



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

2023-2024

MAT Board Approval:

July 2023

Next Review:

Summer 2024

Member of Staff Responsible:

Claire Davies

(To be read in conjunction with the DoWMAT Working in Academies: Code of Conduct Policy)

Our Vision

'To Love, To Learn, To Serve' sums up the DoWMAT's vision for those who come together to create the MAT, enabling all to flourish both as individuals and in community with each other; living life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

Our Values

To Love

The New Testament sums up the entire law as a call to “love your neighbour as yourself” (Galatians 5:14). The Bible teaches that we are only able to love because God first loved us (1 John 4:10). This love is expected to characterise the way in which the DoWMAT operates, makes decisions, builds relationships, and carries out its day-to-day business: each person putting the needs of others before their own, with a commitment to the flourishing of all. The exposition of love in 1 Corinthians 13 reminds us that love is patient, kind, forgiving, generous, humble, trusting, respectful, hopeful, resilient and enduring. Those who learn and work in the DoWMAT, and all who come into contact with it, can expect to experience that love in the way that they are treated.



To Learn



The DoWMAT is a Christian learning community that is committed to enabling all to live a life of freedom and transformation as a result of the hope and wisdom that learning brings. Learning is at the heart of the Church of England’s vision for and commitment to education. Growing in wisdom is celebrated in the Bible and all are exhorted to listen, to seek guidance, to acquire knowledge and to learn discretion (Proverbs 1: 1-6), largely through human relationships and interactions. Jesus’ teaching, as summed up in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10), describes human beings who are learning to live a life that is characterised by humility, compassion, mercy, righteousness and peace. The learning that takes place within the DoWMAT is expected to be recognisably rooted in these godly characteristics and focused upon enabling the holistic development of people who are made in the image of God.

To Serve

Service and servant leadership, was a striking feature of the way in which Jesus lived his life. The example he gave to his disciples in washing their feet (John 13:1-17) provides us with a role model for the way in which we should seek to live in community with others. Putting the needs of others before our own, supporting people in their growth and development as holistic human beings, enabling people’s gifts and talents to come to the fore as a result of our service to them are all defining characteristics of the way in which the DoWMAT operates. In serving others and meeting their needs through generosity of spirit, we manifest God’s grace and love for others (1 Peter 4:8-11).



These core values underpin all aspects of our Trust as we strive to make a positive difference to the lives of all DoWMAT pupils whilst they are at school and in later life. Through these values, we can be sure our community is one of hope; a place of transformation and trust, where all are treated with respect and dignity.

OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONALS | COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS | STRONG SYSTEMS | CONFIDENT LEARNERS

1. INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that the use of social media is responsibly undertaken and that confidentiality of students and staff and the reputation of the Trust and its Academies are protected.

For clarity, social media applies to personal web space such as, but not limited to; social media sites (for example Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat), blogs, microblogs such as Twitter, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, and content sharing sites such as flickr and YouTube or any site, or service deemed as 'social media' by the Trust.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social media 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 potentially other relevant legislation. Staff must also operate in line with the Trust's policies. In addition, it is important to understand that there is a distinction between use of Trust-sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes, and personal use of social media.

It is vital that every member of staff understands that students under the age of 13 should not be allowed access to or be encouraged, to create their own personal social media accounts. Children under the age of 13 are not legally allowed to use social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter. Any communication received by staff from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated person for Child Protection, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Officer. In addition, if any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported.

3. EXPECTED CONDUCT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

It is important and expected that staff follow the following guidance:

- Staff are advised to avoid posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to the Trust or Academy and members of its community on any social media accounts, unless it is an official post or retweeting academy information;
- Staff should not comment on the Trust or their Academy, or any other Trust or Academy official social media page from their personal account;
- 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-pupil of the Academy under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account, with the exception of relatives;
- Never 'friend' a student at any academy in the trust where they are working onto their social networking site;
- Be conscious at all times of the need to keep personal and professional/school lives separate;
- Individuals should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between the Trust and their personal interests.
- Do not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the Trust, or anyone at or connected with the Trust;
- Use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither their personal nor professional reputation, nor the Trust's reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.

4. INAPPROPRIATE AND UNPROFESSIONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

It is important and expected that staff understand what is inappropriate and unprofessional use of social media and adhere to the following guidance:

- Staff should not engage in activities involving social media which might bring the Trust or a specific Academy of the Trust or any individual associated into disrepute;
- Staff should not represent their personal views as those of Trust or any Academy with the Trust on any social medium;
- Staff should not discuss personal information about other students, the Trust, any Academy of the Trust and the wider community they interact with on any social media;
- Staff should not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations or Trust;
- Staff should not identify themselves as members of Trust or any Academy of the Trust in their personal web-space, unless specifically linked to an approved job role within the Trust community where it serves a purpose to professionally market the Trust or their Academy. This is to prevent information being linked with the Trust and its Academies and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, students and parents and the wider school community;
- Students should not have contact through any personal social medium with any member of staff. If students and members of the wider Trust or individual Academy community wish to communicate with staff, they should only do so through official Trust or individual Academy sites created for this purpose;

- Photographs, videos or any other types of image of students and their families or images depicting staff members, clothing with Academy logos or images identifying Academy premises should not be published on personal or public web space without prior permission from the Trust, except for reposting of approved marketing material;
- We advise that Trust and individual Academy e-mail addresses should not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media. This policy applies to all staff employed by our trust, and to external organisations or individuals working on our behalf. Staff who do not comply with this policy may face disciplinary action.

5. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- DoWMAT Code of Conduct for Staff
- DoWMAT Data Protection Policy
- Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures
- Academy Safeguarding Procedures (Visitors and Volunteers)
- Academy Online Safety Policy

Approved by the DoWMAT Trust Board – 14.07.2023.