

Social Media Policy

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 North Halifax Partnership'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 North Halifax Partnership's work.

Why do we need a social media policy?

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media. 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, volunteers, placement students and trustees, and applies to content posted on both a North Halifax Partnership 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 North Halifax Partnership, 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 at North Halifax Partnership. However, when using the internet at work, it is important that staff refer to our Staff use of ICT policy [Y:\Partners\NHP\NHP Staff](#)

[Information\Policies\Staff use of ICT Policy Sept 23.pdf](#). You are permitted to make reasonable and appropriate use of personal social media activity during your lunch breaks.

Point of contact for social media

Our marketing team 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, speak to the marketing manager. *Some other members of staff are also responsible for posting on some channels, once they have been given training and understand this policy.*

Which social media channels do we use?

North Halifax Partnership uses the following social media channels to promote our work:

Facebook

www.facebook.com/NorthHalifaxPartnership

www.facebook.com/surestartchildrenscentresNHP

www.facebook.com/StayingWellCalderdale

www.facebook.com/kevinpearcechildrenscentre

www.facebook.com/wellholmechildrenscentre

www.facebook.com/creationschildrenscentre

www.facebook.com/fieldlanechildrenscentreservices

www.facebook.com/illingworthchildrenscentre

www.facebook.com/ashgreenchildrenscentre

www.facebook.com/innovationschildrenscentre1

Twitter

www.twitter.com/NhxPartnership

www.twitter.com/stayingwellcal

Instagram

www.instagram.com/staying_well_team/

The objective for using social media include positioning the organisation as experts and influencing key influencers. 80% of the content posted on the social media channels is directed business to business, with the remaining 20% promoting North Halifax Partnership's work to consumers.

Guidelines

Using North Halifax Partnership's social media channels — appropriate conduct

1. The marketing team is responsible for setting up and managing the social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the marketing manager will have access to these accounts. Photos of the service can be shared without approval,

but all other promotional material should be approved by the marketing team before being shared.

2. Our marketing team responds to comments and messages on the North Halifax Partnership and main Sure Start channels Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm. Children's Centre leads respond to comments and messages on the individual centre channels Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm. The Staying Well social media lead responds to the Staying Well comments and messages on the Staying Well channels Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

3. Staff should ensure they reflect North Halifax Partnership's values in what they post and use our tone of voice.

4. The marketing team should make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for North Halifax Partnership, and accurately reflects North Halifax Partnership's agreed position.

5. Social media posts should bring value to our audience. Answer their questions, help and engage with them.

6. Staff should take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings, or grammatical errors. The quality of images should also be checked.

7. Staff should always pause and think before posting and reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.

8. Staff shouldn't post content about partners or participants without their express permission. If staff are sharing information about partners, participants or third-party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from North Halifax Partnership.

9. 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 guardian before using them on social media.

10. Facts should always be checked. Staff 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.

11. Staff should be honest in all social media posts. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.

12. Staff should refrain from offering personal opinions via North Halifax Partnership's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about North Halifax Partnership's position on a particular issue, please speak to the marketing team.

13. It is vital that North Halifax Partnership does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.

14. Staff should 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.

15. Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of North Halifax Partnership. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, the marketing team can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

16. North Halifax Partnership is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties.

17. If a complaint is made on North Halifax Partnership's social media channels, staff should seek advice from the marketing manager before responding. If they are not available, then staff should speak to the Chief Executive.

18. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation. Examples might include: Safeguarding concerns. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity.

The marketing team regularly monitors our social media accounts for mentions of North Halifax Partnership so we can catch any issues or problems early. If any staff outside of the marketing team become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on North Halifax Partnership's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the marketing manager immediately.

Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. North Halifax Partnership staff are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with North Halifax Partnership's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive North Halifax Partnership. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of North Halifax Partnership. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about North Halifax Partnership's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent North Halifax Partnership's positions, policies or opinions."

2. Staff who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at North Halifax Partnership should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and the marketing team. Similarly, staff who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for North Halifax Partnership should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and the marketing team.

3. Those in senior management, and specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing North Halifax Partnership's view.

4. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with North Halifax Partnership and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the general public, colleagues, partners and funders.

5. Please don't approach high profile people from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the charity, as this could hinder any potential relationships that are being managed by North Halifax Partnership. This includes asking for retweets about the charity.

If you have any information about high profile people that have a connection to our cause, or if there is someone who you would like to support the charity, please speak to the marketing team to share the details.

6. If a staff member is contacted by the media about their social media posts that relate to North Halifax Partnership, they should talk to the marketing team immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

7. North Halifax Partnership is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing North Halifax Partnership, staff are expected to hold North Halifax Partnership's position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from North Halifax Partnership, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

8. Team members should never use North Halifax Partnership's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the marketing team.

9. Always protect yourself and the charity. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. When you are using social media sites at work, it is important that you do so safely.

10. Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Disputes that arise over social media should be passed directly to the marketing manager where they will be taken offline to be followed up over email. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.

11. 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 North Halifax Partnership and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage staff to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile.

12. Professionals entering into informal relationships with people they have had contact with in the course of their work (i.e. a child, young person or adult) can

increase the likelihood of ethical issues, as well as the potential to open the professional to allegations of ethical breaches or misconduct.

Professionals who receive "friend requests" from people they have had contact within the course of their work, (i.e. a child, young person or adult) should not accept the 'friend request' and politely explain that it is inappropriate for them to accept the request.

Professionals may use social media to establish good working links and networks with partner organisations and to raise awareness.

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 North Halifax Partnership 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. 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.

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 North Halifax Partnership is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

Discrimination and harassment

Staff should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official North Halifax Partnership's 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

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. However, the Lobbying Act, which was passed in January 2014, states that during national elections (known as regulated periods) spending on campaigning activities may be regulated.

Charities which spend more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, during the regulated period, need to register with the Electoral Commission. To abide by the Lobbying Act, campaigning activities on social media must not be seen as intending to influence people's voting choice. During these periods, all campaigning activity will be reviewed by the marketing team.

Use of social media in the recruitment process

Any advertising of vacancies should be done through HR and the marketing team.

There should be no systematic or routine checking of a candidate's online social media activities during the recruitment process, as conducting these searches might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics, such as religious beliefs or sexual orientation, played a part in a recruitment decision.

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. However, if a staff member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the marketing manager immediately.

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.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, staff should ensure the online relationship with North Halifax Partnership follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Staff 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. Staff should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and North Halifax Partnership's content and other content is appropriate for them. Please speak to the safeguarding lead and marketing team if you encounter any issues.

Responsibilities and breach of policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of North Halifax Partnership 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. Please refer to our

further policies for further information on disciplinary procedures. Staff who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the marketing manager.

Public Interest Disclosure

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, if a staff member releases information through North Halifax Partnerships' social media channels that is considered to be in the interest of the public, North Halifax Partnership's Whistleblowing Policy <Y:\Partners\NHP\NHP Staff Information\Policies\Whistleblowing policy April 2022.pdf> must be initiated before any further action is taken?