SCHOOL SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE POLICY

With social networking sites being profusely used as a forum for social interaction, a social media policy is of vital significance. All are entitled to their opinions; however, displaying such opinions in an inconsiderate way may negatively impact students, staff, other parents or the school.

A good way to evaluate your post is to use Socrates' Triple Filter Test: "Is it TRUE? Is it USEFUL? Is it GOOD?"

Definitions
Social Media – refers to all social networking sites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, educational platforms, and webtools.

Scope
This policy applies to the School community: staff, students and parents.

When using Social Media / Online platforms, members of our community are expected that they:

1. Ensure that posts are accurate and fact-checked and capable of authentication
2. Demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries and behaviours
3. GEMS employees are required to respect and adhere to all host country laws relating to access to specific sites and social networks. Failure to do so may result in internal disciplinary action as well as legal penalties
4. Demonstrate good digital citizenship
5. Ensure their online behaviour reflects the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that a person uses when communicating face-to-face
6. Do not post malicious, misleading or unfair content about the school, teachers, other parents or students
7. Only post information that is relevant and publicly available. Do not disclose any information that is confidential to the school that you might have accidentally stumbled up on.
8. Pictures/ videos of students should not be circulated
9. When a group is formed for a particular purpose, members should stick to that purpose by and large. For example - parents and class teacher use class dojo mainly to stay connected to keep well-informed with homework/ missed classwork/ reminders (about submitting projects, special instructions etc).
10. If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported to the Principal or Vice Principal and Designated Safeguard Lead.

11. Personal opinions about staff should not be encouraged. Respect the rights, privacy and confidentiality of others
12. If a member objects to a person's post in a chat group, he/she inform that person via private chat.
13. Members should avoid sending a message between _8:00pm – 7:00am_ unless urgent.
14. Not post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, threatening, violent, racist, infringes copyright or is otherwise unlawful or might cause damage to the School's reputation or bring it into disrepute
15. It is highly encouraged that email communication between staff and members of the school community on school business should be made from an official school email account. Use of personal email addresses may be permitted in circumstances such as using Google forms.

School sanctioned use of social media / Online Platforms

16. The content of any school-sanctioned social media site should be solely professional and should reflect well on the school.
17. Admin rights of the account should be designated to a particular member(s) of staff responsible for posting and monitoring of content.
18. Any social media accounts set up should be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff, and ideally should be linked to an official school email account.
19. The social media account is not permitted to be run by students themselves; there must be a designated member(s) of staff responsible for posting content. However, students would still be free to post on official comments and are encouraged to engage with material.
20. Regular monitoring is the key to maintaining an account which is appropriate and engaging.
21. Any communication received from student on any personal social media sites must be reported to the principal and designated safeguarding lead
22. Employees must respect their audience. They should not use ethnic slurs, personal insults, or engage in conduct that brings GEMS adverse publicity or into disrepute (please refer to the GEMS 'Employee Code of Conduct Policy').
23. Staff must ensure they follow the correct school guidelines when posting images of students on social media sites, i.e. any students whose parents have indicated their child's photograph cannot be used must not be featured, etc.
24. All staff should obtain consent from the parents, before posting the picture of students online / social media
25. Care must be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe.
26. Staff should not engage with any direct messaging of students through social media where the message is not public.

Breach of this Policy

A breach of this policy may also involve a breach of other school policies, such as, but not limited to:

- Student Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding policy
- Staff Code of Ethics
- School Anti Bullying policy

If an employee comes across negative remarks about the School and/or its operations online, they are required to pass these onto the School.

Any breach of this policy will be considered by the Senior Leadership Team as serious, and will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

All reports of cyber bullying and other technological misuse will be investigated and may result in a notification to external agencies depending upon the severity of the case.

Student sanctions may include, but are not limited to, the loss of computer privileges, behavior modification, or suspension from the School.

Reviewed by: SLT, CIDO, Social Media Coordinator, IT Engineer

Signed by the Principal:

Date:30/03/2023

Next Review Date: 01/03/2024