



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

A guide for volunteers, trustees, contractors on using social media to promote the work of CCAA Kids with Arthritis and in a personal capacity.

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, at least once a year. CCAA Kids With Arthritis will amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate. Date of last review: *[December 2023]*

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Introduction

What is social media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Why do we use social media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating CCAA's work. It is important for some staff to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of CCAA's work.

Why do we need a social media policy?

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to CCAA's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all volunteers and trustees, contractors, suppliers, and applies to content posted on both a CCAA device and a personal device. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, they must read this policy.

Setting out the social media policy

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of CCAA, and the use of social media by staff in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help staff support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

Point of contact for social media

The Chair is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to the Chair. You may only post content on CCAA's official channels with the permission of the Chair.

Which social media channels do we use?

CCAA uses the following social media channels:

- Facebook -
- Instagram
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Threads

We use each platform to share information from the Charity to reach families who made need our support, to celebrate Fundraisers and our Award Scheme, share information about research opportunities and to encourage people to become involved in our work.

Guidelines

Using CCAA's social media channels — appropriate conduct

1. The Chair is responsible for setting up and managing CCAA's social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the Chair will have access to these accounts.
2. We will respond to comments as and when there is a Volunteer available to respond.
3. Be an ambassador for our brand. Anyone responsible for CCAA's social media platforms should ensure they reflect CCAA's values in what they post and use our tone of voice. Our brand guidelines set out our tone of voice that all volunteers, trustees and contractors should refer to when posting content on CCAA's social media channels.
4. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for CCAA, and accurately reflects CCAA's agreed position.
5. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help and engage with them
6. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images.
7. Always pause and think before posting. That said, reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
8. If people outside of the core social media administrators wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should speak to the Chair about this.
9. Always check facts. Do not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.
10. Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.
11. Refrain from offering personal opinions via CCAA's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about CCAA's position on a particular issue, please speak to the Chair.
12. It is vital that CCAA does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.
13. Do not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.
14. Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of CCAA. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, CCAA can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

15. CCAA is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We have every right to express views on policy, including the policies of parties, but we can't tell people how to vote.

16. If a complaint is made on CCAA's social media channels, seek advice from the Chair before responding. If they are not available, then speak to Vice- Chair or another Committee Member.

17. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity.

CCAA should regularly monitor social media spaces for mentions of CCAA so we can catch any issues or problems early. If there is an issue that could develop or has already developed into a crisis situation, the following will happen:

- If anyone sees a negative or detrimental comment on our Social Media please report to the Chair or other Committee Member/Trustee.

If anyone outside of the CCAA becomes aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on CCAA's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Chair immediately.

Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. CCAA volunteers, and Trustees are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with CCAA's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive CCAA. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of CCAA. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about CCAA's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "*The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent CCAA's positions, policies or opinions.*"

2. Volunteers, trustees and contractors who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they volunteer or work on behalf of CCAA should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with the Chair. Similarly, volunteers, and Trustees who want to start blogging and wish to say that they have a connection with CCAA should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with the Chair.

4. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with CCAA and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to supporters, funders and the general public.

5. At times CCAA may work with high-profile people, such as celebrities, journalists, politicians and/or major donors. Please don't approach high-profile people from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the charity, as this could hinder any potential relationships that are being managed by CCAA. This includes asking for retweets about the charity. If you have any information about high-profile people who have a connection to our cause, or if there is someone who you would like to support the charity, please speak to the Chair to share the details.

7. If a volunteer or Trustee is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to CCAA they should talk to the Chair immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.
8. CCAA is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing CCAA, volunteers, trustees and contractors are expected to hold CCAA's position of neutrality. Anyone who is politically active in their spare time needs to be clear in separating their personal political identity from CCAA and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
9. Never use CCAA's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from CCAA.
10. Always protect yourself and the charity. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully.
11. Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.
12. We encourage volunteers and Trustees to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support CCAA and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage you to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to CCAA who will respond as appropriate.

Further guidelines

Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether volunteers, trustees and contractors are posting content on social media as part of their role with CCAA or in a personal capacity, they should not bring CCAA into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright law

It is critical that all staff abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

Confidentiality

Any communications that staff make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that CCAA is not ready to disclose yet.

Discrimination and harassment

Volunteers, trustees and contractors should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official CCAA social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

Lobbying Act

Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law. However, the Lobbying Act, which was passed in January 2014, states that during national elections (known as regulated periods) spending on campaigning activities may be regulated.

Charities which spend more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, during the regulated period, need to register with the Electoral Commission. To abide by the Lobbying Act, campaigning activities on social media must not be seen as intending to influence people's voting choice. During these periods, all campaigning activity will be reviewed by CCAA.

Use of social media in the recruitment process

Recruitment of volunteers should be carried out in accordance with the Recruitment Policy/Volunteer Policy and associated procedures and guidelines. Any advertising of volunteer vacancies should be done through the Chair and the Trustees.

There should be no systematic or routine checking of volunteers or Trustees online social media activities during the recruitment process, as conducting these searches might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics, such as religious beliefs or sexual orientation, played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with CCAA's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Protection and intervention

The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself.

Under 18s and vulnerable people

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, volunteers, trustees and contractors should ensure the online relationship with CCAA follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. volunteers, trustees and contractors should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. Staff should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and CCAA content and other content is appropriate for them. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.

Responsibilities and beach of policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of CCAA is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect.

Public Interest Disclosure

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, if a volunteer or Trustee releases information through CCAA's social media channels that is considered to be in the interest of the public, CCAA's Whistleblowing Policy must be initiated before any further action is taken.

This Policy was agreed at the Committee Meeting on: 26th March 2024

Review Record

Date of Review:	By:	Comments
March 2027		