

REPUTATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



The People's Learning Trust: Reputational Responsibility & Social Media Policy

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REPUTATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



1. INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to all colleagues within the central Multi-Academy Trust team, as well as to any colleague at Everton Free School & Football College (our lead school with direct affiliation with the Club), and to any colleague within our academies who is undertaking an apprenticeship funded through Everton Football Club's levy.

These colleagues are required to review and sign this policy to confirm their understanding and agreement.

While the Trust operates as a separate legal entity within the Everton group, we uphold the same high standards of professionalism and responsibility in our use of digital media. By adhering to this policy, we help to protect the reputation of Everton Football Club, Everton Stadium Development Limited, and Everton Women ('the Club'), as well as our own Multi-Academy Trust.

This policy is non-contractual and may be amended at the Club's discretion at any time without notice.

2. PURPOSE

Everton and the Trust are committed to equity and inclusion, and we strive to create environments where people from all backgrounds feel safe to be their true selves. We aim to offer an open and transparent atmosphere in which people feel respected, celebrated and empowered – a place where everyone feels they belong.

Everton Football Club, Everton Stadium Development Limited, and Everton Women ('the Club') are determined to ensure that its reputation, colleagues, customers, and sponsors are protected from potential damage arising from confidentiality breaches and content posted across digital media platforms.

The purpose of this policy is to mitigate risk to the Club's brand and reputation by providing guidelines to colleagues. This policy applies to the use of digital media platforms for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect our business in any way.

The Club wants to empower colleagues to celebrate their professional achievements and positive news from the Club within the guidelines set out in this policy.

If you are ever in doubt about posting anything, you should consult your line manager or one of the following colleagues from the Trust:

- Louise Adams – Director of People (louise.adams@tpltrust.co.uk)
- Linda McMullen – Chief Finance & Operating Officer (CFOO@tpltrust.co.uk)

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3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all colleagues within the central Multi-Academy Trust team, as well as any colleague in Everton Free School & Football College (as our lead school with direct affiliation with the Club), and any colleague within our academies who is undertaking an apprenticeship funded through Everton Football Club's levy

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

During your employment/engagement with the Club, you may obtain confidential information in relation to, for example, the Club, associated businesses, colleagues, players, sponsorship partners, suppliers and customers.

This information must not be shared with anyone, through any medium, for any reason (except in the proper execution of your duties) and must be kept strictly confidential, no matter how trivial it may appear. The internet is in the public domain, and confidentiality must be maintained.

5. LEGAL & PERSONAL LIABILITY

When you choose to go public with your opinions through a blog, social networking site or other openly accessible medium, you are legally responsible for those opinions. You should therefore be aware that you can be held personally liable for any commentary or images deemed to be defamatory, obscene, discriminatory, proprietary or libellous (whether relating to the Club, other individuals or any other company – including the Club's customers and sponsors).

For these reasons, you need to consider whether anything you are posting or placing in the public domain could be regarded as potentially derogatory, discriminatory, offensive, bullying, exaggerated or obscene. You should also ensure that copyrighted materials are not posted or misused.

You must not identify yourself on any social networking site as a colleague of the Club or Trust except where this has been expressly pre-authorised by the Club to support the fulfilment of your specific job role.

The one exception to this rule would be professional business networking sites such as LinkedIn; please see guidance regarding the use of LinkedIn further down.

Please be aware that what you post to the internet is at your own risk, and other parties can pursue legal action against you personally for posting. You should also bear in mind that if you misuse social media outside of work in a manner which the Club or Trust considers inappropriate, given your role or position at work, you may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy.

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6. THE CLUB'S LIABILITY

Notwithstanding that you will be personally responsible for what you write or post, in circumstances where the post relates to your work (or work done by others across the Club or Trust), the Club, Trust and wider Club may also be vicariously liable for what you say.

7. PROTECTING THE CLUB'S BRAND & REPUTATION

The Club and Trust's brand, image and media profile are exceptionally valuable assets which must be protected.

Please see the guidelines below on how you can contribute to maintaining and even enhancing the Club's reputation.

Do	Don't
Amplify the Club and EitC's social media channels by reposting and liking content.	Identify yourself as a colleague of the Club on personal social media profiles.
Use LinkedIn in a professional capacity to celebrate your professional successes and those of your team and the wider Club.	Share content about colleagues, players, sponsorship, partners, suppliers and customers, no matter how trivial it may seem to you.
If you are unsure about what you are planning to post on LinkedIn, get a second opinion from your line manager or a colleague.	Take photos or videos on Club premises for personal use.
Make your personal social media profiles private where possible.	Like and repost messages from individuals and fan groups which are negative and damaging to the reputation of the Club, its supporters or colleagues.
	Engage in the activity of or join any Everton protest groups.
	Use the Club's trademark logo, related brand images (including those of our sponsorship partners) and/or any other intellectual property owned by the Club, such as photographs of players, colleagues, etc. If you need to use any images as part of your work, you should seek permission in the first instance.

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If you are unsure of the parameters around what can and cannot be communicated on a topic, you should reach out to your line manager or a colleague from the Trust (as detailed above in Section 2).

8. LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network on the internet. People use LinkedIn to find job or internship opportunities, connect and strengthen professional relationships, and learn new skills.

Although all activity you undertake on LinkedIn is in your own name, if you have the Club or Trust listed as your employer, you are still representing the business. Therefore, any profile pictures should be professional, and you should refrain from linking your account to any other social media accounts you may have.

9. USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR WORK PURPOSES – GUIDELINES

There are, in certain instances, requirements for colleagues to use Club social media accounts on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and Facebook to undertake their particular role.

Colleagues who use Academy/Club social media accounts to deliver work communications should not post anything to these platforms that is not strictly related to their work. In addition, such accounts should not be linked to personal social media accounts.

Colleagues who, as part of their roles, have access to official and secondary social media accounts associated with the Club will be provided with further specific guidance related to the platforms they use as part of their role.

Colleagues must complete training on social media use relevant to their role before accessing the Trust/Club social media accounts.

10. SUPPORT

If you are identified on social media by a third party as a colleague/worker from the Club, or you are subjected to abuse or direct communication of a negative nature due to your role, please follow these guidelines:

- Do not – respond to the post/comment/message
- Do – record or screenshot the post/comment/message
- Do – share the screenshot with the Trust's Director of People, who will liaise with the Club, as required.

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11. PERSONAL DATA & THE DATA PROTECTION ACT

For the safety of all employed colleagues, agency workers, casual workers, consultants and self-employed contractors engaged by the Club, care must be taken in relation to the posting of personal data. Work-based contact details must never be posted on sites used for non-work purposes. You should not disclose personal data or information about any individual or colleague, which would be in breach of the Data Protection Act.

Colleagues must adhere to the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 when handling personal data. No personal data of pupils, colleagues, or business contacts should be shared on any social media platform without explicit consent and in compliance with data protection legislation

12. BULLYING & HARRASSMENT

The use of social media inside or outside work to bully or harass a colleague or business-related colleague is unacceptable and will be subject to the Disciplinary Policy.

All reports of online bullying or harassment will be investigated promptly under the Trust's safeguarding and disciplinary procedures. Colleagues must refrain from engaging in any form of cyberbullying or inappropriate conduct online, irrespective of whether it occurs during working hours.

13. PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Where a colleague has line management responsibility for another colleague, potential problems may arise from being "friends" on social networking sites. Similarly, an Everton colleague potentially blurring the boundaries of professionalism by personal social networking with external providers can be an issue. Even if these connections are made in your personal time, you will need to maintain these professional boundaries.

Where a colleague is in a "Position of Trust" with a child or vulnerable adult, social media should not be used as a way of communicating with that person.

No colleague should accept a child **under 18 years** who they may work with professionally as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account.

Images of children who are participants should not be posted or tagged on personal social media accounts. If you choose to 'join' or 'follow' an Everton or Trust-endorsed social media account or similar site in your personal time, you should remember that any comment or post that you make may be attributable to you as an Everton colleague, even though you have not identified yourself as such.

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14. BUSINESS CONTACTS

The contact details of business contacts made during your employment/engagement are the Club / Trust's confidential information.

On termination of employment, you must provide the Club / Trust with a copy of all such information. Communication with business contacts in respect of work requirements, new business or recruitment should follow appropriate communication channels.

15. PERSONAL USAGE

The Club and Trust recognise that social networking is an important part of everyday life and is a normal communication method. Personal use of social media during working hours should be limited and must not interfere with professional responsibilities. Colleagues should avoid posting content that could be perceived as inappropriate or detrimental to the Club or Trust's reputation.

16. MEDIA

If you are contacted for comment about the Club or Trust for publication in any social media outlet or news publication, please do not respond and direct the enquiry to the Trust's Director of People, Louise Adams (details in Section 2 above).

17. MONITORING

The Club and Trust reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, colleague activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes, and you consent to such monitoring by your use of such resources and systems.

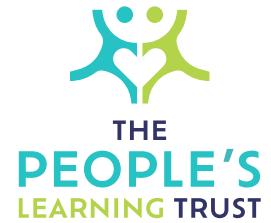
Monitoring will be conducted transparently and in accordance with privacy legislation. Colleagues will be informed of monitoring activities, and any data collected will be handled securely and only used for legitimate business purposes.

18. REPORTING

If you suspect that a Club / Trust representative is breaching the guidance in this policy, you should report the individual to the Trust's Director of People – see Section 2 for contact details.

Your referral can be treated in confidence, and the concern will be carefully investigated. If your concern is related to safeguarding, this should be directed to a member of the Safeguarding Team.

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19. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY

Failure to adhere to the Reputational Responsibility and Social Media Policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy up to and including summary dismissal, depending on the circumstances.

Any colleague suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with an investigation which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details. You may be required to remove any social media content that we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action.

20. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & AGREEMENT

I confirm that I have read and understood the **Reputational Responsibility & Social Media Policy**.

I acknowledge that this policy applies to me as a colleague within the central Multi-Academy Trust team, a colleague in Everton Free School & Football College or as an academy colleague undertaking an apprenticeship funded through Everton Football Club's levy.

I agree to comply with the guidelines outlined in this policy and understand that failure to do so may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.

I understand that this policy is non-contractual and may be amended at the Trust's discretion at any time without notice.

If I have any questions regarding its contents, I will seek clarification from my line manager or a member of the central Trust team, as follows:

- Louise Adams – Director of People (louise.adams@tpltrust.co.uk)
- Linda McMullen – Chief Finance & Operating Officer (CFOO@tpltrust.co.uk)