

This policy covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official school purposes. The policy applies to personal media platforms such as networking sites. This policy also applies to online message boards/forums and comments under news items and other articles. It also addresses if staff were to be contacted by media.

### MANAGING DIGITAL CONTENT

#### Use of Digital and Video Images

The development of digital imaging technologies has created significant benefits to learning, allowing staff and students instant use of images that they have recorded themselves or downloaded from the internet. However, staff, parents and students need to be aware of the risks associated with publishing digital images on the internet. Such images may provide avenues for cyberbullying to take place. Digital images may remain available on the internet forever and may cause harm or embarrassment to individuals in the short or longer term. The school informs and educates all members of the school community about these risks through its Online Safety Education programmes and will implement policies to reduce the likelihood of the potential for harm. The following guidelines are to help manage digital content:

- When using digital images, staff will inform and educate students about the risks associated with the taking, use, sharing, publication and distribution of images. In particular, they should recognise the risks attached to publishing their own images on the internet eg on social networking sites
- Parents are welcome to take videos and digital images of their children at school events for their own personal use. To respect everyone's privacy and in some cases protection, these images should not be published / made publicly available on social networking sites, nor should parents comment on any activities involving other students in the digital / video images
- Staff are allowed to take digital / video images to support educational aims, but must follow school policies concerning the sharing, distribution and publication of those images. Those images should only be taken on school equipment, the personal equipment of staff should not be used for such purposes
- Care should be taken when taking digital / video images that students are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute
- Students must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission
- Photographs published on the website, or elsewhere that include students will be selected carefully and will comply with good practice guidance on the use of such images
- Students' full names will not be used anywhere on a website or blog, particularly in association with photographs
- Written permission from parents will be obtained before photographs of students are published on the school website
- Students' work can only be published with the permission of the student and their parents

### SOCIAL MEDIA

#### Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, Digital Images & Video Personal Responsibility

- School Staff are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish on social media channels will be public for a long time— protect your privacy.
- When posting online, please remember that you are an employee of the school and representative of your colleagues, students, parents and the school community.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that you use face-to-face.
- Blogs, wikis, and podcasts are an extension of your classroom and considered official content. What is inappropriate in the classroom should be deemed inappropriate online.

- Do not post photos or movies of fellow employees without their permission. Do not use photos or movies taken at school without permission. Do not post photos or movies that contain students without parental consent.
- There are many websites that allow users to share personally created movies. You are responsible for all you do, say and post online including videos. Anything posted online should represent you in a professional manner as others will see you as connected to the school. It disrupts learning when teachers, employees and staff post videos with questionable content.
- When posting online be sure not to post confidential student information.
- Cyberbullying is not to be tolerated. Any incidence of cyberbullying should be reported to the Principal immediately. All cyberbullying incidents are to be taken seriously.

### **Personal use of social networking site, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram**

- School Staff are personally responsible for all comments/information and content they publish online. Be mindful that things such as Tweets and Status Updates will be visible and public for a long time.
- By posting comments, having online conversations, etc. on social media sites you are broadcasting to the world, be aware that even with the strictest privacy settings, what you 'say' online should be within the bounds of professional discretion. Comments expressed via social networking pages under the impression of a 'private conversation' may still end up being shared into a more public domain, even with privacy settings on maximum.
- Comments related to the school, its employees, staff and/events related to the school, should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, even on the strictest settings, staff should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
- Before posting photographs and videos, permission should be sought from the subject where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of professional colleagues are concerned.
- Before posting personal photographs, thought should be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.
- Microblogging (Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, etc.) comments made using such media are not protected by privacy settings. Staff should be aware of the public and widespread nature of such media and refrain from any comment and/or #hashtags that could be deemed unprofessional.
- School staff are not permitted to solicit or accept "Friend" Requests from enrolled students on any personal Social Media Account. This includes student's accounts and school staff personal accounts.
- School staff are not permitted to encourage current students to create Social Media Accounts of any kind except if it is sanctioned for school work, approved by the Principal
- School staff should not use Facebook, Twitter or Instagram or any other Social Media Platform to provide classroom information to students and parents. All communication with parents and students should be via MS Teams or official school email only.

### **Other Media**

- Refer all media requests to the Principal. Do not respond to media by saying you are not allowed to talk to a reporter or have to get permission to do so. Instead, tell the reporter: "The school's policy is to refer all media inquiries to the Principal."
- Please contact the Principal if and when you have been approached by the media. Even though you have referred the media, the Principal will need to be informed.

Date of Review of this policy: **January 2022**

Date of Next Review of this policy: **January 2023**

Approved by the Management of British International School Ajman