



Social Media Policy

2025-27

Adopted: 18th September 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Cinzia Hardy'.

Signed:

Role: Chair of Trustees

Date: 18th September 2025

Social Media Policy

This is a comprehensive guide to social media use for Highlights Productions Limited (Highlights) and for individuals using social media in a personal capacity as a representative of Highlights.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years. Highlights will amend and update this policy, following consultations with Staff and Trustees where appropriate.

This policy is intended for all staff, trustees and consultants. Our volunteer promoters are also asked to read our policy and follow the guidance within it where this is appropriate.

Before engaging in social media activity, everyone must read this policy, which contains guidance that will help them adhere to our standards and avoid the hazards.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media is the collective term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create, share and interact with content (words, images, graphics and video content), as well as network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media platforms include Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, Blue Sky, Twitch and TikTok.

1.2 WHY DO WE USE SOCIAL MEDIA AND WHAT CAN WE USE IT FOR?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Highlights' work. It is important for designated staff and volunteers to participate in social media to engage with our audiences and interested parties, contribute to relevant conversations, and raise the profile of Highlights' work, using the charity's business accounts. Some staff and volunteers may also support the charity's work using their personal accounts, and many will have social media accounts for personal use.

Building an engaged online community can lead to more significant long-term support and involvement from supporters. [Social media guidance from the Charity Commission](#) (September 2023) conveys how social media can be a highly effective way for a charity to engage its audiences and communicate about its work.

1.3 SOCIAL MEDIA HELPS US TO:

- ☐ Promote our campaigns
- ☐ Share our news and updates with our audiences
- ☐ Engage in important conversations with audiences, participants and interested parties
- ☐ Celebrate our successes
- ☐ Raise awareness of important issues and challenges
- ☐ Advertise job and volunteering opportunities
- ☐ Support our fundraising activities
- ☐ Increase our membership
- ☐ Build an online supportive community
- ☐ Raise our public profile and strengthen our reputation
- ☐ React to quickly changing situations and topics

1.4 WHY DO WE NEED A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY?

Social media is a fast-moving online world, where nuance and context can be easily lost. While social media brings the charity to a wide audience, it can also present risks. We want to ensure that all staff, trustees and volunteers using social media represent and reflect Highlights in the best way

possible. It is also important to mitigate risks (such as reputational or legal issues) associated with the use of social media to protect our supporters, staff and volunteers, work and reputation.

While we encourage the use of social media to support our communications strategy or plans, we have important standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe and adhere to. The difference between a personal and professional opinion can also be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to Highlights work. Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations and are subject to the same laws as other kinds of publication or commentary in the public domain.

Failure to comply with this policy could expose Highlights to reputational damage as well as putting anyone associated with Highlights at risk.

1.5 RESPONSIBILITIES AND BREACH OF POLICY

Everyone is responsible for their compliance with this policy.

Participation in social media on behalf of Highlights is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect.

Breaches of policy or inappropriate behaviour may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Please refer to our staff Terms and Conditions Policy and guidance and trustees Code of Conduct policy for further information on our processes. Staff and volunteers who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach policies should seek advice from the Artistic Director or Communications Officer.

2. SETTING OUT THE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

2.1 APPLICATION

This policy applies to all social media platforms used by staff (including consultants, and freelancers) and in a professional and personal capacity.

This policy also applies to online blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, and messaging based apps, such as WhatsApp. Social media can be accessed in various ways, including from a desktop or laptop computer, tablet or smartphone. This policy applies to the use of all such devices.

2.2 INTERNET ACCESS AND MONITORING USAGE

There are currently no access restrictions to any of our social media sites in the Highlights office. However, when using the internet at work, it is important that staff and volunteers refer to our Staff Terms and Condition Policy and guidance. You can refer to the same policy for guidance on working from home. You are permitted to make reasonable and appropriate use of personal social media activity in line with this policy during your breaks. But usage should not be excessive or interfere with your work.

2.3 POINT OF CONTACT FOR SOCIAL MEDIA AND AUTHORITY TO POST ON HIGHLIGHTS SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Our Communications Officer is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our external social media channels. If you have questions about any aspect of these

channels, please speak to the Communications Officer. No other staff member or volunteer is permitted to post content on Highlights official channels without the permission of the Communications Officer.

The Artistic Director is responsible for the moderation of the Facebook Group, a closed forum where members of staff, Trustees and volunteer promoters are all able to post as themselves.

2.4 WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS DO WE USE?

Highlights uses the following social media channels:

BlueSky <https://bsky.app/profile/highlightsrural.bsky.social>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/highlightsrural/>

Instagram https://www.instagram.com/highlights_rural/

Highlights has a Facebook page which is used primarily for listings of events and workshops. The user demographic leans towards female aged between 55-75. The majority of our Promoters favour Facebook over Instagram.

Highlights has a Facebook group, the Promoters' Lounge, where volunteers can share queries, advice and ideas. As of August 2025, 32% of promoters are members of this group.

Highlights has an Instagram page that historically has been used more by artists than venues and audiences. This is beginning to change. The user demographic leans towards female aged between 35-55.

Highlights has a BlueSky account, set up to replace X (Twitter). This is still quite new as of March 2025. No user demographics available.

2.5 POLICY OWNERSHIP

The General Manager is responsible for authorising and updating this document. The policy must be approved by the trustees and reviewed every two years, unless a significant change requires the organisation to check the policy before the next review date. All staff and volunteers will be notified of updates.

2.6 CODE OF CONDUCT HEADLINES

AS IN ALL OTHER AREAS OF STAFF AND TRUSTEE CONDUCT, TEN SIMPLE STATEMENTS CLARIFY THE EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOUR ON SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS.

- I will not insult, harass, bully or intimidate individuals or organisations
- I will respond to others' opinions respectfully and professionally
- I will not do anything that breaches my terms of employment/voluntary role
- I will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly using provided guidance
- I will disclose conflicts of interest where I am able

- I will not knowingly post inaccurate information
- I will link to online references and original source materials directly
- I will be considerate, kind and fair
- I will always ensure my activity does no harm to the organisation or to others
- I will champion Highlights and its services

2.7 USING HIGHLIGHTS SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS — APPROPRIATE CONDUCT

2.7.1. KNOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA GUARDIANS

The Communications Officer is responsible for setting up and managing Highlights social media channels. Highlights has overall ownership of these accounts and only those authorised to do so by the Artistic Director will have access to these accounts.

Highlights will uphold best practices for channel security with secure passwords that regularly change. Never give out the passwords for our channels without express permission from the Artistic Director.

2.7.2 BE AN AMBASSADOR FOR OUR BRAND

Staff and volunteers must ensure they reflect Highlights values in what they post and use our tone of voice. Our brand guidelines <https://bit.ly/44igXvG> set out our style that all staff and volunteers should refer to when posting content on Highlights social media channels. Please note only the Artistic Director and Communications Officer are permitted to respond to comments on our social media posts on behalf of the organisation. All posts and comments should be attributed to the charity and not an individual. In special cases it may be appropriate for a staff member or volunteer to make an individual comment as themselves, but this should be under the supervision, and with the approval of the Artistic Director and Communications Officer.

2.7.3. ALWAYS PAUSE AND THINK BEFORE POSTING

When posting from Highlights social media accounts, you must respond to comments in the voice of our charity and not allow your own personal opinions to influence responses. Staff and volunteers must not reveal their personal opinions via our accounts by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'reposting' Highlights, unless it is clear that you are doing so as an individual staff member or volunteer as part of an approach agreed with the Artistic Director and Communications Officer. If you are in doubt about Highlights position on a particular issue, please speak to the Artistic Director or the Communications Officer.

2.7.4. ENSURE BRAND CONSISTENCY

Staff or volunteers must not create or manage any other social media channels, groups or pages on behalf of Highlights without express permission from Communications Officer and training. This is to ensure brand consistency for users and the appropriate safeguarding and monitoring processes are in place.

2.7.5. REMEMBER THE BIGGER PICTURE AND FOCUS ON THE BENEFIT

Staff and volunteers must make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for Highlights to further our charitable purposes (either directly or indirectly, by engaging our audiences,

participants, volunteer promoters, trustees, staff and consultants and building our brand using our strategy). All content must accurately reflect Highlights' agreed position.

2.7.6. BRING VALUE TO OUR AUDIENCE(S)

Those responsible for the management of our social media accounts should answer questions as swiftly as possible to help and engage with our audiences, participants and supporters.

2.7.7. OBTAIN CONSENT

Staff and volunteers must not post content about supporters, service users or partners without their, (or their guardian's), express permission. If staff or volunteers are sharing information about supporters, service users or third-party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from Highlights. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, staff and volunteers must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.

2.7.8. PUT SAFETY FIRST

It can be challenging working on social media and there may be times where staff or volunteers could be subject to unpleasant or abusive comments directed at the charity, our work or people. We encourage everyone who is on social media on behalf of the charity to be aware of our safeguarding policy and consult with the Artistic Director or Communications Officer where necessary.

It is also vital that Highlights does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials in pursuit of social media engagement. For example, a video of a stunt or visiting an unsafe location.

2.7.9. STICK TO THE LAW

Staff and volunteers must 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.

2.7.10. REMAIN POLITICALLY NEUTRAL

Highlights is not associated with any political organisation and does not have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We can express views where appropriate on policies that impact our work and service users, but it is essential that Highlights remains, and is seen to be, politically neutral.

We cannot endorse a political party or candidate. We must carefully manage the risk that we are perceived to have any party-political bias and should carefully consider any posts which might be perceived as such, for example, posts which talk about individual politicians or parties rather than policies. Please refer to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

2.7.11. CHECK FACTS AND BE HONEST

Staff and volunteers should not automatically assume that material that's shared or included in any post is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification – for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it. But think first about how to manage any risk to the charity and its brand in doing so by consulting with Communications Officer to craft the response.

2.7.12. SEEK ADVICE FOR COMPLAINTS

If a complaint is made on Highlights social media channels, staff and volunteers should seek advice from the Communications Officer before responding. If they are not available, then staff and volunteers should speak to the Artistic Director.

2.7.13. KNOW WHAT TO DO IN A CRISIS

Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation. Examples might include:

- Comments which include inappropriate language or inflammatory views, either targeted towards the organisation or individuals within it.
- Criticisms of the organisation or its funders or artists

The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity or our people. The Communications Officer regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of Highlights so we can catch any issues or problems early. If there is an issue that could develop or has already developed into a crisis, the Communications Officer will do the following:

During working hours, the Communications Officer monitors the social media content via an alert system which indicates when a comment on any of our posts has been made. Should these occur outside of the Communications Officer's normal working hours, the posts are dealt with on her return.

In the event of inappropriate comment or post made. Follow the guidance:

Is the comment or post in breach of any relevant law?

- If yes, Artistic Director will inform Trustees of the situation, via the Chair of Trustees, and contact any relevant authorities. It may also be appropriate for support to be provided by a solicitor. The Artistic Director will make this decision based on the nature of the authorities involved and in consultation with the Trustees. The post should be removed from the public forum, but content retained for any necessary investigations
- If no, the post should be removed as soon as is practicable, and consideration taken as to whether a public statement or correction is made to address any concerns re misinformation, balancing the risk of not doing so. This will be decided by the Artistic Director in consultation with the Communications Officer.

If any staff or volunteer outside of the Highlights staff becomes aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on Highlights social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Communications Officer immediately. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to report complaints or comments that could escalate into a crisis or have serious implications for the charity. Only the Communications Officer is permitted to amend or delete content in a crisis.

2.7.14: USE AI APPROPRIATELY

Currently, Highlights does not use AI to produce content. We acknowledge that AI can be a valuable tool that can support our communications activities. However, staff and volunteers must ensure AI created content adheres to our brand guidelines <https://bit.ly/44igXvG>. You must seek permission from the Artistic Director before using AI and only use approved AI tools and processes.

2.7.15. HANDOVER OWNERSHIP IF YOUR ROLE CHANGES

You must hand over ownership of the group/page/account you manage to another appropriate staff member (or volunteer) if you change roles or if you leave Highlights.

All the above also govern the tone, scope, language and content of posts made in the Highlights Promoters' Lounge group.

2.8 USE OF PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS — APPROPRIATE CONDUCT

Personal social media use by staff and volunteers can sometimes be attributed to the charity or bring other risks for the charity or individual staff or volunteers. This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media, but instead flags up those areas in which risks or conflicts might arise. Highlights staff and volunteers are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are considerate of Highlights values and policies, both online and in real life.

You can find more information on your responsibilities when using our computer systems in our Responsible Internet Use section of the Staff Terms and Conditions Policy and Procedure document

2.8.1. SEPARATE YOUR PERSONAL VIEWS

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

2.8.2. TAKE CARE WHEN PUBLISHING PERSONAL VIEWS (PARTICULARLY TRUSTEES AND SENIOR STAFF)

Those in senior management including trustees and public-facing or 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 Highlights view.

For senior roles, we expect you to take additional steps, such as:

- Being aware of your duties and responsibilities.
- Consulting your charity's policies and guidance, being particularly cautious in how your communications as a leading figure for Highlights may be interpreted.
- Avoiding posting any material which might be construed as contrary to or conflicting with the charity's mission or work.
- Ensuring you do not refer to the charity by name on your personal accounts on social media (e.g. 'CEO at an arts charity' rather than the charity's name), unless you are using an account as if it were the charity's own social media account (in line with the first section of the policy).

2.8.3. DISCUSS RISKS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Staff and trustees who have a personal blog, social media profile or website which indicates in any way that they work at Highlights should discuss any potential risk or conflicts of interest with their line manager and the Communications Officer. Similarly, staff or trustees who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for Highlights should discuss any potential risk or conflicts of interest with the Communications Officer.

2.8.4. PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL REPUTATION

Think about your personal 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 the first to correct your own mistakes.

Remember that if you have a public profile with the charity, your personal social media accounts could be looked at by critics of the charity, and bear this in mind when posting.

2.8.5. USE YOUR COMMON SENSE AND GOOD JUDGEMENT

Be aware of your association with Highlights and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the general public, colleagues, partners and funders .

2.8.6. DON'T APPROACH VIPS DIRECTLY

Highlights works with several high-profile organisations and individuals, including artists and theatre companies. Please don't approach high profile people or organisations 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 Highlights. This includes asking for reposts about the charity.

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

2.8.7. REFER PRESS ENQUIRIES

If a staff member or volunteer is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to Highlights, they should talk to the Communications Officer immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

2.8.8. KEEP YOUR POLITICAL ACTIVITY SEPARATE FROM THE CHARITY

When representing Highlights, staff and volunteers are expected to uphold Highlights positioning. Staff and volunteers who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from Highlights and understand and avoid potential risks and conflicts of interest. Staff should also inform their line manager about any such political activity, and trustees should inform the Chair. As set out in point 2.8.2 above, senior staff and trustees should take particular care.

2.8.9. PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY

Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. Remember that a simple 'like' can draw attention to your personal accounts. What you publish is widely accessible and could be around for a long time, so do consider the content, and your privacy, carefully.

All staff and volunteers who wish to engage with any of Highlights social media platforms are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. All staff and volunteers should keep their passwords confidential and change them often. Staff should avoid

becoming a 'friend' or personally connecting with volunteers, but this may be appropriate in certain circumstances which can be discussed with the Artistic Director.

In their own interests, staff and volunteers should be aware of the dangers of putting personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers.

2.8.10. HELP US TO RAISE OUR PROFILE (WHERE APPROPRIATE)

We encourage staff and volunteers to share posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support Highlights and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy (and taking into consideration the information above), we encourage staff and volunteers to do this as it helps users connect to us and raises our profile.

However, please take care to think about the reputation of the charity. If your personal social media account is not professional or otherwise appropriate for our audiences, please do not use it to amplify or promote the charity, as to do so brings risks both to you personally and to the charity. Similarly, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the Artistic Director who will respond as appropriate.

2.8.11. AVOID LOGOS OR TRADEMARKS

Never use Highlights logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos must be requested from the Artistic Director and any content created must adhere to our brand guidelines. If permission is granted, content must be approved by the Communications Officer before publishing.

2.8.12. STAYING SAFE ONLINE

It can be challenging working on social media and there may be times where staff and volunteers could be subject to unpleasant or abusive comments directed at the charity, our work or people. We encourage everyone who is on social media to be aware of our Safeguarding Policy to deal with online abuse and consult with Artistic Director and Communications Officer where necessary.

Staff and volunteers should be vigilant regarding suspicious content or links and must not reveal personal, confidential or sensitive information about themselves, other staff members, volunteers or supporters of Highlights. Staff and volunteers should be wary of fake accounts that may claim to be Highlights and should immediately notify Communications Officer.

Care must also be taken to ensure that any links to external sites from our social media accounts are appropriate and safe.

3 FURTHER GUIDELINES: USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN A PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL CAPACITY

3.1 DEFAMATION

[Defamation](#) is when a false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published in print (such as in media publications) or online (such as Instagram Story, Facebook Live, Snapchat post). Whether staff or volunteers are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring Highlights into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

3.2 COPYRIGHT LAW

It is critical that all staff or volunteers abide by [the laws governing copyright](#), under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, when representing the charity. 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.

3.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

Any communications that staff and volunteers make must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that Highlights is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date, or information from people who the charity has worked with which is private.

3.4 DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Staff and volunteers should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Highlights 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.

3.5 ACCESSIBILITY

In line with Highlights Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; available on request. We endeavour to ensure our social media is as accessible as possible. This includes:

- Using plain English, accessible fonts and avoiding small text sizes
- Using contrasting colours
- Using subtitles where appropriate
- Using alt text for videos and images
- Explaining text contained in an image in the copy that accompanies it
- Following our brand guidelines <https://bit.ly/44igXvG> which have been designed to be accessible.

You can view more guidance on the government website: [planning, creative and publishing accessible social media campaigns](#).

For accessibility best practices, visit the Charity Comms resource: [Accessible communication - a starting point to foster more inclusive comms](#).

3.6 THE LOBBYING ACT

Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose but can never be party political. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law (often known as the 'Lobbying Act'¹).

Under the Lobbying Act, organisations (including charities which spend more than £10,000 across the UK on 'regulated activity' during the regulated period need to register with [the Electoral Commission](#) within the outlined windows for elections.

Regulated activity is any activity which could reasonably be seen as intended to influence people's voting choice, either for parties or candidates (which a charity could never do) or for categories of candidates (e.g. female candidates, or candidates who support Net Zero). During these periods, all campaigning activity will be reviewed by the Artistic Director.

3.7 USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DURING THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Recruitment should be carried out in accordance with the associated procedures and guidelines. Any advertising of vacancies should be done following HR guidance and the job title promoted through approved channels.

There should be no systematic or routine checking of candidates' 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.

3.8 USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO SUPPORT FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Our social media platforms play a key role in our fundraising efforts and engaging with our donors. Before using our social media channels for fundraising purposes, staff and volunteers should adhere to [The Code of Fundraising Practices](#).

3.9 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. For example, Facebook. However, if a staff member or volunteer considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Artistic Director immediately.

3.10 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 or radicalisation. Where known, when communicating with vulnerable

¹ Set out initially in the [Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000](#), as amended by [the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014](#) and [the Elections Act 2022](#).

or young people under 18 years old via social media, staff and volunteers should ensure the online relationship with Highlights follows the same rules as offline.

Staff and volunteers should be aware that children under the age of 13 should not be encouraged to create their own personal social media accounts or engage with others and are not legally allowed to use social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram or X.

Staff and volunteers should ensure that vulnerable and young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online and given guidance on security and privacy settings as necessary. Staff and volunteers should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the vulnerable or young person and Highlights content and other content is appropriate for them. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.

All staff members and volunteers have a responsibility to do everything possible to ensure that vulnerable and young people are kept safe from harm. If you come across anything online that could mean someone is at risk, you should follow Highlights safeguarding policies.

[The Online Safety Act 2003](#) has introduced measures to ensure children are protected online.

3.11 ENGAGING ON EMOTIVE TOPICS

Highlights may be involved in issues that provoke strong emotions. The emotive content we share via our social media channels can engage our audiences and help us achieve our communications goals. However, it is important to plan appropriately and consider potential reputational risks to the charity. For more information, visit [the government resource called charities and social media](#).

3.12 PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE

Under [the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998](#), if a staff member releases information through Highlights social media channels that is considered to be in the interest of the public, Highlights Whistleblowing Policy must be initiated before any further action is taken.

Please note: While all attempts have been made to cover an extensive range of situations, it is possible that this policy may not cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the standards outlined in this document.

It is expected that in these circumstances staff will always consult with the Artistic Director where possible or advise the team of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

3.13 RELATED POLICIES, LAWS AND GUIDANCE

- IT Acceptable Use (part of Staff Pay and Conditions Policy)
- Data Protection Policy
- Confidentiality Guidance (part of the Staff Pay and Conditions Policy)
- Code of Conduct Guidance (part of the Staff Pay and Conditions)

- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Reporting [serious incidents](#) to the Commission, police or other regulators
- Disciplinary Procedures and Guidance (part of the staff Pay and Conditions Policy)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Employment Law
- Staff wellbeing and safeguarding procedures (part of the Staff Pay and Conditions Policy)

FURTHER EXTERNAL GUIDANCE

- [The Charity Commission guidance for charities on social media](#)
- [The Charity Commission checklist for developing a social media policy](#)
- [National Cyber Security Centre's guidance on social media and how to use it safely](#)
- [National Cyber Security Centre's guidance on protecting your published content](#)
- [The Charity Commission guidance on campaigning and political activity guidance for charities](#)
- [Government guidance on the Online Safety Bill](#)
- [Bates Wells website](#)

HIGHLIGHTS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AGREEMENT

STAFF AGREEMENT

I have read and understood the Highlights' Social Media Policy. I agree to abide by the rules set out in this policy and I understand that failing to abide by this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Name:

Role:

Signed:

Date:

HIGHLIGHTS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AGREEMENT

TRUSTEE AGREEMENT

I have read and understood the Highlights Social Media Policy. I agree to abide by the rules set out in this policy and I understand that failing to abide by this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Name:

Role:

Signed:

Date: