



Foróige Social Media Guidelines

Edition July 2017

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Foróige Social Media Guidelines

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Executive Summary

1. The primary objective of these guidelines is to ensure the safety and protection of young people, Staff and Volunteers in their online engagements.
2. Staff and Volunteers are required to comply with these Guidelines, and will be held accountable for what they post online.
3. The privacy of young people is also of immense importance and Volunteers and Staff must not befriend on social media any young people they are working with.
4. The ethos of Foróige must be reflected in all your professional and volunteering social networking activities.
5. If you are concerned with content or behaviour online involving a young person, Volunteers or member of Staff please refer to the Foróige Child Protection Policy immediately and/or a Foróige Youth Officer/Manager as appropriate.
6. Volunteers and Staff must use social media and messaging applications in a way that does not invade the privacy of young people.
7. Volunteers and Staff must be familiar with the social media platforms, and applications, they choose to use.
8. Volunteers and staff have a responsibility to report any content relating to Foróige that, in the opinion of the Volunteer/Staff member, is inappropriate or in breach of these Guidelines.
9. In the event of a breach of these Guidelines, Foróige reserves the right to take appropriate action as per relevant Foróige policies, procedures and guidelines

Purpose

Social media refers to interaction among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. The use of social media is now part of everyday life, whether that be personal usage, professional usage and/or in the capacity of one's role as a Volunteer or member of Staff. The nature of social media is that it is public and permanent.

Foróige Social Media Guidelines

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to Foróige Staff and Volunteers in relation to the use of social media as it relates to your youth work or volunteering role, should you choose to use it.

It is not a requirement that you engage with social media in your youth work role.

This document cannot be exhaustive due to the rapid pace and change of social media and technology. However, it is intended to provide operating principles and a framework to Foróige Staff and Volunteers should you choose to engage with social media for professional and/or volunteering purposes.

Aims

These guidelines have a number of specific aims and these are:

- To promote and develop positive online discussion of Foróige and for Foróige young people, Volunteers and Staff.
- To protect Staff, Volunteers and young people.
- To protect the reputation of Foróige as an organisation.
- To help moderate discussions and Marketing and Communications appropriately.

Background

Social Media

The use of social media as a means of communication has increased rapidly in recent years.

A social network is a dedicated website or application which enables users to communicate with each other by posting information, comments, messages, images etc. Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram enable users to create a profile, add information, comment on others information and news, etc.

There are many positive aspects to social media, particularly as a quick and effective method of communication with others. However, it is everybody's responsibility to use social media appropriately and with respect for other users.

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It is important to note that it is not a requirement of Foróige for Staff and Volunteers to engage with social media when communicating/engaging with young people. It is an additional channel of communication (alongside written Marketing and Communications, phone calls, texts and email) that you may choose to use. It is recommended that you read these guidelines in detail and consult with young people, parents and Foróige Staff if you are unsure whether or not to use social media as a channel of communication.

Supporting Policies, Procedures and Training

- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Data Protection Policy and Procedures
- Equality Policy
- Right to Dignity at Work
- Code of Conduct for Volunteers/Code of Conduct for Board Members and Staff
- Feedback and Complaints Procedure
- Safety Online Training
- FAB Feb Workshops

Child Protection is of paramount importance in Foróige. The organisation's Child Protection Policy and Procedures take priority over these guidelines. In addition, Foróige's Data Protection Policy and Procedures must be adhered to with all use of social media. These guidelines are informed by Foróige's Purpose and Philosophy, Foróige's Equality Policy and the Feedback and Complaints Procedure. The Purpose, Philosophy and organisational policies are available on the Staff Portal, the Volunteer Portal or through your Foróige Youth Officer.

All Volunteers and Staff members should be aware that Foróige regularly monitors the internet and social media in reference to its work and to keep abreast of general internet commentary, brand presence and public perceptions. Foróige does not specifically monitor social media sites for Volunteer or Staff member content on an ongoing basis, however Volunteers and Staff members should not expect privacy in this regard. Foróige reserves the right to utilise for disciplinary purposes any information that could have a negative effect on the organisation, a young person, Volunteer or Staff member, which Foróige comes across in regular internet monitoring, or is brought to the Organisation's attention by Volunteers, Staff members, young people, members of the public, etc.

Requirements

Foróige wants to ensure that we have a strong and positive online profile. Currently, it is made up of a network of individuals, websites and social media channels at club, project, county and national level.



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We want to ensure that a common set of principles and guidelines are applied so that we are all working in unison to promote the work of young people, Staff, Volunteers and the organisation.

We are all part of the same organisation so it is a requirement that all clubs, groups, projects, District Councils and discussion groups relating to Foróige are registered with the Foróige Marketing and Communications Department. This can be done by emailing online@foroige.ie and supplying the name of your Club/Project, a link to the Facebook/Twitter/Instagram account (or any social media accounts you are using as part of Foróige) that you have created and the name of the person(s) who will be responsible for them.

Once a site is registered it becomes part of the official Foróige online network and may use the logo, brand etc. in line with Foróige's brand guidelines. It is then a requirement to adhere to Foróige's Social Media Guidelines to ensure the positive ethos and values of the organisation are promoted. If you have any questions about registration please do not hesitate to contact the Foróige Communication's Department.

Official, Registered Foróige Online Channels

If you are in control of or a contributor to an official registered Foróige social media account, it is essential that your posts reflect the same positive values that Foróige incorporates into all its online Marketing and Communications. Be respectful and bear in mind how you conduct yourself online in this capacity as it not only reflects on you but also on the organisation. Foróige will not recognise or support unofficial online channels and may take action to this effect.

Principles

The principles of engaging with social networking are embedded in the fundamental purpose and philosophy of Foróige (Appendix 2).

Based on this stated Purpose and Philosophy the following principles apply to using Social Media in the context of your role in Foróige.

Foróige Social Media Guidelines

1. Reflect the positive ethos and values of Foróige

All posts, interactions and direct Marketing and Communications must reflect the positive ethos and values of the organisation. Inappropriate content is not allowed and when detected will result in follow up action. It includes but is not limited to:

- Explicit material e.g. images/videos/graphics of drug taking, sexual images, violence/featuring weaponry (unless deemed appropriate to achieve the outcomes of a specific youth work project and with prior approval of relevant Foróige personnel)
- Illegal material e.g. images/videos/graphics
- Offensive material (deemed racist, sexist, homophobic or other images/videos/graphics). Be especially aware that what may appear humorous to many could well be offensive to others.
- Material deemed to be a personal attack (harassment and intimidation) or otherwise deemed unsuitable

2. Respect and value the privacy of everyone involved in Foróige

Please refer to Foróige's Data Protection Policy and Procedures for guidance. Social media is, in the main, a public space so please be aware of the types of information that are confidential and avoid posting any such information online.

3. Maintain confidentiality of the organisation

When posting on the internet do not disclose information that is confidential to the organisation. The workings of the Foróige club, project, service or group must be kept private to those directly involved.

4. Maintain personal and professional boundaries in your online interactions

For Foróige Staff and Volunteers, the boundaries between your personal, professional and volunteering activities can easily become blurred online. The role of a Volunteer or Staff person is as a guide, mentor and facilitator to a young person. This role must be in mind at all times as your behaviour online can set a positive example to young people.

Private messaging can be likened to private meetings and should be avoided across all social networks including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat etc.

Foróige Social Media Guidelines

5. Be transparent

All online posts, interactions and Marketing and Communications must be transparent in the same way that all face to face Marketing and Communications and interactions with young people should be transparent. This means that young people and their parents/guardians are aware of the use of social networking to communicate with young people and are clear about your role in the organisation.

6. Be honest

Honesty is crucial when using social networking in your youth work role. Openness about who you are and making available alternative methods for contacting you help build trust both with young people and the wider public. Also, providing your unique perspective on non-confidential activities of Foróige enables feedback, discussion and continuous improvement for the work of the organisation. Keep in mind that you won't always know the answers, so please request assistance from the appropriate source e.g. the Foróige Marketing and Communications Department as and when required.

7. Respect brand and copyrighted information and age requirements

Do not post or link to illegally copied material on the website and do not link to any over 18s websites. Also, do not post links that you have not personally verified as appropriate.

8. Consent to post photography/videos of Foróige Young people on social media should always be sought

Ensure that you have consent to post images of Foróige young people on social media. Consent forms for Foróige Club members and Project attendees should include a media release section which seeks permission for photographs/films to be taken occasionally which may be published online or elsewhere. Non-Foróige members should also have consent forms signed by their parents which include a media release stipulation when attending Foróige activities such as discos and concerts.

Ensure that all images are appropriate, respectful and are consistent with Foróige's ethos and values. Immediately respond to any request to remove images from a young person, other Volunteer, parent or guardian. If an image is causing distress to an individual, we must take immediate action to rectify it.

9. Respect the law

The law applies to the Internet and you must ensure that all online activity is within the law:

- Posts should respect copyright, privacy and fair use.
- Avoid linking to outside sites unless you trust the source.

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- Ensure you follow the terms and conditions of any social networking sites.

10. Avoid plagiarism

Give credit where credit is due. Do not violate the rights of others by claiming their work as yours. Do not use the copyrights, trademarks, publicity rights or other rights of others without the necessary permission of the rights holders.

Responsibilities

1. You are responsible for the social media accounts connected to your role as a Volunteer/Staff member and you must ensure that they are a safe environment for young people.
2. You are responsible for registering a club or project's social media account with Foróige's Marketing and Communications Department.
3. It is recommended that there are two adult administrators for each social media account.
4. You are responsible for understanding the social media platform or messaging app you are using, and the privacy settings associated with it.
5. You must take responsibility for moderating your club/group/project presence on social media. Moderating is removing content which is deemed inappropriate.
6. Note that, as per their terms of use, anyone under the age of 13 is not allowed to join Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Snapchat.
7. Do not tag young people in photographs. They can however tag themselves if they want to.

Connecting with a young person on Social Media

Being 'friends' with young people you are involved with through Foróige via your social media profiles is not appropriate. It blurs the boundaries between your personal life and your role as a Volunteer or Staff person. It may also be damaging to the young person. The following outlines additional reasons why it is inappropriate:

- Young people may not be fully aware of privacy settings and may inadvertently reveal private information. If you are a friend of a young person on social media, you may find yourself 'trawling' through the young person's profile. This is poor practice, intrusive and violates the privacy of that person.

Article 16 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that
'All children have the right to privacy'

- A young person may start chatting to you online outside of working hours or may start to regularly leave comments on your profile and vice versa. People start to notice the casual nature of your professional/Volunteer relationship.
- Personal messages sent from one person to the other may be seen as more intimate, or intrusive than an email. You may inadvertently be seen as being intrusive by sending a private message or posting a Foróige related message on their personal profile.
- If you are using your personal social media profiles to connect with young people, they can access your own personal profile, disturbing your Volunteering or work/life balance.
- Some young people will push boundaries and may be keen to develop 'private' relationships and friendships with you. You might be seen as having 'favourites' or even feelings for a young person which could create a difficult situation.
- Similarly, as 'friends' are invited to join a person's Facebook profile it implies to the young person they are a friend. More vulnerable young people can see this relationship differently than you intend it to be.
- A parent or guardian may misinterpret comments made between you and the young person if the communication becomes friendlier.

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Do not befriend young people you are working with in a Foróige capacity on your social media for the above reasons and to protect young people, staff and volunteers. It is recognised however, that you may have a child, other relatives or close friends of your family with whom you are a friend but they are also a Foróige young person. This is a personal issue and not within the remit of these guidelines or the organisation.

Where the situation already exists that you are a friend with a young person who is involved in Foróige on social media, it may be upsetting for the young person to be 'de-friended'. It is recommended that you have an open conversation with them letting them why you must de-friend them.

- Staff and Volunteers who choose to use social media as part of their youth work role should maintain separate personal and work profiles. This ensures that you can control your Foróige online profile and maintain your role as a guide, mentor and facilitator while interacting with young people online.
- Where a profile or group may receive friend/membership requests from individuals not already known to a member of Staff/Volunteer the profiles of the individuals making the request must be checked before they are accepted.
- Groups or profiles must include a clear message stating who the profile owner is and their affiliation to Foróige.

It should be noted that liking a Facebook Page is not akin to 'friending' someone. The Like does not open up that person's profile to the owner of the Page.

Facebook for Clubs and Projects

Facebook Pages are appropriate

- Facebook Pages are the most public choice for a presence on Facebook. They are used by businesses, organisations, celebrities and public figures. The most appropriate use of a Facebook Page is for club/project promotion, informing the community of events and achievements, calls for Volunteers and so on.
- Remember that you have no control over who likes your page and accesses the content. Photos, videos and comments here are *completely open* to the public.

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- Facebook Pages are not the place to talk about internal club/project/group workings, plans and other business. They are not the place to talk about potentially sensitive subjects.
- Facebook Pages must be moderated.
- The Facebook Page must be connected to a Facebook profile you have created for youth work/Volunteering purposes. Again – you must not befriend a young person you work with on Facebook.

Facebook Profiles are not appropriate

Facebook profiles are for individuals to keep in contact with their friends. You can view each other's profiles with ease. Facebook profiles are not the right fit for a Foróige Club, Group or Project as you are privy to a young person's profile and have befriended them. You must not befriend a young person who you are dealing with in a youth work capacity on Facebook.

Facebook Groups are appropriate

Facebook Groups are for groups of people and are an ideal place for interactions and discussions amongst several people at once. You can set permissions on a Facebook Group and have administrators who approve member requests. A closed group setting is the most suitable option. Only current members of the club, project or group should join the Facebook Group. When people move on from the Club or Project they must be removed from the Facebook Group. Within your Facebook Group you will see that you can add a description for what can be posted in that specific group.

Snapchat for Clubs and Projects

Snapchat is a mobile messaging application used to share photos, videos, text, and drawings. Direct messages sent on Snapchat disappear after a few seconds, while posts to the Snapchat 'Story' last for 24 hours and can be viewed more than once. As with all social media platforms or messaging apps, it is important to understand how to use Snapchat, and to bear in mind these guidelines when posting content on it.

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Snapchat 'Stories' are appropriate

- The Snapchat 'Story' feature consists of one or more 'Snaps' (Pictures/videos/Text) that last for 24 hours.
- The Snapchat 'Story' is the appropriate feature for clubs and projects to use if they are publicising events etc. It is the means used by organisations, businesses, and public figures who have a presence on Snapchat.
- If the settings of Snapchat 'Story' are set to 'allow everyone to view', the content becomes publicly available to anyone who has your Snapchat username.
- It is important to remember not to disclose any private information including someone's Snapchat username (a 'Shout Out')
- While Snapchat is an informal/casual application, it is important to be mindful that the content you post is appropriate.

Adding young people as friends on Snapchat is not appropriate

- Although, not adding young people as friends on Snapchat eliminates some of the application's functionality, it must be remembered that sending/receiving Snaps (direct messages) can blur the boundaries of your personal life and your role as a Volunteer or Staff member.
- Snapchat is a messaging app, therefore sending messages to, or receiving messages from young people can be seen as more intimate than viewing a club or project's Snapchat 'Story'
- Direct messages between you and a young person could be misinterpreted
- If you are friends with a young person on Snapchat, you may find yourself opening messages they have sent you and, or, viewing their personal Snapchat 'Story'

Other Social Media such as Twitter, and Instagram

There are a large number of internet based networks such as Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and Instagram where boundaries can seem to be less clear cut. Each of these applications and services work in a different way. Twitter is seen as a predominantly public forum, as is Instagram.

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We recommend that you avoid private messaging a young person who you are working with or volunteering with on social networks unless it is absolutely fundamental to your work with that young person. Communication taking place with young people on all social media should be as transparent and open as possible.

Other guidelines include:

- You should avoid trawling that young person's profile and remember that the privacy of the young person is paramount. You should not follow young people on their Twitter or Instagram accounts.
- Young people can sometimes reveal private information in public online spaces. If you do encounter something that concerns you regarding a young person involved in Foróige, you should refer to Foróige's Child Protection Policy and or a Foróige Youth Officer/Manager as appropriate.
- When you have the opportunity, remind young people that their photos and tweets can be seen by anyone when published on a public online platform.

Messaging apps

Messaging apps include and are not limited to WhatsApp, Viber, Snapchat etc.

Communication taking place with young people on all social media should be as transparent and open as possible. If sending a text message or a message via a messaging app such as WhatsApp or Viber to a young person you are working with or volunteering with, the message should only be sent if its purpose is fundamental to your work or volunteering with that young person.

When Using Social Media Personally

Foróige respects your right to use social media in a personal capacity but we request that you bear in mind these guidelines, and the implications of referring to Foróige when you do. Please recognise that Foróige may be held responsible for your behaviour online.

Never forget the permanence of information posted online. Once information is posted, you no longer have control of it, e.g. another individual may take a screenshot of your post or share it. It is an

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opportunity to lead by example and you have a responsibility to yourself to portray an honest, transparent online profile and that all information and posts reflect who you are.

- Please respect and reflect the positive ethos and values of Foróige.
- You are responsible for your own actions but remember these actions may have consequences for Foróige. You have a responsibility not to do anything that may tarnish or damage Foróige's reputation or image.
- Do not mix your official Foróige role with your personal life online. Not everybody will be able to make the distinction between the two. If you are identifiable as a Foróige staff member or volunteer in a professional or personal social media profile, be mindful of the impact your posts or actions in videos and pictures may have on people's perceptions of Foróige. E.g. smoking and drinking while wearing Foróige branded clothing, or while at an event attended by young people.
- It is not appropriate to be 'friends' with young people you are involved with through Foróige via your social media profiles.
- People are allowed to represent themselves online as part of Foróige only in ways that comply with our policies and guidelines, or where specific permission has been approved by the organisation. People who are not actively involved in the organisation are prohibited from representing themselves online as Foróige.
- Staff/Volunteers should not post any content on their personal or work profiles which would be professionally inappropriate for young people to know or see **or** in the case of a personal non-work profile they should use the privacy settings of a site to ensure this content is not accessible to young people.
- Staff/Volunteers should also not post any content on their personal or work profiles which could have a detrimental impact on their own employment/role or would be looked upon unfavourably or as unprofessional by their employer or by Foróige, e.g. Be mindful of the content you post while wearing Foróige branded clothing, or while at a Foróige event that is being attended by young people.
- Look out for comments (positive and negative) about Foróige and if they look important, forward them to the Foróige Marketing and Communications Department.
- If you see negative posts about Foróige, avoid the temptation to react. Forward the post to the Foróige Communication Department and/or a Foróige Youth Officer/Manager.

Dealing with Major Mistakes

- Correct any mistake immediately and make clear what you have done to fix it.
- If it is a major mistake, contact the Foróige Marketing and Communications Department immediately and/or a Foróige Youth Officer/Manager so that appropriate action can be taken to minimise the impact.



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Reporting

Inappropriate Content

If you have any concerns relating to official Foróige online channels, please report them immediately to the Foróige Marketing and Communications Department and/or a Foróige Youth Officer/Manager.

Cyberbullying

If you have concerns in relation to cyberbullying (regarding either a victim or perpetrator) inform a Foróige Youth Officer/Manager immediately.

Child Protection Concerns

If you have a child protection concern, you must follow Foróige's [Child Protection Policy](#).

Foróige Social Media Guidelines

Appendix 1 Definitions

Social Media

Websites and applications used for social networking.

Social Networking

The use of dedicated websites and applications to interact and communicate with other users.

Moderation

The act of managing the content, comments and behaviours featured on the social media accounts for which you are responsible.

Privacy Settings

It is important to be familiar with privacy settings of the social network or messaging application that you are using.

Privacy settings can enable you to:

- Manage who sees the content you share.
- Who sees what on your timeline.
- Who can send you friend requests.
- Who sees your profile photo or videos.
- Managing tags on Facebook photographs or posts of you.

Administrator

Social Network Administrators can edit the pages, post to the page, respond to and delete comments, create ads and view insights.

Appendix 2 Purpose & Philosophy

The purpose of Foróige is to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their own development and in the development of society. The philosophy (beliefs) of Foróige can be summarised as follows:

THE FORÓIGE PHILOSOPHY

- Every person**
 - IS UNIQUE**
Each person has unique qualities and attributes.
 - IS CREATIVE**
Creativity applies to many aspects of life: solving problems, organising, the arts, communicating, caring for others.
 - CAN TAKE RESPONSIBILITY**
We always have a choice: in what we think, do and become.
 - IS INTERDEPENDENT WITH OTHERS**
We develop through interactions with other people. We achieve more by working together.
 - CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE WORLD**
Each person has something important to contribute to making the world a better place.
 - CAN HAVE AN INFLUENCE**
Reality is not fixed. It can be changed by our actions. Each person can influence what is going on. Each can influence what they become in life.
 - CAN LEARN FROM EVERY SITUATION**
Learning does not stop at school. It is part of everyday living. It is a lifelong process.

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Appendix 3 Supporting Foróige on Social Media

You can support Foróige's national social media presence by accessing the following:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/foroige

Twitter: www.twitter.com/foroige

Snapchat Username: **foroige**

YouTube: www.youtube.com/foroigechannel

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/for-ige>

Instagram: <http://instagram.com/foroige>

Pinterest: <http://www.pinterest.com/foroige/>