

# **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

## **Read With Me**

Registered company number 12594043

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to provide guidance for employees and volunteers on how they should use social media in the workplace. Read With Me CIC (from herein referred to as Read With Me) is committed to employees and volunteers using social media in a safe and responsible manner.

### **2. General Principles**

- 2.1. 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.
- 2.2. Social media is essential to the success of communicating Read With Me's work. It is important for some employees and volunteers to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of Read With Me's work. However, such informal and instant communication can reach a very wide audience and is permanent, increasing the risk of misinformation, inappropriate communication, unprofessional behaviour and negative impact.
- 2.3. The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if the employee or volunteer is discussing an issue relating to Read With Me's work. While Read With Me encourages 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 carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.
- 2.4. This policy is intended for all employees and volunteers and applies to content posted on any Read With Me's device or a personal device. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, employees and volunteers must read this policy.
- 2.5. This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Read With Me, and the use of social media by employees and volunteers in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what employees and volunteers need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help employees and volunteers support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting Read With Me and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

### **3. Who is responsible?**

- 3.1. The Read With Me Training Manager is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels.
- 3.2. In addition to the Training Manager, Read With Me's two Directors and the Volunteer Liaison Manager have access to Read With Me's social media channels and post/reply to appropriate content as required.

### **4. Use of Social Media at work**

- 4.1 The staff (point 3.2 above) are ambassadors for our brand, and all posts must reflect the Read With Me values and tone.

Policy date: January 2023

Policy review date: January 2026

- 4.2 All social media content must have a purpose and a benefit for Read With Me, and accurately reflect the Read With Me agreed position on the topic.
- 4.3 Social media posts must be free from typos, misspellings, or grammatical errors. Any images used must be of a high quality and must come from the Read With Me own photo library or from Canva.
- 4.4 If other staff and volunteers wish to contribute content for the Read With Me social media channels, they must speak to Director Linda Cohen in the first instance.

## **5. Complaints on Social Media channels**

- 5.1. If a complaint is made on read with me social media channels, advice must be sought from one or both of the Directors before responding.
- 5.2. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the Read With Me reputation. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting in a timely manner can be detrimental to Read With Me.
- 5.3. If staff and volunteers become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on the Read With Me social media channels or elsewhere, they must speak to at least one of the two Directors immediately.

## **6. Use of Social Media outside of work**

- 6.1 This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts may arise Read With Me staff and volunteers are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with Read With Me's values and policies, both on-line and in real life.
- 6.2 Staff and volunteers must remain aware that any information they make public can affect how people perceive Read With Me. They must make it clear when they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of Read With Me. If they are using their personal social media accounts to promote and talk about Read With Me's work, they must insert the following disclaimer: "*The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Read With Me's positions, policies or opinions*".
- 6.3 Staff and volunteers who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at Read With Me must discuss any potential conflict of interest with one or both of the Directors. Similarly, staff or volunteers who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work/volunteer for Read With Me must discuss any potential conflicts of interest with one or both of the Directors.
- 6.4 Staff and volunteers must use common sense and good judgement. They must remain aware of their association with Read With Me and ensure their profile and related content is consistent with how they wish to present themselves to the wider public.

## **7. General guidelines**

- 7.1 If a staff member or volunteer is contacted by the media (TV, radio, press) about their social media posts that relate to Read With Me, they must talk to at least one of the Directors immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.
- 7.2 Read With Me 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 Read With Me, staff are expected to hold the Read With Me position of neutrality. Staff and volunteers who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in

separating their personal political identity from Read With Me and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

- 7.3 Staff and volunteers must protect themselves and Read With Me when using social media. What is published remains widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so content needs to be considered carefully.