

St John Newland Social Media Policy

Purpose

- To seek God's glory through utilising social media to connect and engage with Church ministries

Accountability

- Each social media page/profile/group must have at least 3 administrators
- One of the administrators must be "John Newland", the general St John Newland administrator account for social media.
- Administrators to always be current members of the Church

Security

- Administrators to always log out of desktop sites of Facebook or Twitter when leaving a computer/mobile device unattended
- Administrators to ensure mobile devices that use the Facebook, Messenger and/or Twitter apps are pin code or password protected
- Regularly change personal password for security as Facebook pages and groups are linked to personal accounts
- Only administrators know password for Twitter. Twitter password to be changed annually and when there is a change in admin.

Safeguarding

- If anyone contacts an administrator regarding anything that is a safeguarding issue, this MUST be passed onto staff team or our safeguarding officer without delay and dealt with according to our safeguarding policy.
- Personal and sensitive information is not to be shared on social media pages/profiles/groups (e.g. mission partner info, illness info)
- Photos of children only to be posted with parental consent
- Same safeguarding precautions to be taken as those on website
- Personal profiles of administrators – be aware that to be above reproach, contact with minors and vulnerable adults via personal Facebook pages should be kept to an absolute minimum. It is preferable that if an administrator is friends with a minor that they are also Facebook friends with the minor's parents, and contact be done through parents if at all possible
- Be aware of Diocese guidelines regarding safeguarding children and vulnerable adults: (see appendix)

Review Process

- Annual review of all aspects of page/profile/group by admins
- Annual review of Social media policy by staff team with input from page/group admins

Training

- Training in Church social media policy for all admins
- Further reading – e.g. Will you be my facebook friend; T Chester, Diocese Social Media Guidelines

Guidelines for pages/groups/accounts

Page aim

- Pages/groups to have specified aim relating to the purpose stated in the St John Newland Social media Policy

Target Audience

- Each social media page/profile/group to establish it's appropriate target audience in order to post/tweet accordingly

Page Content

- Stipulate daily, weekly and occasional posts (appropriate for page/group/profile)
- Post page comments/tweets in third person or collective personal pronoun (we) as each page/group/account is representing St John Newland
- Post photos as appropriate
- Frequency of page/group content to be considered to keep pages/groups active but not spam members feeds
- Share and retweet very selectively
- Oversight from appropriate staff team member over content where necessary (e.g. article content)
- Page/profile/group MUST reflect the views of the Church, not individuals running the page/group
- Facebook Pages to not allow posts from anyone other than administrators
- Facebook Groups to have admin approved posts only
- Profanity filters to be switched to strong on pages
- Inappropriate content to be avoided:
 - potentially controversial topics
 - non-Church events
 - personal opinions
 - sensitive information (mission partners, illness etc)

Private messages (if applicable)

- Administrators to reply to private messages, referring to staff team if necessary.
- Administrators not to be drawn into discussing controversial topics – refer the messenger email to an appropriate member of staff team to discuss further

Facebook Events (if applicable)

- Pages/groups to decide when/if using Facebook events is a useful tool for that page.
- Events to be created by the page/group who is running the event
- If an event is being run by another page/group but there has been no Facebook “event” created, contact the respective page/group to discuss creating a Facebook “event” - who will create, what to include in description etc.

Etiquette

- Only engage in conversation when someone initiates interaction
- Keep it about the gospel (preferably events which are overtly evangelistic, or word ministry).
- Keep it positive - what we **do** believe in, what we **for**. Facebook and Twitter are bad places for nuanced disagreement or argument.
- Steer clear of anything too controversial (not because we're embarrassed about views we hold that may not be considered PC, but because we want to tread carefully as we're learning how best to use social media)
- Be cautious of promoting (by sharing or retweeting) particular publications (EN, Church of England newspaper etc). They may be writing about topics we might have a nuanced view on.
- If an individual is regularly posting negative comments or sending negative private messages, please speak to staff team about how to proceed.
- In the event of threats, defamation or impersonation, follow diocese policy:

If anyone makes a threat, defames you or impersonates you online, firstly, take a screenshot of what has been posted – the person may later take a message down if they are challenged about it. There are simple instructions on how to do this on WikiHow (<http://www.wikihow.com/Take-a-Screenshot-in-Microsoft-Windows>) .

Save the screenshot and contact your communications officer

Promotion of page/profile/group

- Pages/profiles/groups to be promoted through organic means
- Administrators to be aware of opportunities to share pages/groups, but only with permission of administrators on the page/group they want to share it on
- Administrators to annually encourage those who like the page to share it on their personal profiles

General guidance

- Take responsibility for what you write, and assume everything is public. On the internet, everything is visible, and everything is stored. Nothing you say will be forgotten or hidden. Post as though your grandmother or your bishop is reading over your shoulder.
- Remember, social media is subject to laws of safeguarding, libel, slander, copyright and data protection. There is no legal protection offered by posting anonymously or under an alias.

Closing of page/profile/group

- If a page/profile/group is no longer active, the page/profile/group should be closed down. Only active accounts are to be kept open so that when individuals search for accounts related to St John Newland they will find accounts that are open and up to date.

Appendix:

Below is a summary of Diocese guidelines regarding safeguarding children and vulnerable adults that we should be aware of. The full diocese social media policy is available at

<http://dioceseofyork.org.uk/uploads/attachment/2688/social-media-guidelines.pdf>

- It's important to put more thought into your boundaries when communicating with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The law and diocesan policies around safeguarding apply in your communications with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Get parents' or guardians' permission before you contact young people via social media or email, and consent for use of photographs.
- You should not add children or young people on your personal social networking page who are part of the children's and youth ministry/project at your church or group and who are under the age of 18. You can set up a Facebook group for your project or group and invite them to be members (if they are over the required minimum age limit).
- Keep all your communications public and only send messages to whole groups, rather than to individuals. Behave as you would in a public setting - always maintain a second leader 'in the room', and make sure your line manager is able to see what is posted or emailed.
- Only contact young people during office hours, not in the evening or at night.
- Leaders and young people could develop agreed 'Internet Guidelines'. A youth group is a good context for healthy use of the internet to be encouraged (for more ideas on this see <http://www.methodist.org.uk/mission/children-and-youth/the-well-for-workers/downloadable-resources/social-media-guidelines>)
- It's potentially easier to form inappropriate relationships using social media. Online banter and private messaging can lead to a level of intimacy that you'd ordinarily guard against. Be alert to the potential for misinterpretation. Keep your boundaries in place.
- If a young person uses social media to disclose sensitive or difficult information to you, save these messages in case they are needed later, for example in sharing with the police or social workers. If someone uses a social media space to access pastoral care, or disclose information inappropriately, you may need to take the conversation offline or into a more private location.
- Avoid interacting more with one young person than another, eg, if you wish happy birthday to one person, you need to do it for all users.
- Humour - without the cues of non-verbal communication, humour can be easily misconstrued. Be alert to adolescent sensitivities.
- Be a good example. Remind young people that there's no such thing as 'private' online. Tell them what kind of photos and information are okay to post and to never share personal information like name, school, age or address.
- There is a risk that young people can be drawn into violent extremism via social media. For help on this, see The Channel, which draws on existing collaboration between local authorities, the police, statutory partners (such as the education sector, social services, children's and youth services and offender management services) and the local community and has three objectives: to identify individuals at risk of being drawn into violent extremism; to assess the nature and extent of that risk; to develop the most appropriate support for the individuals concerned: <https://www.counterextremism.org/resources/details/id/115/channel-process>
- There is a short, online training course on the CHANNEL process, available at: http://course.ncalt.com/Channel_General_Awareness/01/index.html

Useful Links and Articles

<http://worshipmatters.com/2017/07/12/paradox-worship-selfie/?platform=hootsuite>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/12-questions-to-ask-yourself-before-posting-something-online>



Social Media Page/Profile/Group Guidelines Proforma

A planning tool for your social media presence

Page/profile/group name _____

Page aim _____

Target audience _____

Posts/Tweets

All posts/tweets are to be in line with content guidelines in the St John Newland Social Media Policy

Posts/tweets are split into three categories:

1) Daily posts/tweets

2) Weekly posts/tweets

3) Monthly posts/tweets

4) Occasional posts/tweets

Private messages (if applicable)

Events (if applicable)

Page/profile/group promotion
