

Tora Kai Karate Social Media Policy (Updated 2025)

Tora Kai Karate recognises and embraces the numerous benefits and opportunities that social media offers. While employees are encouraged to engage, collaborate, and innovate through social media, they should also be aware of associated risks—especially in relation to safeguarding, bullying, privacy, and organisational reputation.

Purpose of the Policy

- Encourage safe and appropriate use of social media by employees.
- Protect Tora Kai Karate, its employees, and its members—particularly children and vulnerable individuals.
- Define expectations for both personal and professional social media use.
- Apply to all employees, volunteers, and contractors, regardless of whether they are using Tora Kai Karate's or personal equipment.

Roles, Responsibilities, and Procedure

Employees should:

- Maintain a professional online presence that upholds the values of Tora Kai Karate.
- Follow this policy and all other relevant policies (e.g. safeguarding, data protection).
- Understand that excessive or inappropriate use of social media during work hours may result in disciplinary action.
- Think carefully before posting: if in doubt, don't post it.

Managers are responsible for:

- Supporting employees in understanding social media boundaries and expectations.
- Ensuring staff are briefed on updates to the policy.
- Reviewing the policy annually or in response to incidents or legislative changes.

Definition of Social Media

Social media refers to any online platform enabling interactive communication or content sharing. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube, Flickr
- Blogs and forums
- Messaging platforms like WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram, and Facebook Messenger

Acceptable Use

All content shared online—even on 'private' or 'friends-only' settings—should be considered public.

Employees must not:

- Share confidential or sensitive information about Tora Kai Karate, its staff, or members.
- Post content that is discriminatory, harassing, defamatory, false, threatening, sexually explicit, or otherwise offensive.
- Upload content that may bring Tora Kai Karate into disrepute.
- Use AI-generated content in official club communications unless explicitly reviewed and authorised by a senior manager to ensure accuracy, compliance, and safeguarding integrity.
- Accept or send 'friend requests' on personal accounts to or from members or ex-members under 18, or their parents.
- Use personal social media accounts to communicate with parents or members.
- Use social media during teaching or class time.

Safeguarding

Social media poses significant safeguarding risks.

These include:

- Online bullying
- Grooming or stalking
- Exposure to inappropriate or hateful content
- Encouragement of violence, self-harm, or risky behaviours

To reduce these risks:

- Do not attempt to meet or locate a child using personal accounts.
- Do not share images or identifying information about minors without written parental consent.
- Group chats involving children must be authorised and supervised, and consented to by parents.

Tora Kai Karate complies with the Online Safety Act 2023, which provides standards for preventing children's exposure to harmful content online.

Data Protection and Privacy

- All use of social media must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Do not post photos, names, or identifying information of children or members without explicit, written consent.
- Store any digital evidence of safeguarding incidents securely and share only with designated safeguarding leads.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

- Report all online safeguarding concerns to the designated safeguarding officer (DSO).
- Act promptly if a concern arises—children may need immediate support.
- If you receive harassment or abuse via work accounts, report it to the DSO or senior manager.

Reporting, Responding, and Recording Cyberbullying Incidents

- Never respond to or engage with cyberbullying.
- Report any defamatory, abusive, or unauthorised online material to a senior manager.
- Preserve digital evidence: save screenshots, URLs, and time-stamped logs.
- Store evidence securely in compliance with data protection laws.

Action by Employer: Inappropriate Use of Social Media

- Senior management will investigate all reports of inappropriate social media use.
- If an employee is responsible for harmful content, disciplinary action will be taken in line with relevant policies.
- Tora Kai Karate may liaise with web hosts or ISPs to remove harmful content and, where necessary, involve the police.
- Support and counselling will be offered to affected staff.

Breaches of This Policy

Breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary procedures, including dismissal for serious misconduct. Investigations may include:

- Requiring staff to provide relevant login information or content screenshots.
- Reviewing content visibility, impact, and duration online.
- Considering relevant employment and safeguarding policies.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to:

- Legislative updates (e.g. Online Safety Act 2023)
- Good practice guidance
- Relevant case law
- Significant reported incidents

This policy does not form part of any employment contract and may be amended as necessary following consultation.

Legislation

All social media use must comply with UK law. Tora Kai Karate adheres to the following:

- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Defamation Act 2013
- Online Safety Act 2023

Conclusion

Social media is continually evolving, but the principles of professional conduct and safeguarding remain constant. Whether using social media for personal or work purposes, all staff must act responsibly and uphold the standards and reputation of Tora Kai Karate.

