



Staff Use of Social Media and Networking Sites Policy

Introduction

This Policy will clearly set out the standards set by the School for social networking and how to ensure this does not interfere with the professional standards required to be maintained as an employee of the School.

Social media and networking sites include: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat etc. Please note this list is not exhaustive.

Scope

This policy must be read in conjunction with the School's Staff Handbook, the Mobile Phone, Technology, Security and Electronics Communication Policy, the Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice.

Employees should:

- Maintain an appropriate level of separation with parents/pupils of the School to maintain professionalism
- Understand they have a duty to act appropriately at all times
- Have obligations of confidentiality which apply at school and outside of working hours
- Understand they have an obligation not to bring the school into disrepute
- Ensure that school equipment (PC's, laptops) should only be used for work related matters
- Increase the privacy settings for their profile

Any employees found to have been in breach of any of the above will be subject to disciplinary action for gross misconduct, in line with the School's Disciplinary Policy.

Social networking / blogging during working hours

Social networking or blogging during working hours is strictly prohibited and will be an act of gross misconduct.

Access to such websites in the workplace could lead to potential issues such as:

- poor productivity of staff
- risk of computer viruses on downloads and exchanged statements
- slowing down of the school computer system, and
- breaches of confidentiality

Social networking / blogging outside of working hours

Employees of the School should take great care in ensuring that no information is posted which could potentially bring disrepute to themselves as an employee, another member of the School or to the School directly. Further, employees must make it clear when posting information or comments that any views posted are personal and do not represent those of the School.

Employees must not use the School's social networking site for personal blogs.

Employees must also ensure they do not access social networking sites during work hours and with the use of school equipment.

Under no circumstances must any confidential information pertaining to the School, its suppliers, students, parents of students or other employees be posted on a social media or networking site. Any content posted on social networking sites which has reference to the School or any of its employees will be investigated and be subject to disciplinary action.

Online Forums

The School recognises that an employee may have to go on online forums and bulletin boards through their work from time to time. Employees must be aware that participation on such online groups may be linked to the School. Employees are required to include an appropriate disclaimer in all their postings on public forums to ensure the views expressed are not reviewed or approved by the School. Employees must further ensure that any discussions must remain factual and avoid expressing opinions. Under no circumstances should confidential information be shared on such forums.

Duty of Care

All employees have a role of responsibility to the School and its parent/pupils and actions outside of the School which may impact on this role of responsibility, may be considered an act of gross misconduct in line with the School's Disciplinary Policy.

The School owes a duty to its staff to take reasonable care of their health and safety, to provide a suitable working environment, and to conduct its affairs in a manner which is not likely to destroy or seriously damage the relationship of trust and confidence between the school and the individual. This duty of care extends to being proactive in seeking to prevent any adverse comments being put on the internet or social networking sites about other colleagues, pupils or anyone related to the School.

Employees must also adhere to Safeguarding requirements and not post any information relating to any pupils or anyone related the School. Nor should they be communicating on social media with any pupils or their families. For further information please refer to the Safeguarding procedures.

Continuing to work together

Whilst the School understands that employees are entitled to their privacy and social networking activities outside of the guidelines stated in this policy, the School also needs to maintain a standard of professionalism from all those who represent the School.

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