate, or when the answer to a question is not known, these enquiries will be passed on to the relevant team member.

8. Obtain consent

Staff must not post content about the School community, supporters, volunteers, service users or partners without first checking that appropriate permissions are in place. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, staff must ensure they have the consent of a parent or carer before using them on social media.

9. Put safety first

It can be challenging working on social media and there may be times where staff could be subject to unpleasant or abusive comments directed at the School, our work or people. We encourage you to consult with the Chief Information Officer, the Chief Compliance Officer or the DSL where necessary.

10. Stick to the law

Staff must not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.

11. Remain politically neutral

The School is not associated with any political organisation and has no affiliation with or links to political parties. We can express views where appropriate on policies that impact our sector, work and community, but it is essential that the School remains, and is seen to be, politically neutral.

12. Check facts

Staff should not automatically assume that material that is shared or included in any post is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification – for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.

13. Seek advice for complaints

If a serious complaint is made on the School's social media channels, staff should seek advice from the Chief Information Officer in the first instance before responding.

14. Know what to do in a crisis

Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the School's reputation. Examples might include allegations of a safeguarding incident or criticism of our provision by a group of parents.

The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity or our people. The Marketing Team regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of the School so we can catch any issues or problems early. If any staff or volunteers outside of the School's Marketing and Development Team become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on the School's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Chief Information Officer immediately. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to report complaints or comments that could escalate into a crisis or have serious implications for the charity.

15. Use AI appropriately

AI can be a valuable tool that can support our communications activities. However, staff and volunteers must ensure AI created content adheres to our AI policy and brand guidelines. Using AI technologies to generate images and videos of a person must only be done with their express permission. Only approved AI tools and processes must be used.

16. Handover ownership if your role changes

You must hand over ownership of the group/page/account you manage to another appropriate staff member if you change roles or if you leave the School.

Annex 2: Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

Personal social media use by staff and volunteers can sometimes be attributed to the School or bring other risks for the School or individual staff or volunteers. This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media, but instead flags up those areas in which risks or conflicts might arise. School staff and volunteers are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are considerate of the School's values and policies, both online and in real life.

You can find more information on your responsibilities when using our computer systems in our Technology Acceptable Use Policy

1. Separate your personal views

Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive the School. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the School.

Senior leaders, including governors and public-facing or specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care, as personal or political views published may be misunderstood as expressing the School's view.

Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from the School, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

2. Protect your personal reputation

Think about your personal reputation as well as the School's. Be aware of your association with the School and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues and the public. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be the first to correct your own mistakes.

Remember that if you have a public profile with the School, your personal social media accounts could be looked at by critics of the School, and bear this in mind when posting.

3. Discuss risks and conflicts of interest

Staff and trustees who have a personal blog, social media profile or website which indicates in any way that they work at the School should discuss any potential risk or conflicts of interest with their line manager and the Chief Compliance Officer. Similarly, staff or trustees who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for the School should discuss any potential risk or conflicts of interest with their line manager and the Chief Compliance Officer.

4. Don't approach individuals or organisations directly

The School works with several high-profile organisations and individuals. Please don't approach high profile people or organisations from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the School, as this could hinder any potential relationships that are being managed by the Development Team.

If you have any information about high profile people or organisations that have or would like to have a connection to our School, please speak to the Development Team to share the details.

5. Refer press enquiries

If a staff member or volunteer is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to the School, they should talk to the Executive Director immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

6. Protect your privacy

Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. Remember that a simple 'like' can draw attention to your personal accounts. What you publish is widely accessible and could be around for a long time, so do consider the content, and your privacy, carefully.

All staff and volunteers who wish to engage with any of the School's social media platforms are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. All staff and volunteers should keep their passwords confidential and change them often. Staff should not 'friend' or personally connect with the School's followers via social media.

In their own interests, staff and volunteers should be aware of the dangers of putting personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers.

7. Help us to raise our profile (where appropriate)

We encourage staff and volunteers to share posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support the School and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy (and taking into consideration the information above), we encourage staff and volunteers to do this as it helps users connect to us and raises our profile.

However, please take care to think about the reputation of the School. If your personal social media account is not professional or otherwise appropriate for our audiences, please do not use it to amplify or promote the School, as to do so brings risks both to you personally and to the School.

8. Avoid logos or trademarks

Never use the School's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so.

9. Staying safe online

Staff and volunteers should be vigilant regarding suspicious content or links and must not reveal personal, confidential or sensitive information about themselves, other staff members, volunteers or supporters of the School. Staff and volunteers should be wary of fake accounts that may claim to be the School and should immediately notify the Chief Information Officer if they become aware of one.

Care must also be taken to ensure that any links to external sites from our social media accounts are appropriate and safe.