

Date: 17 January 2017

For: Employees, volunteers, referrers, members



Social Networking Policy

Introduction

Ride High recognises that more and more adults and children are using social networking sites. The widespread availability and use of these sites bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with our audiences in new ways. It is important that we are able to use these sites effectively and flexibly. But it is crucial that our members, referrers and other partners, and the public at large have confidence in the service we provide, and this Policy is therefore designed to ensure that our employees, volunteers and members use social networking sites responsibly.

Social networking sites include Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, blogs, chatrooms, open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia and sharing sites like YouTube. However, this Policy applies to all forms of social networking opportunities (together hereinafter referred to as “social media”).

This Policy applies to Ride High employees, volunteers and all other individuals who work for or provide services on behalf of Ride High, and also to our members. It covers the personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official Ride High business, including in particular for advertising/promotional purposes.

Currently, Ride High has its own Facebook page and Twitter page both of which are used exclusively for promoting Ride High. From time to time, videos of our events and activities are posted on YouTube. Ride High also has its own website (www.ridehigh.org).

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure:

- that Ride High is not exposed to legal and governance risks;
- that the reputation of Ride High is not adversely affected;
- the safeguarding of Ride High members and their confidentiality;
- that our employees and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities in connection with the use of social media;
- that our members are also aware of the principles we expect them to follow when using social media in connection with Ride High;
- that it is possible to distinguish clearly where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of Ride High.

Principles

All employees, volunteers and members must remember that information they share on social media is subject to copyright, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also adhere to the terms of our written policies.

They must also adhere to the following principles:

- No content may be published on social media which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claim for damages.
- No content may be published on social media which might bring Ride High into disrepute.
- Employees and volunteers must always act in the best interests of Ride High and our members when contributing to social media.
- Social media must not be used in an abusive manner.
- Social media must not be used for actions that would put any person in breach of Ride High policies.
- Social media must not be used by Ride High employees or volunteers to post any personal information or comment about any other employee, volunteer or members or former members (or their families) without their prior consent.
- Ride High email addresses and other official contact details must not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through social media.
- Use of social media in worktime for personal use only is not permitted.
- Employees must be conscious of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate. Caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be “friends” in personal social media as social media blurs the line between work and personal lives.
- The Ride High logo must not be used on personal social media.

Any breach of these principles by any employee may lead to disciplinary measures pursuant to our Disciplinary Procedure. Any breach by any volunteer will be discussed with them by the Children’s Manager.

Guidance/protection for employees and volunteers on using social media

No employee or volunteer should interact with any member or former member under the age of 18 on social media (unless a family member). Therefore, no employee or volunteer should have a member or former member under the age of 18 (other than a family member) as a “friend” to share information with.

No employee or volunteer should post any information or comment on their own Twitter or Facebook page concerning a member or former member

No member should be able to see employees’ or volunteers’ profiles on social media.

It is illegal for an adult to give their age and status as a child when using social media.

Guidance/protection for members on using social media

No member under 13 should be accessing social media, pursuant to guidance from both Facebook and MSN.

No member may access social media during a Ride High session, unless supervised by the Club Leader.

Members should report any improper contact or cyber bullying to the Club Leader, Children’s Manager or Operations Manager in confidence as soon as it happens. Cyber bullying is unacceptable and if undertaken by a member will be dealt with pursuant to our Behaviour Policy or our Safeguarding Children Policy depending on the source of the bullying.

Child protection guidance

If the Operations Manager, Children’s Manager or Chief Executive receives a disclosure that an employee or volunteer is using social media in an inappropriate manner as detailed above they should deal with that disclosure in accordance with our Safeguarding Children Policy and/or our Disciplinary Procedure.

Ride High Facebook and Twitter pages, YouTube videos and website

The Ride High Facebook and Twitter pages, and our website, are managed and monitored on a daily basis by Ride High employees, who are aware of the need to consider carefully the type and wording of information posted. Each member of the team is aware of the principles set out above when considering what information to post, which must be appropriate for its audience.

Neither of the pages or the website will name any Ride High member unless the requisite consent has been obtained and, in accordance with the Parent/Carer consent form and our Safeguarding Children Policy, photographs or photograph images of members may only be posted if again the requisite consent has been obtained. The same applies to YouTube postings.

If anyone planning to post information on the website, either page or on YouTube is in any doubt about the posting, they should first consult the Operations Manager or Marketing Manager.

Training and awareness

A copy of this Policy will be shown to all employees and volunteers, and each must sign the list attached to the original to indicate they have read and understood it. It will also be made available to all referrers and members and/or their parents/carers.

Approval and review

This Policy was approved at a Board Meeting of the Trustees on 17 January 2017. It will be reviewed each September thereafter or more frequently if appropriate.

Signed.....

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