

**Social Media Policies and Guidelines**

The Hockaday School welcomes new technologies which create new ways of exchanging information, celebrating successes and strongly encourages our community members to engage, build networks, and stay connected to promote the School's goals, mission, and vision. Social media channels are communication tools that create opportunities for Hockaday to take part in global conversations and reach out to the broadest possible audience. To raise awareness of current best practices and help Hockaday’s communities, clubs, and organizations participate within social media platforms in positive, meaningful ways that reflect well on them and the School, the Office of Communications provides the following guiding principles which apply to all official groups including faculty, staff, students, parents, and alumnae. Any questions about these guidelines, or about Hockaday’s social media and/or online presence, should be directed to the Office of Communications.

* Be responsible and informed: Any published content or accounts are subject to the policies of the School.
* Be respectful: Be mindful of the tenets of excellence and four cornerstones when using social media platforms.
* Be transparent: Identify yourself for authenticity and to add value to your online contributions.
* Respect privacy: Do not reveal others’ private information e.g., tagging photos with individuals’ names or badges.
* No soliciting: Contributors will not solicit funds or payments on Hockaday’s social media channels.
* Add value: Contribute your observations, experiences, and opinions related to topics on which you are focusing and encourage two-way communication by asking for others’ thoughts. Cite all sources that are not your own.
* Provide relevant content: Think about what you want to say before you post your comments and understand that what is posted could be shared across other platforms and directly reflects on Hockaday.
* Proofread and confirm content: Once a message or opinion is posted on social media, it can be seen by thousands of people. Even if a post is removed from a native source, it can be found on search engines and other private devices (text messages, screen captures, etc.).
* Be mindful of context: To avoid any miscommunications, express your full thought in a post, use it to drive traffic to a website or blog posting where you can use as much detail as needed.
* Determine security settings and permissions: If the group exists solely for the members it serves, e.g., the Hockaday Book Club, and requires an administrator’s permission to join, state that caveat on the group’s homepage. If the group is open, actively accept requests to join rather than letting requests hang stagnant.
* Use disclaimers: Make it clear that the views you are expressing are yours alone and not necessarily those of Hockaday. What you write is ultimately your responsibility. If you identify yourself as a Hockaday employee or discuss topics related to the School using social media, make it clear that you do not speak on behalf of our organization.
* Follow copyright laws: Comply and respect the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others.
* Let the experts respond: If you come across criticism of Hockaday or any instance that might be considered a crisis situation (e.g., a crime or accident related to a student or campus) via a social media platform, please bring it to the attention of the Head of School and the Director of Communications who will assess the situation and arrange for a response. Please do not respond on the School’s behalf.
* Ask first: If you are unsure if specific content is appropriate or creating a new group is possible, ask the Office of Communications for assistance. Hockaday does not endorse or take responsibility for content posted by third parties, and the Office of Communications does not review content prior to posting (unless asked to provide feedback). The office does, however, reserve the right to remove or edit content that diminishes the reputation of, or communicates inaccurate information about the School.
* Champion it: Once you establish a social media presence, invest time in publishing useful content and responding to user comments.

Social media is very powerful and can have a great impact on professional and personal relationships. Your choices determine if those lasting impacts are positive or negative. For questions, please contact Communications Manager, Sally Hudspeth at [shudspeth@hockaday.org](mailto:shudspeth@hockaday.org).