

Social Media Do's and Don'ts Guidance

Academic Year 2022-2025

- Social media is key to raising your profile. Twitter is usually the best route for engaging with the sector and the media; LinkedIn for the sector and potential employees; and Facebook for parental engagement, but you should amplify all positive stories you issue to the media through your social media channels.
- One person should be given ownership of the social media accounts and should then be responsible for updating them regularly. However, two to three should have access in case of illness, leave, new employment as well as from a safeguarding perspective.
- With Twitter, there should be at least a tweet or retweet per day, whilst Facebook and LinkedIn should be averaging a couple of posts a week.
- This doesn't require creating separate content for each platform – largely the content used for Twitter can be replicated on Facebook and LinkedIn, perhaps elaborating a bit more where appropriate.

Twitter

- A Twitter account should be active and regularly updated, sharing and retweeting news from across the schools as well as sharing information.
- Engage with relevant hashtags so that you automatically become part of the conversation in the wider education space.

Do

- Share updates on positive news, events, or activities.
- Share local news with a comment, perhaps on how the news will impact the school, communities, pupils, or staff.
- Share more general community updates and encouraging collaboration and positivity. • Quote tweet rather than retweet – adding a comment is much more likely to generate engagement.
- Encourage others to produce content you can use – for example, getting staff and teachers involved is a great way to vary your content.
- Spread out your posts across the day.
- Follow users back – this is a great way to encourage them to engage with your posts.

Don’t

- Use too many or irrelevant hashtags - using random hashtags will not help your engagement and reach, even if they are trending, those that see them won't be relevant to you so are not likely to interact with your content.
- Post too many times – too many posts will likely prompt users to unfollow you.

Responding to comments

- Interact with followers who reply to your posts – even if it's just to say thank you!
- You can't delete people's comments on Twitter, so negative comments should be responded to with an offer to take the conversation offline, if appropriate. Otherwise, they should be ignored unless they are offensive in which case you can report the Tweet.

Facebook

- A Facebook page can be a really good way of communicating with parents and prospective parents, as well as other external stakeholders.

- Like with Twitter, a page should be set up to share news and advance notice of any relevant events or fundraising activities taking place. It can also be a place to post recruitment adverts, including for support staff, as you can tap into the local community job pool that way.

Do

- Share updates on positive news, events, or activities.
- Share local news with a comment, perhaps on how the news will impact the school, communities, pupils, or staff.
- Share more general community updates and encouraging collaboration and positivity • Promote jobs.

Don't

- Use 'engagement bait'. Facebook demotes posts that use phrases written to generate easy engagement like 'Comment if you...' or 'Like if you...'. Instead try and make posts personable, relatable, and encourage conversation.
- Ignore your followers – Facebook is more likely to show your post in someone's News Feed if you regularly interacting with your followers. So, it's worth it to take time responding to messages and comments.
- Expect big results straight away – it will take time to get big numbers on Facebook, so be patient! But the better your content is, the more people share it, and the more likes you'll get.

Responding to comments

- Usually a short reply will do – even if this just means saying thank you or you're welcome, it all shows Facebook that you're engaging with your users and helps give the page a boost. • If you think a comment requires a long response or an extended conversation it may be best to direct people elsewhere such as a contact email, or you could also ask them to send a message to the page so you can help them further from there.
- The nature of education means you may get comments from people with political opinions e.g., about the government's decision for opening or closing schools.
- It is usually best not to respond to political comments as it is difficult to do so without giving an opinion, however, if you think it would be relevant to direct them to the website that is okay.
- If a comment is negative or critical about the trust or school, you can suggest that the individual sends a message so you can discuss their concern. If their tone is particularly rude it is probably best to ignore them.
- There may be comments you should remove if they are offensive. A good rule of thumb for checking if you should remove a comment is looking at the Facebook Community Standards and removing it if these are violated. This includes things like fake news, threats, libel, and hate speech such as racism.
<https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/>

LinkedIn

- LinkedIn should primarily be seen as a tool to communicate with sector stakeholders and isn't as essential for individual schools.
- However, in the same way as Twitter and Facebook it can be used by schools to share news of what is taking place and raise the profile of the school.
- This is not the space for communicating directly with parents, so you don't need to use it to share information about guidance, for example.

Do

- Make use of the longer character limit to make posts longer, as these tend to do better on LinkedIn than short posts. Including details and explaining more about why what you're sharing is good or relevant is important to boost engagement.
- Post your hashtags at the bottom of posts, this way they don't clog up the body of the post but still help you generate engagement.
- Tag further stakeholders in at the bottom of posts, and tag ones specifically mentioned in the text of the post as you mention them.

Don't

- Let your profile go out of date – make sure that any changing information is updated regularly.
- Post late at night or at weekends – This is not a definite don't, it just isn't as useful to post on LinkedIn when people aren't thinking about work or business!
- Forget about employee engagement – they are your biggest asset on LinkedIn in terms of boosting your organic reach and engagement