

## 1. Policy Statement

Bathgate Music Hub (BMH) recognises that social media and digital communication platforms are important tools for communication, engagement and promotion. Used appropriately, these platforms support the Hub's charitable aims, educational mission and role within the local community.

This Social Media Policy establishes the standards, responsibilities and boundaries that apply to the use of social media and related digital platforms by individuals associated with Bathgate Music Hub. The policy exists to protect the reputation of BMH, to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable individuals, and to ensure that all digital communication reflects the organisation's values of professionalism, respect and inclusivity.

For the purposes of this policy, the term “**social media**” is interpreted broadly. Accordingly, this policy applies not only to social media platforms, but also to **all public-facing digital communication produced by or on behalf of Bathgate Music Hub**, including:

- the Bathgate Music Hub website
- digital publications and online content
- email communications and newsletters
- any digital platform or channel representing BMH

## 2. Scope and Application

This policy applies to all individuals who act for, represent, or are associated with Bathgate Music Hub. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Trustees
- staff, tutors and musical directors
- volunteers
- adult members
- youth members
- parents and carers
- partner organisations when acting on behalf of BMH

Any individual who contributes to, manages, moderates or is publicly associated with BMH's digital communication is expected to comply with this policy. Failure to do so may result in action being taken in accordance with BMH governance and safeguarding procedures.

## 3. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Social Media Policy is to provide a clear framework for appropriate conduct and decision-making in relation to digital communication. In particular, it seeks to:

- protect the reputation, integrity and credibility of Bathgate Music Hub
- ensure that online communication is accurate, responsible and professional
- safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults
- minimise the risks associated with misinformation, reputational harm and online conflict
- support consistency in how BMH communicates across all digital platforms

## 4. Governance and Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy rests with the Trustees of Bathgate Music Hub. The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively, reviewed regularly, and enforced where necessary.

The day-to-day management of social media channels and website content may be delegated to named and authorised individuals. However, accountability for content published on behalf of Bathgate Music Hub remains with the organisation.

Only individuals who have been explicitly authorised may:

- publish content on official BMH platforms
- respond publicly on behalf of BMH
- moderate, edit or remove comments
- issue public statements via digital channels

## 5. Principles of Digital Communication

All digital communication associated with Bathgate Music Hub must be approached with care, responsibility and professionalism. Content should be accurate, factual and respectful, and must reflect the values and objectives of the organisation.

In practice, this means that all communication must:

- comply with relevant legislation, including data protection and safeguarding law
- respect privacy, confidentiality and personal dignity
- be appropriate for an organisation that works closely with children and young people
- avoid political commentary, ideological debate or divisive positioning
- avoid confrontational, defensive or argumentative language

These principles apply equally to social media content and website content.

## 6. Engagement with the Public

Bathgate Music Hub welcomes positive and constructive engagement and values meaningful interaction with the community it serves. However, BMH also has a responsibility to ensure that its digital spaces remain safe, respectful and appropriate.

BMH will **not** engage with, or respond to, online content that is:

- anonymous or posted from unidentifiable accounts
- abusive, hostile, discriminatory or threatening
- misleading, defamatory or based on unverified allegations
- inflammatory, sensationalist or deliberately provocative
- intended to provoke conflict or create unnecessary controversy
- inappropriate or unsafe for children and young people
- spam, commercial advertising or agenda-driven promotion

Where such content appears on BMH platforms, BMH may, without notice:

- hide or remove comments or posts
- restrict or block accounts
- disable comments on specific content
- report material to platform moderators or relevant authorities

Bathgate Music Hub does not enter into public debate regarding topics or behaviour it does not condone.

## 7. Criticism, Complaints and Concerns

BMH recognises the importance of accountability and understands that criticism may arise from time to time. Where criticism is raised constructively and respectfully, it may be acknowledged or responded to as appropriate.

However, social media and other public digital platforms are not considered appropriate channels for:

- complaints
- disputes
- safeguarding concerns
- complex or sensitive matters

Such issues will be redirected to private and formal communication routes in accordance with BMH procedures. Abusive, hostile or inflammatory criticism will not be engaged with.

## 8. Conduct of Members, Parents and Volunteers Online

All individuals associated with Bathgate Music Hub are expected to behave responsibly online where their conduct could reasonably be linked to the organisation.

Individuals must not:

- present personal views as official BMH positions
- speak on behalf of BMH without authorisation
- share confidential or internal information
- post images or videos of youth members without appropriate consent
- engage in online arguments connected to BMH
- use BMH branding or identity without permission
- behave online in a way that could reasonably damage BMH's reputation

Members and supporters are encouraged to share positive experiences of BMH, provided this is done responsibly and in line with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

## 9. Safeguarding and Digital Safety

Safeguarding considerations apply fully to all digital communication. Any content involving children or young people must comply with the BMH Safeguarding Policy.

In particular:

- appropriate consent must be obtained before publishing content
- children and young people must not be publicly named or tagged
- personal or sensitive information must not be shared
- content must be removed promptly upon request

Private digital communication between adults and young people through personal accounts is not permitted. Approved and transparent communication channels must be used at all times.

## 10. Crisis, Incident and Sensitive Communication

In the event of a safeguarding matter, accident, legal issue, media enquiry or situation involving reputational risk, only authorised Bathgate Music Hub spokespersons may issue public statements or responses.

All other individuals must refrain from:

- commenting publicly
- speculating online
- sharing unverified information
- responding to media approaches

This is essential to ensure accurate, responsible and appropriate communication.

## 11. Breaches of This Policy

Failure to comply with this policy may result in action being taken, which may include:

- removal of digital content
- withdrawal of access to digital platforms
- referral to the Trustees for further consideration
- disciplinary or safeguarding procedures
- referral to external authorities where necessary

This applies to all individuals within the scope of this policy.

## 12. Review

This Social Media Policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustees of Bathgate Music Hub, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, safeguarding guidance, digital platforms or organisational need.