



British International School
of Ljubljana
an Orbital Education School



Social Media Policy 2023-2024



The British International School of Ljubljana promotes our Values throughout this policy.

Our Mission

We provide a **high quality British style international education** in English, balancing tradition and innovation.

We aim to be the internationally recognised, **outstanding educational choice** for families in the region.

Our passion is creating a **positive, safe and nurturing learning environment** in which everyone is valued as individuals, empowering them to be versatile, motivated and caring people.

We will endeavour to **create opportunities** to develop creativity, collaboration and critical thinking skills through an **inclusive and personalised experience**.

Our Values

Excellence - We strive for excellence in everything we do.

Respect - We learn at school by showing respect to everyone in the community

Responsibility - We are engaged, promoting actions and behaviours that support a sustainable future.

Integrity - We are transparent, honest and ethical in all our relationships.

Compassion - We are kind and caring, encouraging everyone to succeed.

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) is a broad term for any kind of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other. However, some games, for example Minecraft or World of Warcraft and video sharing platforms such as YouTube have social media elements to them.

The school recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. Staff, parents/carers and students are actively encouraged to find creative ways to use social media. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation.

The school expects employees to achieve and maintain high standards of conduct and it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that their conduct is conducive to this.

Prior to the emergence of social networking sites all employees already had conduct and confidentiality responsibilities as, misconduct and/or disclosure of confidential or commercially sensitive information could cause significant harm. All employees must be aware that these same responsibilities apply to any information they place online, or on any social networking site.

As such, when using the internet and/or social networking sites, all employees must ensure they do not either intentionally, or inadvertently, breach any obligations in respect of



confidentiality or commercially sensitive information, as well as ensuring they maintain high standards of conduct in respect of the information they post, in accordance with the school's code of conduct.

This policy aims to encourage the **safe** use of social media by the school, its staff, parents, carers and children.

Scope

This policy is subject to the school's Codes of Conduct and Acceptable Use Agreements/ policy on e-mail and internet use, and should be read in conjunction with these policies.

This policy:

- Applies to all staff and to all online communications which directly or indirectly, may represent the staff member and/or the school.
- Applies to such online communications posted at any time and from anywhere.
- Encourages the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education
- Defines the monitoring of public social media activity pertaining to the school

The school respects privacy and understands that staff and students may use social media forums in their private lives. However, personal communications likely to have

a negative impact on professional standards and/or the school's reputation are within the scope of this policy.

Professional communications are those made through official channels, posted on a school account or using the school name. All professional communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications are those made via a personal social media account. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with the school or impacts on the school, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the school with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the school are outside the scope of this policy.

Digital communications with students are also considered. Staff may use social media to communicate with learners via a school social media account for teaching and learning purposes but must consider whether this is appropriate and consider the potential implications.



Organisational control

Roles & Responsibilities

SLT

- o Facilitating training and guidance on Social Media use.
- o Developing and implementing the Social Media policy
- o Taking a lead role in investigating any reported incidents.
- o Making an initial assessment when an incident is reported and involving appropriate staff and external agencies as required.
- o Receive completed applications for Social Media accounts
- o Approve account creation

IT Manager

- o Create the account following SLT approval
- o Store account details, including passwords securely
- o Be involved in monitoring and contributing to the account
- o Control the process for managing an account after the lead staff member has left the organisation (closing or transferring)

Staff

- o Know the contents of and ensure that any use of social media is carried out in line with this and other relevant policies
- o Attending appropriate training
- o Regularly monitoring, updating and managing content he/she has posted via school accounts
- o Adding an appropriate disclaimer to personal accounts when naming the school

Process for creating new accounts

The school community is encouraged to consider if a social media account will help them in their work, e.g. a history department Twitter account, or a "Friends of the school" Facebook



page. Anyone wishing to create such an account must present a **proposal** to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) which covers the following points:-

- The aim of the account
- The intended audience
- How the account will be promoted
- Who will run the account (at least two staff members should be named)
- Will the account be open or private/closed

Following consideration by the SLT an application will be approved or rejected. In all cases, the SLT must be satisfied that anyone running a social media account on behalf of the school has read and understood this policy and received appropriate training. This also applies to anyone who is not directly employed by the school, including volunteers or parents.

Monitoring

School accounts must be monitored regularly and frequently (preferably seven days a week, including during holidays). Any comments, queries or complaints made through those accounts must be responded to within 48 hours (or on the next working day if received at a weekend) even if the response is only to acknowledge receipt. Regular monitoring and intervention is essential in case a situation arises where bullying or any other inappropriate behaviour arises on a school social media account.

Personal Use of Social Media for Staff

The school respects an employee's right to a private life. However, the school must also seek to protect its reputation within the community, its confidentiality, fellow employees, and safety of children and young people in our care.

Employees therefore should, when using social networking sites, take care to ensure:

- their comments, views expressed or use adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this policy and other relevant policies including the school's code of conduct. This includes, although is not limited to;
 - posts which adversely affect, or risk affecting the reputation of the school, or bring the school into disrepute.
 - posts which conflict, or risk conflicting, with the school's high values and principles,



- posts which may be considered contrary to principles of fair treatment or equal opportunities, or discriminatory and/or likely to cause offence, concern, alarm, or harm, to any other individual or group of individuals.
- they do not publish information that provides confidential information concerning any, children, young people or colleagues or the school, including photographs
- their interaction on these websites does not damage relationships between our children, parents and members of staff.
- Do not make posts which may be perceived to be defamatory, libelous, bullying, harassing, victimising, pornographic, discriminatory, or that could create a hostile work environment.
- Digital communications by staff must be professional and respectful at all times and in accordance with this policy. Staff will not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make ill-considered comments or judgments about staff. School social media accounts must not be used for personal gain. Staff must ensure that confidentiality is maintained on social media even after they leave the employment of the school.

All statements made on social networking sites will be treated in the same way as if they have been made publicly, written on paper and/or said or shown directly to a recipient or intended recipient.

- Users must declare who they are in social media posts or accounts. Anonymous posts are discouraged in relation to school activity.
- If a journalist makes contact about posts made using social media staff must immediately refer this to the SLT before responding.
- Unacceptable conduct, (e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by the school and will be reported as soon as possible to a relevant senior member of staff and escalated where appropriate.
- The use of social media by staff while at work may be monitored, in line with school policies. During school hours staff should refrain from using their private social media sites.
- If using social networking for professional and business purposes to discuss their occupation generally, and/or express their views or opinions in respect of their field of work (ie. via Twitter, LinkedIn etc), the individual must include specific reference on their social media page that "The views expressed are their views and do not necessarily reflect the views of their employer".
- The school will take appropriate action in the event of breaches of the social media policy. Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, the school will deal with the matter internally in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy. Where conduct is considered illegal, the school will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies and may take action



according to the disciplinary policy. Any breaches of this policy may be considered and determined in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedure, which may result in the employee being subject to disciplinary action.

Any serious breach of this policy (for example, bullying of another colleague on a social media site, making disparaging or defamatory comments about the school, its students or disclosing sensitive and confidential information etc.) may be found to constitute gross misconduct, and may lead to dismissal without notice.

Legal considerations

- Users of social media should consider the copyright of the content they are sharing and, where necessary, should seek permission from the copyright holder before sharing.
- Users must ensure that their use of social media does not infringe upon relevant data protection laws, or breach confidentiality.

Handling abuse

- When acting on behalf of the school, handle offensive comments swiftly and with sensitivity.
- If a conversation turns and becomes offensive or unacceptable, school users should block, report or delete other users or their comments/posts and should inform the audience exactly why the action was taken. If possible, a screen shot should be taken of the offensive comments.
- If you feel that you or someone else is subject to abuse by colleagues through use of a social networking site, then this action must be reported using the agreed school protocols. If possible, a screen shot should be taken of the offensive comments.

Tone

The tone of content published on social media should be appropriate to the audience, whilst retaining appropriate levels of professional standards. Key words to consider when composing messages are:

- Engaging
- Conversational
- Informative
- Friendly (on certain platforms, e.g. Facebook)



Use of images

School use of images can be assumed to be acceptable, providing the following guide-lines are strictly adhered to.

- **Permission to use any photos or video recordings should be sought in line with the school's policy.** If anyone, for any reason, asks not to be filmed or photographed then their wishes should be respected.
- **Under no circumstances should staff share or upload student pictures online other than via school owned social media accounts**
- Staff should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on school social media accounts. Students should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on any school list of children whose images must not be published.
- If a member of staff inadvertently takes a compromising picture which could be misconstrued or misused, they must delete it immediately.

Personal use for Students, Parents and Carers

Students

- Staff are not permitted to follow or engage with current or prior students of the school on any personal social media network account.
- The school's education programme should enable the students to be safe and responsible users of social media.
- Students are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about the school. Any offensive or inappropriate comments will be resolved using the school's behaviour policy

Parents/Carers

- If parents/carers have access to a school learning platform where posting or commenting is enabled, parents/carers will be informed about acceptable use.
- The school has an active PTA which supports the safe and positive use of social media. This includes information on the web-site in our **E-safety at BISL** section.
- Parents/Carers are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about the school. In the event of any offensive or inappropriate comments being made, the school will ask the parent/carer to remove the post and invite them to discuss the issues in person. If necessary, refer parents to the school's complaints procedures.



Monitoring posts about the school

- As part of active social media engagement, it is considered good practice to pro-actively monitor the Internet for public postings about the school.
- The school should effectively respond to social media comments made by others according to a defined policy or process.

Security and Identity Theft

Users of social media should be security conscious and should take steps to protect themselves from identity theft. In addition, employees should:

- Ensure that no information is made available that could provide a person with unauthorised access to the school and/or any confidential information and
- Refrain from recording any information regarding the school on any social net-working website – unless this is authorised as part of use of a school account (see above)

Managing your personal use of Social Media:

- “Nothing” on social media is truly private. Never assume it is, and/or that it may remain as such.
- Individuals should be aware that any statements they make on social networking sites are in the public domain, and regardless of privacy settings, they may become more widely publicised.
- Employees should refer to the principles detailed within this policy, and in the school’s code of professional conduct for guidance in considering the types of information or comments they must not post to any social media network.
- As a rule of thumb, and as an additional general checking principle before publishing anything on a social networking site - Employees may wish to ask them-selves ‘Would they be happy to have their statement read by a fellow employee, spouse, partner, family member, or the Principal or senior member of the school?’
- If not, or if the employee is in any doubt, then the employee should err on the side of caution and the statement should not be made.
- Social media can blur the lines between your professional and private life. Do not use the school logo and/or branding on personal accounts
- Check your settings regularly and test your privacy



- Keep an eye on your digital footprint
- Keep your personal information private
- Regularly review your connections – keep them to those you want to be connected to
- When posting online consider; Scale, Audience and Permanency of what you post
- If you want to criticise, do it politely.
- Take control of your images – do you want to be tagged in an image? What would children or parents say about you if they could see your images?
- Know how to report a problem

Additional Guidance for Social Media

Managing school social media accounts

The Do's

- Check with a senior leader before publishing content that may have controversial implications for the school
- Use a disclaimer when expressing personal views
- Make it clear who is posting content
- Use an appropriate and professional tone
- Be respectful to all parties
- Ensure you have permission to 'share' other peoples' materials and acknowledge the author
- Express opinions but do so in a balanced and measured manner
- Think before responding to comments and, when in doubt, get a second opinion
- Seek advice and report any mistakes using the school's reporting process
- Consider turning off tagging people in images where possible



The Don'ts

- Do not make comments, post content or link to materials that will bring the school into disrepute
- Do not publish confidential or commercially sensitive material
- Do not breach copyright, data protection or other relevant legislation
- Consider the appropriateness of content for any audience of school accounts, and do not link to, embed or add potentially inappropriate content
- Do not post derogatory, defamatory, offensive, harassing or discriminatory content
- Do not use social media to air internal grievances

Review and Evaluation

This policy is to be reviewed annually, though any deficiencies or weaknesses in the social media policy/ arrangements will be remedied without delay.

This policy will be reviewed by the Principal and leadership team.

Due for Review:

04/07/2024

PREPARED BY: Mel Hitchcocks, Principal 04.07.2023