

# Social Media Policy

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**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

BARNET EDUCATION ARTS TRUST  
BARNET MUSIC HUB

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**Table of Contents**

1. Introduction ..... 3

2. Definitions and Scope ..... 3

3. Acceptable Use Policies ..... 3

4. Use of Social Media in practice ..... 3

    4.1. Personal use of social media ..... 3

    4.2. BEAT-sanctioned use of social media ..... 4

5. Associated BEAT Policies ..... 5

Document History ..... 6

## **1. Introduction**

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting 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 duties to our schools, parents/guardians/carers, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

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. They apply to all BARNET Education Arts Trust (BEAT) employees.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Protect BEAT from legal risks
- Ensure that the reputation of BEAT its staff and trustees is protected
- Safeguard all children
- Ensure that any users are able to distinguish clearly where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of BEAT

## **2. Definitions and Scope**

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: Blogs, Online discussion forums, Collaborative spaces, Media sharing services, 'Microblogging' applications, and online gaming environments. Examples include WhatsApp, X (Formerly known as Twitter), Facebook, Windows Live Messenger, YouTube, Flickr, Xbox Live, Blogger, Tumblr, Last.fm, and comment streams on public websites such as newspaper site. Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds.

All members of staff 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 BEAT policies listed in Section 5, Associated BEAT Policies

## **3. Acceptable Use Policies.**

Within this policy there is a distinction between the use of trust-sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes, and personal use of social media

## **4. Use of Social Media in practice**

### **4.1. Personal use of social media**

- BEAT staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with parents/guardians/carers or students from the trust's community in any personal social media whilst in employment at BEAT
- Any communication received from students on any personal social

media sites must be reported to the designated person for Child Protection

- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any student in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above
- Members of staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts
- All email communication between staff and members of the trusts community on BEAT business must be made from an official BEAT email account
- Staff must not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to contact parents/guardians/carers or students on BEAT business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the CEO.
- Staff are advised to avoid posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to BEAT and members of its community on any social media accounts
- Staff are also advised to consider the reputation of the trust in any posts or comments related to the trust on any social media accounts
- Staff should not accept any current student of any age or any ex-student of BEAT under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account

#### 4.2. BEAT-sanctioned use of social media

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum and to support student learning. For example, the trust has an official:-

- X (Formerly known as Twitter) account (@BEAT\_orguk),
- Facebook account (facebook.com/Barneteducationartstrust/)
- Instagram account (barnet\_eds\_arts).

There are also many possibilities for using social media to enhance and develop students' learning.

When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff may set up a distinct and dedicated social media site or account for educational purposes, ideally this should be linked to an official BEAT email account. Where this is not possible it must be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff.
- All information regarding the site including the URL and identity of the site must be notified to the appropriate member of the SMT before student access to the site is permitted.
- The content of any trust-sanctioned social media site must be solely professional and must reflect well on BEAT.
- Staff must not publish photographs of children without the written consent of parents/guardians/carers, identify by name any children featured in photographs, or allow personally identifying information to

- be published on BEAT social media accounts
- Care must be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe
- Any inappropriate comments on or abuse of trust-sanctioned social media should immediately be removed and reported to a member of SMT
- Staff should not engage with any direct messaging of students through social media where the message is not public
- All social media accounts created for educational purposes must include a link in the About or Info page to the Acceptable IT Usage Policy on the BEAT website. This will indicate that the account is officially sanctioned by Barnet Education Arts Trust.

## **5. Associated BEAT Policies**

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Acceptable IT Usage
- Data Protection

**Document History**

| Date     | Reason for Change                               | Change Controller |
|----------|---|-------------------|
|          |   |                   |
| Nov 2019 | New   | SB                |
| Feb 2021 | Reviewed  | SB PSW            |
| Feb 2022 | Reviewed minor modifications and clarifications | SB PSW            |
| Feb 2024 | New Format Minor mods                           | SB & PSW          |
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Signed  Chair of Trustees

Name: Martin Baker

Date: 10/07/2024

Signed  Chief Executive

Name: Sharon Broughall

Date: 10/07/2024