

## **Social media policy: as reviewed 2024**

### *Introduction*

What is social media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Why do we use social media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating TVS's work. It is important for some staff to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of TVS's work.

Why do we need a social media policy?

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to TVS's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all [staff members of all levels, volunteers and trustees], and applies to content posted on both a device and a personal device. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, staff must read this policy.

Setting out the social media policy

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of TVS, and the use of social media by staff in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help staff support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

Internet access and monitoring usage

There are currently no access restrictions to any of our social media sites in TVS.

Point of contact for social media

A named trustee is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, contact the Secretary. No other staff member can post content on TVS's official channels without the permission of the Chair.

Which social media channels do we use?

We will use our charity's social media accounts such as Facebook and Instagram and include the links. We use [www.tvschools](http://www.tvschools) to promote and publicise our work.

Using TVS's social media channels

A named trustee of TVS is responsible for setting up and managing TVS's social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the Chair will have access to these accounts.

Those with access should:

1. Be an ambassador for TVS, its values in what they post. All staff should refer to TVS brand guidelines when posting content on TVS's social media channels and use the tone of voice set out there.
2. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for TVS, and accurately reflects TVS's agreed position.
3. Reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
4. Clearly label content so our audiences know it has not come directly from TVS. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, staff must ensure, where possible, they have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.
5. Always check facts. We should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.
6. Be honest. Say what they know to be true or have a good source for and if a mistake is made, don't be afraid to admit it.
7. Refrain from offering personal opinions via TVS's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'
8. Not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of TVS.

TVS is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We have every right to express views on policy, including the policies of parties, but we can't tell people how to vote.

Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

We encourage staff to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support TVS and the work we do.

#### *Further guidelines*

##### Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether staff are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring TVS into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

##### Copyright law

It is critical that all staff abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Staff should never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource by citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

##### Confidentiality

Any communications that staff make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that TVS is not ready to disclose yet – for example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

##### Discrimination and harassment

Staff must not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual.

### Lobbying Act

Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law.

### Use of social media in the recruitment process

Recruitment should be carried out in accordance with the law and associated procedures and guidelines. Any advertising of vacancies should be done through the Chair and Secretary.

### 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, for example, Facebook.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, you should ensure the online relationship with TVS follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. You should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. You should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person.

### Responsibilities and breach of policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of TVS is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For staff, breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue.

**This policy statement was reviewed by Jim Lewis, Trustee, and approved by Margaret Kiloh, Chair of Trustees, in June 2024. It is due for review in June 2026. The TVS Board of Trustees is responsible for implementing this policy.**