

# Social Media Policy

Stride UK

## **Stride UK Foundation Social Media Policy**

### **Introduction**

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.

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Stride'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 Stride's work.

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Stride, and the use of social media by staff in both a professional and personal capacity.

Our Chief Operating Officer, Keira McCosh, 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, Keira McCosh can be contacted via email [keira@strideuk.org](mailto:keira@strideuk.org) between 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday. No other staff member can post content on Stride's official channels without permission.

### **Social Media channels in use**

Stride UK Foundation uses the following social media channels:

Instagram - @strideuk\_foundation

Twitter - @strideuk\_

TikTok - @strideuk\_

LinkedIn – [www.linkedin.com/company/stride-uk](http://www.linkedin.com/company/stride-uk)

Facebook – [www.facebook.com/strideukfoundation](http://www.facebook.com/strideukfoundation)

The purpose of all social media channels for Stride is to share information, news and updates with supporters and partners whilst encouraging users to become involved in our work.

### **Using Stride's social media channels — appropriate conduct**

1. Our COO, Keira McCosh, is responsible for setting up and managing Stride's social media channels. Only individuals who have been authorised to do so by the COO will have access to these accounts.
2. Posts and replies to messages will be monitored and actioned between Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm. We endeavour to reply to all requests in a timely manner.
3. Be an ambassador for our brand. Staff should ensure they reflect Stride's values in what they post and use our tone of voice. Our brand guidelines set out our tone of voice that all staff should refer to when posting content on Stride's social media channels.

4. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for Stride and accurately reflects Stride'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 staff outside of Stride wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should contact the COO about this.
9. Staff shouldn't post content about supporters or service users without their express permission. If staff are sharing information about supporters, service users or third party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, staff must ensure they have the appropriate consent before using them on social media.
10. Always check facts. Staff should 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.
11. 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.
12. Staff should refrain from offering personal opinions via Stride's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about Stride's position on a particular issue, please speak to Keira McCosh.
13. It is vital that Stride does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.
14. Staff should 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.
15. Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of Stride. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, we can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.
16. Stride 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.
17. If a complaint is made on Stride's social media channels, staff should seek advice from the COO or CEO before responding.

18. 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.

The senior management team regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of Stride so we can catch any issues or problems early.

If any staff outside of the senior management team become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on Stride's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the COO 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. Stride staff are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with Stride's values and policies, both online and in real life.

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

2. Staff who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at Stride should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and the COO. Similarly, staff who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for Stride should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and the COO.

3. Those in senior management, and specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing Stride's view.

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

5. If you have any information about high profile people that have a connection to our cause, or if there is someone who you would like to support the charity, please speak to the COO to share the details.

7. If a staff member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to Stride, they should talk to the senior management team immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

8. Stride 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 Stride, staff are expected to hold the foundation's position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from Stride, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

9. Never use Stride's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the COO.

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. When you are using social media sites at work, it is important that you do so safely. You can find more information on your responsibilities when using our computer systems in our Safeguarding and Privacy policies.

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 staff 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 Stride and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage staff 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 the senior management team who will respond as appropriate.

13. Under no circumstances should you accept follow requests from young people who participate in our programmes. In the event that a young person attempts to contact you through your personal social media, please direct them to our official channels immediately and report this communication to your line manager.