

Social Media Policy For Staff, Pupils, Parents And The Wider School Community

Rationale

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to engage, and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly.

While recognising the benefits of a range of social media applications as a popular medium of communication, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This policy sets out a framework of good practice that pupils, staff and the wider community are expected to follow when using social media.

The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that the use of social media is responsibly undertaken and that confidentiality of pupils and staff and the reputation of the school are safeguarded.

Scope

This policy applies to Pristine Private School pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community.

Under no circumstances may PRISTINE SCHOOL logos, typefaces or brands be used or published on any personal web space or on any online or offline medium without prior consent. These are registered trademarks, patents and the property of Pristine School.

This policy covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official school purposes, including sites hosted and maintained on behalf of the school.

This policy applies to personal web space such as social networking sites (for example *Facebook*, *MySpace*, *Instagram*, *SnapChat*), blogs, microblogs such as *Twitter*, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, *WhatsApp*, open access online encyclopedias such as *Wikipedia*, social bookmarking sites such as *del.icio.us* and content sharing sites such as *flickr* and *YouTube*. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media – the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium.

Related Policies

- Internet Usage Policy
- Staff handbook, rules and procedure

Principles – Be Responsible and Respectful

- Users should be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional/school lives separate. They should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between the school and their personal interests;
- Users should not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Pristine Private School into disrepute;
- Users should not represent their personal views as those of Pristine Private School on any social medium eg. Facebook, WhatsApp Groups
- Users should not discuss personal information about other pupils, School and the wider community they interact with on any social media;
- Users should not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations or the School.

Personal use of Social Media

Pupils and members of the wider school community should not identify themselves as members of Pristine Private School in their personal web-space, unless specifically linked to an approved job role within the School community where it serves a purpose to professionally market the school. This is to prevent information being linked with the school and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, pupils and parents and the wider school community.

Pupils should not have contact through any personal social medium with any member of staff, whether from Pristine School or any other school, other than those mediums approved by the School.

If pupils and members of the wider school community wish to communicate with staff they should only do so through the approved medium, official emails.

Information that pupils and members of the wider community have access to as part of their involvement with Pristine Private School including personal information, should not be discussed on their personal web space.

Photographs, videos or any other types of image of pupils and their families or images depicting staff members, clothing with school logos or images identifying school premises should not be published on personal or public web space without prior permission from the school.

We advise that school email addresses should not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

All staff, parents, pupils and members of the wider community are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. All staff, parents, pupils and members of the wider community should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online.

Information staff members have access to as part of their employment, including personal information about students and their family members, colleagues, other affiliated parties and school corporate information must not be discussed in their personal web space.

Pupils and the wider school community should not post images or videos from school events on any public social media site unless permission is sought by the school.

Sites like LinkedIn may be used for professional purposes to highlight a personal profile with summarised detail. However the school advises that care is taken to maintain an up to date profile and a high level of presentation on such sites if Pristine Private School is listed.

Using Social Media

Pupils should only use official school sites for communicating with staff, or with other pupils to communicate with one another for the purposes of an educational context. GroupWise, iSAMS, Google Docs, Edmodo and Firefly VLE are the current platforms by which staff and pupils should communicate and no other medium should be used without careful consideration.

The school is responsible for running its official website. No other social media platforms may be set up by any member of the whole school community which have a direct or indirect connection with School.

Usage of certain media is permissible during school hours by pupils, provided requisite permissions are sought and granted in accordance to school policy.

Monitoring of Internet Use

Pristine Private School monitors usage of its internet, online content, online services and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users.

Users of Pristine Private school email and internet services should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the school's ICT system.

All Pupils, staff and members of wider community should refrain from downloading unauthorised, unwarranted and inappropriate content using the school Internet.

Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this policy that leads to a breach of confidentiality, defamation or damage to the reputation of PRISTINE SCHOOL or any illegal acts or acts that render the school liable to third parties may result in legal action, disciplinary action or sanctions in line with the published school policies for staff.

The school has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying in all its forms. Bullying is the intentional and deliberate intimidation of another person through emotional, physical, psychological and/or cyber means. Instances of proven and intentional bullying may result in immediate suspension of the aggressor from the school. The matter will be referred to KHDA for ratification. Aligned with the above, the school will not tolerate any form of defamation or intentional harm practiced through social media forums.

<i>Policy Details: Social Media Policy</i>	
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