

Roscommon Community College



Social Media Policy 2024-2025

Date for Review: *August 2025*

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Introduction

Roscommon Community College, a co-educational secondary school under the patronage of Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB), has established this Social Media Policy. Developed by the school's Social Media Team in consultation with the principal, this policy has been ratified by the Board of Management. It is scheduled for review one year from its date of ratification.

Purpose/Rationale

The primary objective of this policy is to provide a structured framework and safeguarding measures for the use of social media to promote learning, teaching activities, extracurricular activities, and the overall day-to-day operations of Roscommon Community College.

Social media refers collectively to the school's accounts on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and X formerly Twitter. These guidelines also extend to any additional platforms that may be used in the future. Breaches of these guidelines will be investigated, and the school retains the right to take disciplinary action in accordance with the Discipline Policy when necessary.

All stakeholders should be aware that information shared via social media, even in private settings, is subject to copyright, data protection, freedom of information, and defamation laws and policies. A list of pertinent policies and legislation underpinning this policy is provided below.

This policy applies to all students, staff, parents, and other stakeholders of Roscommon Community College.

Aim

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that we at Roscommon Community College manage our website (roscomcol.com), social media, print media, and other digital communication platforms in accordance with best practices and to the highest standards.
- To safeguard the creation and maintenance of content on all channels affiliated with the school.
- To provide guidance and direction to all stakeholders regarding the use of the school's social media platforms, ensuring their use and maintenance in a safe and responsible manner, respecting the rights and reputation of the school and others.

School Social Media Platforms

Roscommon Community College is represented on the following platforms:

- **Website:** www.roscomcol.com
- **X (formerly Twitter):** @RosComCol
- **Facebook:** Roscommon Community College
- **Instagram:** Roscommon_community_college

Any pages operating outside of these are not affiliated with RCC and do not represent the school.

Safeguarding

The safeguarding of all school stakeholders is paramount. All necessary measures will be employed to ensure robust safeguarding practices are in place.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Social Media Team:** Responsible for overseeing the running of the school's social media platforms and for the implementation and enforcement of the social media policy.
- **Principal:** Provides final approval for content and handles escalated incidents.

Content Approval Process

All content intended for the school's social media platforms must be reviewed and approved by designated members of the Social Media Team to ensure it aligns with the school's values and policies prior to posting. A two staff member authentication process is in place to check content compliance.

Guidelines for Staff Managing the School's Social Media Platforms

Insofar as is possible, staff managing the school's social media platforms are asked to:

- Avoid naming students fully in social media posts.
- Use group photos as much as possible.
- Ensure images reflect the best aspects of the school.
- Spell-check posts prior to publication.
- Not to publish defamatory, abusive, or offensive material regarding any individual affiliated with the school.
- Not to disclose confidential or sensitive information about the school or its community.
- Avoid content that could reasonably damage the reputation or professional standing of the school.

Additional Rules Regarding Usage for Staff Managing Social Media Platforms

- Verify with the school secretary for students without photo consent.
- Use only school-provided devices for storing social media data.
- Store devices with social media content securely at school; if taken home, they must remain secure and inaccessible to unauthorized individuals.
- Avoid publishing inappropriate content, including defamatory, derogatory, or slanderous comments.

- Ensure content reflects professional conduct expected of school staff.
- Avoid breaching school policies, such as confidentiality.
- Maintain respectful content and tone.
- Review content objectively before posting; if uncertain, seek a second opinion.
- Correct mistakes promptly and factually.
- Report inappropriate activity or behavior immediately.
- Do not engage with students or parents on general school matters via social media.
- Remove any questionable third-party comments immediately.
- Comply with student requests to delete personal data in line with the Data Protection Act (2018).
- Avoid direct interactions with students, parents, or other individuals on school social media platforms.

General Guidelines for Staff Regarding Social Media

Staff should be mindful of their professional conduct online, recognizing the potential impact of their posts on the school and its community. Staff are prohibited from using or publishing information on social media platforms that could negatively affect the school or its stakeholders. Examples of prohibited behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Publishing defamatory, abusive, or offensive material about staff, students, or any individual affiliated with the school.
- Disclosing confidential or sensitive information about the school or its community.
- Publishing content that could damage the school's reputation or professional standing.

Guidelines for Parents

Parents are asked to respect material posted on school social media platforms and report any inappropriate or defamatory content to the school for investigation. Defamatory comments against school safeguarding procedures will result in a request for removal within 24 hours. Non-compliance may be referred to An Garda Síochána for review.

Guidelines for Students

Students are reminded that any inappropriate commenting on school social media platforms, copying and disseminating images posted on school social media or any inappropriate use of school social media platforms will be dealt with in accordance with the Discipline Policy of the school.

Students are also reminded that it is strictly prohibited to contact teachers or school staff on social media platforms or to post any information about teachers or school staff (including videos

or images) on social media platforms. Any breaches of same will be subject to the Discipline Policy of Roscommon Community College and may be forwarded to the Board of Management.

A copy of the school's Discipline Policy can be found here: [Discipline Policy - Roscommon Community College \(roscomcol.com\)](#)

[A copy of the school's Acceptable Usage Policy can be found here:](#)

General Guidelines for Students and Social Media

Students are reminded to use social media in a respectful, responsible way, and in compliance with school policies and relevant legislation. The following guidelines should be observed to ensure compliance:

- Do not post or share any defamatory, abusive, offensive, or inappropriate content.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of others; do not share personal information without consent.
- Avoid engaging in or promoting cyberbullying or harassment.
- Do not share or distribute copyrighted material without proper authorization.
- Report any suspicious or inappropriate online activity to a teacher or school authority immediately.
- Understand that any posts related to the school can reflect its reputation and must therefore be respectful and appropriate.
- Adhere to the school's Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) at all times.
- Do not use social media to communicate with teachers or staff outside of sanctioned school channels. (MS Teams is the only appropriate channel if used by the teacher)
- Always consider the long-term impact of online activities on your digital footprint and future opportunities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Social Media Team will regularly monitor the school's social media platforms to ensure compliance with this policy.

Student Education

Digital citizenship education programs are a valued part of learning and teaching in RCC and will continue to be implemented to teach students about responsible social media use, online safety, and the impact of their digital footprint through the SPHE Short Course Specification. All teachers are reminded that they are teachers of digital literacy and as same should reflect this in teaching and learning across the curriculum.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure continued compliance with legal requirements and best practices.

Enforcement

Non-compliance with the general principles and conditions of this policy may lead to disciplinary action. These guidelines are not exhaustive. In situations that are not expressly governed by these guidelines, you must ensure that your use of the school's social media platforms is, always, appropriate and consistent with your responsibilities towards the school. In case of any doubt, you should consult with the principal.

Incident Reporting and Response

- **Incident Reporting:** Any breaches or incidents related to social media misuse must be reported to the Principal or the designated Social Media Team. Reports should include details of the incident and any evidence available.
- **Response Procedure:** The school will investigate reported incidents promptly and fairly. Appropriate actions will be taken based on the findings, in accordance with the school's Discipline and Acceptable Usage Policies.

Crisis Management

A crisis communication plan will be developed to manage and communicate during any crisis involving social media, such as inappropriate posts or security breaches.

Non-Reply Policy

School social media is not regularly monitored and cannot be used for queries regarding daily school operations. Direct Messages will not be replied to. Please direct all queries to the school office at info.roscommon@gretb.ie or by calling 090 6626670.

Legislation Underpinning This Policy

- Data Protection Act (2018)
- Video Recordings Act (1989)
- Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Conduct Act (2020)
- Children First Act (2015)
- Defamation Act (2009)
- Copyright and Related Rights Acts (2000-2007)
- Child Trafficking and Pornography (Amendment) Act (2004)
- Equal Status Act (2000)
- Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act (1989)
- Irish Human Rights and Equality Act (2014)

Conclusion

Roscommon Community College is committed to the responsible use of social media. This policy provides clear guidelines to protect the school's integrity and the privacy and safety of all stakeholders. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all staff, students, and parents.