



Policy Document

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Marching & Performing Arts United Kingdom

Registered Charity Number: 328541



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MPAUK – Social Networking Policy

Introduction



Marching & Performing Arts United Kingdom (hereafter referred to as The Charity) is aware and acknowledges that increasing numbers of adults and children are using social networking sites.

The widespread availability and use of social networking application bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with audiences in new ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our reputation.

This policy and associated guidance is to protect staff and advise the Charity leadership on how to deal with potential inappropriate use of networking sites.

For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice.



Example Social Networking sites

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- a. That the Charity is not exposed to legal risks
- b. That the reputation of the Charity is not adversely affected
- c. That our users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of the Charity.

Facebook is targeted at older teenagers and adults. They have a no under 13 registration policy and recommend parental guidance for 13 to 16 year olds.

The following is an extract from Facebook policies:

“Facebook requires everyone to be at least 13 years old before they can create an account (in some jurisdictions, this age limit may be higher). Creating an account with false info is a violation of our terms. This includes accounts registered on the behalf of someone under 13”

This guidance is to advise and protect staff and members over 18 years from accusations of improper relationships with members under the age of 18 years:

Scope

This policy covers the use of social networking applications by all Charity stakeholders, including, staff, trustees and members. These groups are referred to collectively as ‘Charity representatives’ for brevity.

The requirements of this policy apply to all uses of social networking applications which are used for any Charity related purpose and regardless of whether the Charity representatives are contributing in an official capacity to social networking applications provided by external organisations.

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to:

- a. Blogs, for example Blogger
- b. Online discussion forums, such as netmums.com
- c. Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook
- d. Media sharing services, such as YouTube
- e. ‘Micro-blogging’ applications, such as Twitter

All Charity representatives should bear in mind that information they share through social networking 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 other legislation. They must also operate in line with the Charity Equality and Diversity Policy.

Social Networking as part of the Charity Services

All proposals for using social networking applications as part of a Charity service (whether they are hosted by the Charity or by a third party) must be approved by the Charity first.

Charity representatives must adhere to the following Terms of Use. The Terms of Use below apply to all uses of social networking applications by all Charity representatives. This includes, but is not limited to, public facing applications such as open discussion forums and internally-facing uses such as project blogs regardless of whether they are hosted on Charity network or not.

Where applications allow the posting of messages online, users must be mindful that the right to freedom of expression attaches only to lawful conduct.

The Charity expects that users of social networking applications will always exercise the right of freedom of expression with due consideration for the rights of others and strictly in accordance with these Terms of Use.

Terms of Use

Social Networking applications

Must not be used to publish any content which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claim for damages. This includes but is not limited to material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the Charity into disrepute.

Must not be used for the promotion of personal financial interests, commercial ventures or personal campaigns

Must not be used in an abusive or hateful manner

Must not be used for actions that would put Charity representatives in breach of the Charity codes of conduct or policies relating to staff.

Staff should be aware that if their out-of-work activity causes potential embarrassment for the Charity or detrimentally effects the Charity reputation then the Charity is entitled to take disciplinary action.

Violation of this policy will be considered as gross misconduct and can result in disciplinary action being taken including termination of your involvement with the Charity.

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Guidance/Protection for staff on using social networking

Members of staff should be mindful at all times when communicating on social networking sites

It is illegal for an adult to network, giving their age and status as a child

If you have any evidence of members misusing social networking sites, please contact the Charity Child Protection officer.

Guidance/Protection for members on using social networking

No member under 13 should be accessing social networking sites.. There is a mechanism on Facebook where pupils can be reported via the Help screen; at the time of time of writing this policy the direct link for this is: <https://www.facebook.com/help/contact/209046679279097>

Please report any improper contact or cyber bullying to any member of staff or a Trustee in confidence as soon as it happens.

We have a zero tolerance to cyber bullying

Child Protection Guidance

If the Charity Director / Trustee receives a disclosure that an adult in the Charity is using a social networking site in an inappropriate manner as detailed above they should:

Record the disclosure in line with their Safeguarding Policy

This may result in the matter being referred to the Police Child Protection Team.

If the disclosure has come from a parent, take normal steps to calm the parent and explain processes

If disclosure comes from a member of staff, try to maintain confidentiality

the adult should be suspended pending investigation after contact with the police. It is not recommended that action is taken until advice has been given.

If disclosure is from a child, follow your normal process in your Safeguarding Policy until the police investigation has been carried out.

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Cyber Bullying

Where a disclosure of bullying is made, the Charity has the duty to investigate and protect.

This can be a complex area, and these examples might help:

A child is receiving taunts on Facebook and text from an ex member who moved three months ago: This is not a Charity responsibility, though the Charity might contact the ex-member to broker a resolution.

A child is receiving taunts from peers. It is all at times away from Charity using Facebook. The perpetrators are in the Charity: The Charity has a duty of care to investigate and work with the members and families, as they are all involved with the Charity.

If parent / carers refuse to engage and bullying continues, it can be referred to the Police as harassment

This guidance can also apply to text and mobile phone cyber bullying.

It is the responsibility of the parent / carer to control their child's membership to social networking sites such as Facebook or their child's ownership / usage of mobile devices such as a phone.