The Maynard School

2024- 2025

6.38.1 Social Media Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- 6.10 Safeguarding and child protection policy
- 6.11 Code of Conduct for staff
- 6.20 Privacy Policy
- 6.24 Esafety policy
- 6.24.2 Staff and Governor Acceptable Use Agreement KS2 – KS5 students

1 **Introduction**: The School recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and all other internet postings including blogs, wikis and other interactive websites. It is also a valuable educational tool.

2 **Purpose**: This policy applies to the use of social media for School and your own personal purposes, whether during normal working hours or in your personal time. Its purpose is to help you avoid the potential pitfalls of sharing information on social media sites and must be read in conjunction with the acceptable use policy for pupils and the harassment and bullying policy. This policy is designed for your protection and applies to the content of social media profiles, which will be accessible to the account's whole network or list of approved contacts, and also to direct messages sent through social media to individual contacts.

3 **IT facilities**: The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using the School's IT facilities and equipment or your personal devices.

School social media

4 **Purpose of using social media**: The School recognises the value of social media to help celebrate the achievements and activities of the pupils. The School's objectives in using social media are to engage with the School and wider community and to share news of the School's activities and achievements. In order to ensure that the School uses social media in a way that is in line with its purposes and best interests, the controls set out below apply.

5 **School social media accounts**: The School runs central social media accounts on X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Tik Tok and Instagram. The School's X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram accounts] are unlocked and can be viewed by anybody. The School's Facebook group is intended for use by current pupils and as such it is locked down. Anyone wishing to join the group must apply to the moderators in order to join.

6 **Creating new social media accounts**: From time to time, it may be appropriate to open a new School social media account, for example on a new social media platform or to create a discussion group for a particular purpose. Any new School social media account will be created by the Head of Marketing and Communications.

7 **Account security**: Access to the School's social media accounts is locked down and controlled by the marketing department. We do not have individual school departments accounts. Staff are not given login details and cannot upload digital content to our social media accounts.

9 **Interacting with third parties**: Members of the public (whether or not connected to the School) are likely to interact with the School's social media content. You must not use the School's social media accounts to debate or argue against any third party. If you are concerned about the nature of a third party post, you must inform the marketing department. If a third party has engaged with the School's social media for another purpose, for example to make a complaint, you must provide the office@maynard.co.uk email address and invite them to email in to the Head in order to take the matter further. If you are in any doubt as to how to interact appropriately with third parties using the School's social media, do not post. Instead, speak to the marketing department for guidance.

10 **Online abuse**: If you receive abusive messages through a School social media account you should tell the marketing department immediately so that action can be taken, such as blocking the account that has sent the abusive messages, and offering you appropriate support.

11 **Reporting concerns**: If you become aware of any online activity or content relating to the School or its wider community that causes you concern, or if you become aware of any online activity or content that could constitute bullying or harassment, on a School, personal or public social media platform or other online forum, you must report this immediately to the Head of Marketing.

12 **Moderating content**: The School has moderators for all its social media platforms who are members of our marketing department, they can be contacted at: marketing@maynard.co.uk Moderators are responsible for keeping the School's social media content under review (including content posted openly to each account, and the direct messages or comments linked to the account). They will determine whether any internal or third party social media content should be deleted, and / or whether any third party user should be blocked from the School's social media profiles. The School's moderators will also, in conjunction with the Head of Marketing and Communications, keep the School's use of any tools available on the various social media platforms under review. This may include managing who can comment on posts, and whether comments require moderation before they are published. Comments are not allowed by anyone who does not follow The Maynard on social media. If necessary, we will remove the facility for anyone to comment across all our social media platforms.

13 **Staff training**: If you are asked to post to a School social media account, and / or you are asked to moderate an account, you will be given training in how to comply with this policy. Please see the Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy

14 **Breach**: A breach of this policy may be treated as misconduct and could result in disciplinary action including in serious cases, dismissal.

15 **Monitoring**: In addition to the work carried out by the School's social media moderators, the School regularly monitors the use of the internet, social media and email systems to check that the use is in accordance with this policy. Please see the IT acceptable use policy for further information on monitoring. If it is discovered that any of the systems are being abused and / or that the terms of this policy are being infringed, disciplinary action may be taken which could result in your dismissal.

Personal social media

16 **Purpose**: This part of the policy applies to your personal use of social media, whether during normal working hours or in your personal time. Its purpose is to help you avoid the potential pitfalls of sharing information on social media sites. It must be read in conjunction with the Esafety policy, Acceptable use Agreement, Staff Code of Conduct Policy and the harassment and bullying policy. This policy is designed for your protection and applies to the content of your social media profiles, which will be accessible to the account's whole network or list of approved contacts, and also to direct messages sent through social media to individual contacts.

17 **Personal use**: The School permits the incidental use of the internet and social media so long as it is kept to a minimum and takes place substantially out of normal working hours. Use must not interfere with your work commitments (or those of others). Personal use is a privilege and not a right. If the School discovers that excessive periods of time have been spent on the internet provided by the School either in or outside working hours, disciplinary action may be taken and internet access may be withdrawn without notice at the discretion of the Head.

18 **Guiding principles**: You must behave responsibly at all times and adhere to the following principles in your personal use of social media:

- 18.1 you must not be "Friends" with, "Followers" of, or connect with pupils on any personal social media or other interactive network. You must not allow pupils to "follow" you on any personal social media. It would be considered inappropriate to connect with pupils or former pupils through any means on a personal account. Depending on the circumstances, it may also be inappropriate to connect with parents, guardians or carers;
- 18.2 you must not publish anything which could identify colleagues, pupils, former pupils, parents or guardians on any personal social media account, personal webpage or similar platform. This includes photos, videos, or other materials such as pupil work;
- 18.3 you must be mindful of how you present yourself on social media, whether as part of your profile or in direct messages. Staff are entitled to a social life like anyone else. However, the extra-curricular life of an employee at the School has professional consequences and this must be considered at all times when using personal social media;

- 18.4 you must always represent your own views and must not allude to other people's personal views in your internet posts;
- 18.5 when writing an internet post, you should consider whether the contents would be more appropriate in a private message. While you may have strict privacy controls in place, information could still be shared by others. It is always sensible to consider that any information posted may not remain private;
- 18.6 you should protect your privacy and that of others by omitting personal data from internet posts such as names, email addresses, home or work addresses, phone numbers or other personal data;
- 18.7 you should familiarise yourself with the privacy settings of any social media you use and ensure that public access is restricted. If you are not clear about how to restrict access, you should regard all your information as publicly available and behave accordingly;
- 18.8 you must not post anything that may offend, insult or humiliate others, particularly on the basis of their sex, age, race, colour, national origin, religion, or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, pregnancy or maternity;
- 18.9 you must not post anything that could be interpreted as threatening, intimidating or abusive. Offensive posts or messages may be construed as cyberbullying and may lead to action being taken under the harassment and bullying policy and / or the disciplinary policy;
- 18.10 you must not post disparaging or derogatory remarks about the School or its Governors, staff, volunteers, pupils or parents, guardians or carers. This includes in any online group formed for alumni of the School;
- 18.11 you must not post anything that could be interpreted as glorifying or supporting terrorism, extremism or organisations promoting terrorist or extremist views, or encouraging others to do so;
- 18.12 you must not use social media in a way which could constitute a breach of any policies contained in this Employment Manual.

19 **Removing postings**: You may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. If you fail to remove postings, this could result in disciplinary action.

20 **Breach**: A breach of this policy may be treated as misconduct and could result in disciplinary action including in serious cases, dismissal.

21 **Reporting concerns**: If you become aware of any online activity or content relating to the School or its wider community that causes you concern, or if you become aware of any online activity or content that could constitute bullying or harassment, and in either case on a School, personal or public social media platform or other online forum, you should report this internally to the Head.

22 **Monitoring**: The School regularly monitors the use of the internet, social media and email systems to check that the use is in accordance with this policy. Please see the IT acceptable use policy for further information on monitoring. If it is discovered that any of the systems are being abused and / or that the terms of this policy are being infringed, disciplinary action may be taken which could result in your dismissal.