



# Social Media Code of Conduct for Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

Embrace Multi Academy Trust strives to maintain and improve good provision and outcomes at each of its member schools. Based upon our shared ethos and our values of wisdom, collaboration, respect, integrity, inclusivity, and compassion, we aim to support the learning and development of every person within the trust and our policies are written from this perspective.

Version	Approval Level	Document History	Date	Review Period
V1	Trust Leader	Approved	November 2020	2 Years
V2	Trust Leader	Approved	February 2024	2 Years

## **Statement of intent**

Embrace Multi Academy Trust understands the benefits of using social media; however, if misused, the trust and/or school community can be negatively affected. This code of conduct sets out clear procedures for how we expect parents/carers and the wider community to conduct themselves when using social media.

## **Application of the code of conduct**

This code of conduct is in place to outline appropriate and expected use of social media across all schools within Embrace Multi Academy Trust.

The code of conduct is relevant to the use of all forms of social media, including all social networking sites, internet postings, blogs and chat apps.

This code of conduct applies to parents and carers and to members of the wider community. Members of staff at the trust and within schools must conduct themselves in line with the staff acceptable use of IT policy and staff code of conduct; pupils are expected to comply with the school behaviour policy and the pupil acceptable use of IT policy; and trustees and governors have a separate code of conduct and acceptable use of IT policy.

## **Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Defamation Act 2013
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (as amended).

## **Expected social media conduct**

Embrace Multi Academy Trust expects civilised online behaviour from all stakeholders and will not tolerate any of the following social media behaviour:

- Sending abusive messages to anyone employed at or connected with the trust or its schools.
- Sending abusive messages about anyone employed at or connected with the trust or its schools.
- Posting defamatory 'statuses' about anyone employed at or connected with the trust or its schools.
- Using social media to complain or post any grievances about the trust or its schools.
- Sharing misinformation, fake news, or other content that could harm the reputation of the trust or its schools.

The trust has a complaints policy in place, which should be followed instead of using social media to broadcast grievances online.

Parents/carers and the wider community will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social media. This code of conduct will be published on the trust and all trust school websites.

Parents/carers and the wider community should be vigilant about preventing and reporting cyberbullying incidents. We advocate open communication with the trust and its schools to address and resolve any issues promptly.

Parents/carers should encourage responsible online behaviour and awareness of the possible consequences of inappropriate actions with their children.

Breaches of this code of conduct will be taken seriously by the trust and its schools and, in the event of illegal, defamatory, or discriminatory content, breaches could lead to prosecution.

Parents/carers will not attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' any member of staff on social media.

Embrace Multi Academy Trust retains the right to request that any potentially damaging comments or material are removed from social media platforms.

### **Actions to be considered by the trust or individual schools in the event of non-compliance with this code of conduct**

Following any non-compliance with this code of conduct, the trust and/or individual schools will consider a response that could involve one or more of the following actions dependent upon the nature of the non-compliance:

- Contact individuals directly, to stop issues continuing.
- Request a meeting with individuals.
- With the permission of the individuals concerned, view messages sent between individuals to deal with problems quickly and effectively.
- Ask individuals to remove comments immediately.
- Request that 'group chats' are closed down, should any problems exist between individuals.
- Report the matter to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the particular social media site.
- Set out the school's concerns to the individual in writing, giving them a warning and requesting that the material in question is removed.
- Contact the host/provider of the social media site to complain about the content of the site and ask for removal of the information.
- Take legal advice and/or legal action where the information posted is defamatory in any way or if the circumstances warrant this.
- Contact the police if considered appropriate by the trust or school.