



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Social media, used wisely, can be a highly effective communication and missional tool, but also has the capacity to cause harm. This policy seeks to ensure good practice by both St Stephen's House as an institution and by members of the community, protecting students and their families, staff and the college as a whole from incidents or content that could be detrimental to reputation or involve any form of harm or abuse.
2. Nothing in this policy is intended to infringe on normal academic freedom, freedom of expression, or day-to-day college community business.
3. For the purposes of this policy, social media is defined as any online interactive tool that encourages participation, interaction and exchanges. New forms of social media appear regularly; examples of platforms that are currently popular include Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, X, YouTube and LinkedIn. In addition to well-known platforms such as these, social media for these purposes include blogs, discussion forums, instant messaging and any website that allows public commenting or posting. These examples will be updated from time to time, but this policy applies to all social media use whether expressly listed in this paragraph or not.

St Stephen's House Use of Social Media

4. St Stephen's House uses social media in recruitment, marketing and promotion, in supporting past, current and future students, in fostering and promoting relationships with DDOs and diocese, and in promoting events and resources.
5. We currently use the following social media platforms: Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube and Instagram.
6. We keep our social media platforms under review and may withdraw from any or all, and/or join a new platform if it is felt appropriate.

Moderation

7. Our social media accounts are maintained and monitored by the Principal and a nominated member of the Common Room Executive Committee. On occasion, for limited periods, access to social media platforms is given to students, staff members, or others, at the direction of the Principal, for the purpose of social media takeovers or in other limited circumstances. Anyone with such access will be asked to read and abide by this policy.



8. Moderation is done with as light a touch as possible. We reserve the right to block sites and accounts, and to restrict access to some categories of material available through our network but will only do so where we deem it absolutely necessary.

Security

9. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that passwords and other access controls for official St Stephen's House social media accounts are of adequate strength and kept secure. Under no circumstances should passwords be shared except with other administrators authorized to use the relevant account. Passwords must be changed when the Principal or other authorized administrator leaves St Stephen's House or changes role within it.
10. Passwords must be changed at the earliest opportunity if there is a compromise or suspected compromise of an official St Stephen's House social media account.

Permissions

11. Sharing photos and footage of community life at St Stephen's House is an important part of our marketing, (and especially useful for prospective students who are unable to attend Open Days), but at the same time we wish to respect the privacy of members of the community. We assume we have permission to share photos and video footage that we take at our events or during daily life at college.
12. Any student or member of the community who does not want to appear in photos shared on social media or other marketing (either generally or at a specific event or occasion) should inform the Principal and their request will be respected. At the beginning of each academic year, we will give students the opportunity to make this known, but they can also make it known at any other time.
13. We will not share images of children with first obtaining the written permission of parents/guardians.
14. We are mindful of the fact that, in worship in particular, members of our community might wish to have more privacy than elsewhere. For that reason, we will not, without an individual's specific permission, take or share photos or recordings of anyone:
 - a. In prayer
 - b. Receiving Holy Communion
 - c. Giving or receiving the ministry of laying on of hands/anointing
15. If we take photos or footage of worship, we will be sensitive to those being photographed or filmed, being mindful of the fact that this can be a very personal and intimate moment. As a general rule, we will, henceforth, only show faces of



those leading worship; shots of the congregation at large should usually be taken from the back.

Content

16. All contributions to social media platforms should be made in the spirit of our shared Community Values and in accordance with our college handbook, in particular our safeguarding policy.
17. All contributions to social media platforms should be in accordance with the laws of the land, including (but not limited to) the laws of defamation and copyright.
18. Artificial intelligence should be used in social media content only with extreme caution, particularly with regard to the creation or alteration of images. It should not be used to alter the image of any person portrayed in our social media, including any change to their background or surroundings, in any way that might give a misleading impression as to their whereabouts or circumstances. Use of deepfakes is not advisable in any way, even as jest or satire and/or where the alteration is obvious.

Concerns of complaints

19. If you have any concern or complaint about St Stephen's House social media use or content, you should follow the agreed college procedures, which normally start with meeting the person or persons involved to seek a resolution to the issue.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY STUDENTS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Academic and ministry uses of social media

20. Social media has the potential to support learning and, well used, can be a wonderful tool for advancing mission and ministry.
21. Students should not access social media sites during lectures or other formal learning occasions, unless it is part of the activities approved by the member of staff facilitating the session, or in direct relation to their learning needs.

Guidelines for personal use of social media

22. You should participate online in the same way as you would in any other public forum. You are responsible for the things you do, say or write. Your contributions to social media should not contain any abusive, defamatory, offensive, untrue, discriminatory, bullying or malicious content in respect of any person or organization, including St Stephen's House.
23. You should not disclose any confidential information about St Stephen's House, its employees, or its students.



24. Your contributions to social media should be in accordance with the laws of the land, including (but not limited to) the laws of defamation and copyright. Be aware that images are subject to copyright, and that crediting a photographer does not get around copyright laws unless you have their express permission to use the image. If you need free stock images, check out sites such as Pixabay, Unsplash and Freely.
25. Your contribution to social media should be in accordance with St Stephen's House policies, especially our safeguarding policy, If in doubt, please refer to the college handbook, college policies, or seek advice from your tutor. Any breach of college policies on these and other matters may need to be dealt with within the framework of St Stephen's House published disciplinary procedures.
26. Always think carefully before you share concerns or complaints about any aspect of St Stephen's House on social media. If you have a concern or complaint, you should follow the agreed college procedures, which normally start with meeting the person or persons involved to seek a resolution to the issue.
27. You should not share images or footage from St Stephen's House that include children's faces without their parent/guardian's consent.
28. We appreciate students sharing online content about their life and studies at St Stephen's House (and tagging us) so that we can read and see pictures reflecting on your time at St Stephen's House. From time to time (when appropriate) we like to share students' posts and images through the college's own social media. If you do not want your social media posts or blogs about St Stephen's House reshared by the college, please contact the Principal. At the beginning of each academic year, we will give students the opportunity to make this known, but they can also make it known at any other time.

QUESTIONS

29. If you have any questions about this policy or any other aspect of social media use, do contact the Principal.