



The  
British School  
of Monaco

**POLICY SECTION:** Section 3 - PERSONNEL

**POLICY NUMBER:** 3.13

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

**EFFECTIVE FROM:** 13/VII/22

**REVIEW DATE:** Summer 2023

# The British School of Monaco

## Social Media Policy

The Mission of The British School of Monaco is to provide Monaco families with a British curriculum school that offers a nurturing community and an innovative learning environment, enabling students to evolve into their best authentic selves.

The Vision of The British School of Monaco is to create an exceptional educational environment in which students are nurtured to become authentic individuals, and reflective, resilient and adaptive learners. Our teachers are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence, innovative teaching, and helping students reach their full potential.

### 1. Rationale

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new, relevant and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with duties to the School, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

The School use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children and young people. The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff and pupils.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Safeguard all pupils and promote wellbeing.
- Ensure users are not exposed to risk as a result of their actions.
- Use social media in a respectful, positive and productive way which respects all parties involved.
- Ensure that the reputation of the British School of Monaco (the School) with its staff and governors is protected and that stakeholders understand their ambassadorial role with regard to the School.
- Protect the School from legal risks.

- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the School.

## **2. Definitions and Scope**

The School defines social media as 'any websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking'. Social networking sites and tools include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, LinkedIn, MySpace, YouTube and Instagram. It also includes forums and discussion boards such as Yahoo! Groups or Google Groups, online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, and any other websites which allow individual users or organisations to use simple publishing tools. Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds.

All members of the School should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, may be subject to copyright, safeguarding and data protection legislation. They must also operate in line with the School's Equality Opportunities, Child Protection, Safer Recruitment and Online Safety and ICT Acceptable Use policies.

## **3. School-sanctioned use of social media and/or social media accounts using the name of The British School of Monaco, its logo, or clearly attached to The British School of Monaco in some way**

Any distinct and dedicated social media site or account must only be set up by the School. This will be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held and be linked to an official school email account. Such social media accounts must have a link to the Online Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy, have official British School of Monaco branding and state that it is an 'Official British School of Monaco Approved Site'. If any social media account is identified that is not an official British School of Monaco approved site, this should be reported to the Principal.

The content of any School-sanctioned social media site and/or social media accounts using the name of The British School of Monaco, its School logo, or clearly attached to The British School of Monaco in some way, should be entirely professional and should reflect well on the School.

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum, and to support student learning and to share news with the wider British School of Monaco community. There are also many possibilities

for using social media to enhance and develop pupils' learning and to keep the British School of Monaco Community and our supporters in touch with the School.

When using school social media accounts and/or social media accounts using the name of The British School of Monaco, the British School of Monaco logo, or clearly attached to British School of Monaco in some way, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff can only publish photographs of pupils whose parents have given consent on the child's admissions form.
- Standard practice is to publish only the first name and initial of surname.
- School sanctioned social media sites must use images of children in suitable clothing.
- Staff must take into account the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy when making any posts on school social media accounts.
- Any links to external sites from the accounts must be appropriate and safe; if they are shared these must be verified as reputable sites and only appropriate hashtags should ever be used.
- Any inappropriate comments on, or abuse of, school-sanctioned social media and/or social media accounts using the name of British School of Monaco, a British School of Monaco logo, or clearly attached to British School of Monaco in some way, should immediately be removed and reported to the Principal. It is the responsibility of everyone using the site and social media in general to report abuse immediately.
- All school sanctioned social media accounts created for school purposes should include a link in the About or Info page to the Online Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy on the School website. This will indicate that the account is officially sanctioned by the School.

#### **4. Use of social media in practice for staff - for personal and professional use**

- Staff must not have 1:1 communication, including direct messaging (DM), with pupils or parents through any social media, apart from via school email accounts.
- Staff should not request or accept any current student or parent of the School of any age or any ex-student of the School under the age of 18 or ex-parent as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account unless they are the parent of the pupil or a close family member.

- Staff may remain in communication with past pupils via a school email account or the School social media accounts or appropriate alumni accounts.
- Any communication received from current pupils or parents of pupils on any personal social media sites must be reported immediately to the Principal.
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any student in any social media, these must immediately be reported to the Principal.
- Members of staff must ensure that, wherever possible, and where the social media site allows, their privacy settings on social media sites are set so that pupils and parents cannot access information relating to their personal lives or follow them on their personal accounts.
- All email communication between staff and pupils of the School or their parents on school business must be made from an official school email account (any deviation from this in an emergency must at once be reported to the Principal).
- Staff must not use personal email accounts or personal mobile phones to contact pupils of the School, or their parents, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances such as school trips or away matches that have been given prior approval by the Principal.
- Staff should not post or publish on the internet or on any social networking site, any reference to their colleagues, parents or pupils, or discuss pupils or colleagues, or criticise the School or staff. Staff may like, share or make appropriate comment in response to the School's official social media accounts.
- Staff must not post images on any unofficial British School of Monaco social media account that includes pupils, unless sharing posts made from an official School social media account.
- Staff are instructed to consider the reputation of the School in any posts or comments related to the School on any social media account. Staff should be aware that cases that bring the School into disrepute or compromise its reputation and that of its pupils, staff or parents, may result in disciplinary action.

## **5. Guidance and advice for staff**

Most common social networking sites are inherently insecure places to have discussions which contain any sensitive information. Privacy laws can be violated and the reputation of our school can be damaged if the public sees a discussion of any sensitive information taking place on social networking. Staff should be aware that these types of cases can result in disciplinary action.

### Proprietary Information

Staff may not share information which is confidential and proprietary about the School. This includes information about services, programmes, financial, strategy, and any other internal confidential, proprietary, or sensitive workplace information that has not been publicly released by the School. These are given as examples only and do not cover the range of what the School considers confidential and proprietary. If staff have any questions about whether information is proprietary, they must speak to the Principal before releasing it. Staff must also be aware of the points made within their employment contract when they joined the School, a copy which can be obtained from HR.

The School's logo may not be used without explicit permission in writing from the Principal; the School owns the rights to all logos, mottos and phraseology and their usage.

### Workplace Privacy

- The School respects staff member rights to privacy and to express themselves. However, the School and staff members must also respect, and diligently protect, the privacy of fellow staff members, pupils, parents, and others. Privacy and confidentiality must be maintained in every possible way.
- Staff must not discuss pupil or family related information via social networking and public social media, texting, or online unless it is an approved medium and for a school related purpose. This is particularly important given the prestigious nature of some of the families who may join the school - professional confidentiality is paramount and all times.
- Staff are advised to be extremely cautious in conversations with other staff, parents and volunteers in social networking, on the basis that privacy laws can be violated even if a person's name is not shared.
- The School will honour the privacy rights of current and past employees, current and past pupils and their families, and anyone else associated with the School, by seeking permission before writing about or displaying internal school happenings which might be considered to be a breach of their privacy and confidentiality.

### Privacy and Security Settings

- The School expects staff to use the highest security and privacy settings provided by social networking sites. Regardless of privacy settings, staff are advised to be respectful and responsible in all activity if it in any way involves or references the School, job, or those staff work with.
- Staff must understand that on-line content is difficult, if not impossible to retract once posted or sent.
- Should a member of staff have any concern about any adverse online content about themselves, or a colleague, or the school, they must inform the Principal immediately.

### Blogging and Websites

- If staff are developing a website or writing a blog that will mention the School, staff, Governors, pupils, parents and volunteers, they MUST get permission first before writing anything, and advise the Principal they are intending to do this. The Principal may choose to inspect this from time to time.
- It is important that staff make appropriate decisions about work-related blogging and the content of blogs, personal websites, postings on wikis and other interactive sites. Staff are advised to use caution with postings on video or picture-sharing sites, or in comments made elsewhere on the public internet and in responding to comments from posters either publicly or via email. If staff are assisting pupils to develop a website or blog, this must first be approved by the Principal and he must be given password access.

### Legal Liability

Staff should recognise that there is the possibility of being legally liable for something inappropriate which is shared online.

### The Media

If a member of the media or non-traditional online media (including bloggers) contacts a member of staff about the business of the School (e.g., programmes, services, pupils, parents, clubs, policies, practices, or additional business information of any kind), the member of staff MUST contact the Principal prior to responding. Members of staff must not contact the media without express written permission from the Principal and any item produced for the media must be approved by the Principal before submission.

## **6. Use of social media in practice for pupils**

- Pupils use of social media on any School IT systems, School hardware and School IT (Google) accounts accessed at any time (including during online learning) and equipment/devices and any personal devices (including hand held devices, watches or any other internet enabled device) brought on to the School site or at a School activity, must comply with the Pupils' Computer/Device Usage Agreement and the School's Online Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy.
- Pupils must not access any social media that is for adults only or if the pupil does not meet the minimum age requirement. It is vital that parents understand the age restrictions that are applied to many popular apps. For example, commonly used social platforms including TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and YouTube have minimum age limits of 13 years. We strongly recommend in the Parent Handbook (section 17) and in meetings with parents that they observe these age limits.
- Anonymous sites must not be accessed as there is a high risk that inappropriate comments can be exchanged, causing distress or endangerment.
- Bad, including offensive, explicit or abusive, language and inappropriate pictures must never be included in messages.
- All messages should be positive and not include anything that could be upsetting or defamatory towards others or the School.
- Pupils must take responsibility for keeping details of their accounts private, using full privacy settings and logging off properly and not allowing others to use their accounts.
- Pupils must report anything offensive or upsetting that they see online to the appropriate bodies, either by using the "report abuse" tabs or by speaking to their parents or a member of staff.
- It is a serious offence to use another person's account, or to create an account in another person's name without their consent.
- Pupils should not regard anything posted online as private and should remember that harassment, defamatory attitudes and racism are just some issues which could lead to prosecution.
- If pupils see inappropriate postings by other pupils, they must inform the school so that steps can be taken to avoid possible repercussions.

## **7. Use of social media in practice for parents**

- Positive contributions to the School Social Media, such as Twitter, are welcomed.



- Any concerns or issues about the School, its pupils or staff should be expressed directly to the School and not be voiced on social media.
- Parents must obtain permission before posting pictures that contain other parents or their children, unless sharing or liking a post from the School's official social media account.
- If parents become aware of inappropriate use of social media by their own or other people's children, they should contact the School so that the School can work with the parents to educate young people on safe and appropriate behaviour.
- If parents become aware of the inappropriate use of social media by other parents or school staff, they should inform the School so that steps can be taken to remedy the situation.

### **Further Guidance**

Further guidance on educating and safeguarding young people online and responding to incidents:

#### **Online safety advice for pupils, parents and teachers:**

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>

#### **Cyberbullying**

[www.childnet.com/cyberbullying-guidance](http://www.childnet.com/cyberbullying-guidance)

#### **Preventing radicalisation**

<https://educateagainsthate.com/>

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation)

### **Social Media Restrictions for Social Media Platforms**

#### **What are the age limits for social media apps and platforms?**

It is vital that parents, pupils and staff know the age restrictions that are applied to many popular apps. As this is a fast-moving area we would recommend that parents (with their child) always check before a child accesses an app from an internet safety website such as Internet Matters, for which there is a link below. We do not endorse the use of these apps; this information is provided only to help support your children to use social media safely.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/what-age-can-my-child-start-social-networking>

**Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy**

This policy will be reviewed according to the school's policy review schedule or when the need arises by relevant staff, the Principal and the Governing Body, taking account of students' opinions and concerns, and parental views, where appropriate.