



STUDENT SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Guiding Statements

To encourage the holistic development of our students in Christian character, leadership, service and personal skills based on the IB Learner Profile and school IGNITE values.

To promote a genuine love of learning and encourage creative, critical and reflective thinking for every student to attain the best academic achievement within each student's capabilities.

To provide a safe, welcoming and affirming environment reflecting the school's child protection and safeguarding guidelines, to develop students socially, physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

Preamble

This policy is based on the principles of mutual responsibility and respect of all parties involved in the use of social media. It requires accountability on the part of the user for his or her actions. It is designed to assist in managing the safe and responsible use of social media platforms by students, and involves parents as partners in assisting their children in the proper use of mobile devices at ACS (International). It is underpinned by an overall requirement for students to exercise care and use social media in a considerate manner, and to be aware of situations in which others could be affected by their actions. I

The School has established this policy so that students and parents/caregivers are familiar with the guidelines and expectations for the appropriate use of social media as a member of ACS (International).

Definitions

Social media (also referred to as social networking) refers to a range of online services and tools used for publishing, sharing and promoting interaction and dialogues. The School acknowledges that there are benefits to social media as it can improve both communication and learning for students when used responsibly.

Unlike traditional websites which are there to communicate information and complete tasks, social media is more like having a conversation. This means that posts are more regular, personalized and responsive to comments made by readers. The audience to posts can also be quite large, particularly if there are a lot of followers.

The list of social media types is extensive with new and innovative social media sites being developed almost every day. Principals can determine what social media platform adds value to their particular need. This list is provided as a guide to the types of social media currently available:

- *Social networking sites:* are websites that allow you to create a personal profile about yourself and then chat and share information with others such as family and friends eg, Facebook, Edmodo, Myspace, LinkedIn, Yammer)
- *Chat Apps:* are applications that allow people to connect with others and share text and images. They may also allow you to share your location and other document types as well. As well as allowing person-to-person to chat, group chats can also be created in which a group of people can communicate e.g. Weibo, Messenger, WhatsApp
- *Video, audio and photo sharing websites:* are sites that allow you to upload and share videos, sounds and photos which can be viewed/heard by web users the world over eg, Flickr, YouTube, iTunes U, Vimeo, Instagram, SoundCloud

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- *Blog*: A blog (short for web log) is a kind of online diary, where you regularly post about your life, your hobbies, business, news or other interests. It is a way of having your own space in the virtual world eg, WordPress, Blogger
- *Microblogging apps*: are websites that post micro-blog like posts to announce what you are currently doing eg, Twitter, Yammer, Tumblr
- *Wikis*: are websites where users create, edit and share information about a particular subject or topic eg, Wikipedia, Wikispaces
- *Online gaming*: are games played over some form of computer network and are often based around a community of users eg, Steam
- *News aggregation*: news aggregators provide a list of the latest news stories published by users from a range of different web sites eg, Digg
- *Forums or message boards*: are online discussion sites where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages

General Requirements

- It is the responsibility of students who use social media in relation to the school or its members, to abide by the Acceptable\Unacceptable Uses outlined in this document.
- The Acceptable\Unacceptable Uses apply to comments made in response to postings.
- Social Media should be used positively, for example to promote an event, improve communication, share permitted curriculum resources and to build positive relationships.
- Any posts to social media platforms that include other people should have their consent prior to the posting.
- Social Media should not interrupt the daily function of the school or its members, such as other students and teachers.
- If you, or someone you know, is a victim of unacceptable use, it should be reported to a teacher immediately. If evidence exists please also provide this as you make the report.

Acceptable Uses

- Building positive relationships within the school community.
- To improve communication between groups e.g. CCAs, Fundraising committees, class study groups etc.
- To promote the school and its events.
- General conversation that is not derogatory to anyone within the school community.

Unacceptable Uses

- Bullying, threatening, denigrating and/or humiliating another member of the ACS (International) community. This includes distribution of material on platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp, including within in private groups.
- Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language on social media in relation to the school or people within the community will face disciplinary action.
- Recording, shooting and/or sharing of videos and photos of students or staff members, taken in or outside school without their consent.
- Distributing rumours, true or otherwise, of members of the school community e.g. confession pages.
- Distributing inappropriate content regardless of whether the person who posts it are the creator or original source.

- Distribution of images and video taken that promote negative perceptions about the school. In the case where there is a genuine issue that needs resolving, it should be done privately through the normal school processes.
- Using social media to vent grievances against the school or members of the community. In the case where there is a genuine issue that needs resolving, it should be done privately through the normal school processes.
- Distribution of assessment material that would be considered cheating e.g. taking photos of common tests and sharing them.
- Unauthorised use of the school name and logo. For valid accounts such as Prefectorial Boards, they must get the approval from the SLT prior to using the school's logo or name.

Shared Accounts

If a student has access to an online account that has been involved in inappropriate postings, the student will be considered responsible for all the postings. This includes cases where a student claims that the account has multiple people accessing it through a shared password or account structure. Therefore, students should not become 'administrators' of accounts that they know are being used against the terms of this policy.

Privacy Issues

Social Media must not be used to invade the privacy of others. Students must not post photographs, images or video of students or staff at any time without their specific consent.

Deliberate and/or repeated publishing use or disclosure of this material in any format may lead to serious disciplinary action.

Consequences

- Students who violate the rules set out in this document will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Serious breaches, such as the creating and/or publishing unacceptable content to large audiences or the posting of highly offensive\threatening\humiliating material, may lead to suspension or expulsion from the school.