



Social Media Policy

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Our social media community guidelines

At the moment our church makes very little use of social media in our day to day life but it is important to know what the guidelines should be when we do.

These have been created to encourage conversations that reflect our values. They apply to all content posted on the national social media accounts run by the Church of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop of York.

Social media is a very public way of enabling us as Christians to live out our calling to share the good news of Jesus Christ. One of its many joys is that it is immediate, interactive, conversational and open-ended. This opportunity comes with a number of downsides if users do not apply the same common sense, kindness and sound judgement that we would use in a face-to-face encounter.

While written specifically for all users who engage with the Church of England's and Archbishops' national social media channels, these guidelines are built on universal principles. They are a resource for Christians, people of other faiths and people of no faith. Dioceses and local churches across the Church of England are welcome and encouraged to adopt them.

By engaging with the Church of England and Archbishops' social media accounts, you agree to:

- **Be safe.** The safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults must be maintained. If you have any concerns, ask a diocesan safeguarding adviser.
- **Be respectful.** Do not post or share content that is sexually explicit, inflammatory, hateful, abusive, threatening or otherwise disrespectful.
- **Be kind.** Treat others how you would wish to be treated and assume the best in people. If you have a criticism or critique to make, consider not just *whether* you would say it in person, but the tone you would use.
- **Be honest.** Don't mislead people about who you are.
- **Take responsibility.** You are accountable for the things you do, say and write. Text and images shared can be public and permanent, even with privacy settings in place. If you're not sure, don't post it.
- **Be a good ambassador.** Personal and professional life can easily become blurred online so think before you post.
- **Disagree well.** Some conversations can be places of robust disagreement and it's important we apply our values in the way we express them.
- **Credit others.** Acknowledge the work of others. Respect copyright and always credit where it is due. Be careful not to release sensitive or confidential information and always question the source of any content you are considering amplifying.
- **Follow the rules.** Abide by the terms and conditions of the various social media platforms themselves. If you see a comment that you believe breaks their policies, then please report it to the respective company.

How will we respond to people who breach our social media community guidelines?

The Church's and Archbishops' Communications teams may take action if they receive complaints or spot inappropriate, unsuitable or offensive material posted to the national social media accounts. This may include deleting comments, blocking users or reporting comments as appropriate.

Who do I speak to for further advice?

If you have a safeguarding concern, please see the Rector or the Safeguarding Officer who will either look into the matter or, if necessary, seek further advice.