

Date of issue	2013	Reviewed	March 2026	Next review	March 2028	Approved by	Children's Committee
For	Employees, volunteers, students, visitors, members, referrers						



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, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, LinkedIn, MySpace, blogs, chatrooms, WhatsApp, Discord, Twitch, Reddit, BeReal, Threads, and any platform with messaging or content-sharing features as well as 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, Twitter page and Instagram account and is also on LinkedIn; all of these 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;

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- to ensure that employees, volunteers and members understand that their association with Ride High may be identifiable through their online activity and that inappropriate use of social media may cause reputational damage to both the individual and Ride High;
- 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, data protection legislation, 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.
- Employees, volunteers and members must be mindful that they may be associated with Ride High through their online presence or activities. Content posted on personal social media accounts that could reasonably be linked to Ride High must not damage the reputation, values or public confidence in either the individual or the organisation.
- When identifying themselves as employees, volunteers, trustees, members or representatives of Ride High on social media, individuals must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Ride High's values and policies.
- 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.

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- Ride High employees or volunteers must not communicate with any members or former members directly via social media including viewing or interacting with their content.
- The Ride High logo must not be used on personal social media except for LinkedIn.

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 Volunteer 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 social media 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 Facebook, MSN, Instagram and Snapchat.

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

From time to time, Ride High runs age-appropriate e-safety sessions for our members.

Members should report any improper contact or cyber bullying to the club leader or Children's 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 Children's Manager or the 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.

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Organisation Social Media Account Guidelines

Any employee, volunteer or authorised person managing a Ride High social media account must:

- Communicate respectfully, professionally and courteously at all times, maintaining appropriate online etiquette.
- Ensure that all content reflects Ride High's values, safeguarding responsibilities and commitment to inclusion.
- Maintain confidentiality and never disclose personal information relating to members, former members, service users, families, employees or volunteers without appropriate consent and authorisation.
- Protect the anonymity of service users wherever possible and ensure that no information is published that could directly or indirectly identify an individual unless the appropriate consent has been obtained.
- Verify the accuracy of information before publishing and correct any errors promptly.
- Report any inappropriate comments, security concerns or safeguarding issues in accordance with the Incident Reporting section of this Policy.
- Only use authorised organisational accounts for official Ride High communications and must not share account credentials with unauthorised individuals.

Ride High Facebook, Instagram 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 carefully consider 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 Marketing Manager.

Photographs

Photographs and videos of young people in our care may only be taken by Ride High employees, volunteers and Trustees or their authorised agents. Unless otherwise authorised by Ride High, photographs and videos may only be taken on a camera or other device owned by Ride High. Such photographs and videos may be used on Ride High's website

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and/or in Ride High's printed material and by the media (including newspapers and broadcast media) for the promotion of Ride High and its activities, but may not be used for any other purpose, and only if we have received prior written permission from the young person's parents/carers.

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 and shown to all students undergoing training with Ride High.

Incident Reporting

All employees, volunteers and members must follow a clear process when any online incident occurs: **Identify → Report → Record → Escalate**. Any concerning activity on social media must be reported immediately to the Children's Manager, Head of Learning or Chief Executive. This includes, but is not limited to, impersonation accounts, leaked or unauthorised photos or videos, online harassment of staff, volunteers or members, and any suspected data breach involving social media platforms. All incidents must be documented promptly and escalated in line with Ride High's safeguarding and data protection procedures to ensure timely action and appropriate oversight.

Approval and review

This Policy was approved at a Meeting of the Trustees. It will be reviewed bi-annually, after any major safeguarding incident, when new platforms or risks emerge or when legislation changes.