SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Oxford International School

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OIS

Information & Communication Technology Department

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by employees and students of The Oxford International School (OIS).

It provides practical advice to ensure employees and students use such sites responsibly.

DEFINITION OF 'SOCIAL MEDIA'

The term 'social media' covers a vast range of software applications.

For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including, without limitation, blogs, wikis and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. It also covers all kinds of content shared online, including text, photographs, images, video and audio files.
This policy is in addition to, and complements, any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

OXFORD INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL SOCIAL MEDIA GOALS

Emerging platforms for online collaboration are fundamentally changing the way we work, offering new ways to engage with customers, colleagues and the world at large.

Given the large proportion of the population using social networking sites, educational institutions such as OIS can derive benefits through engaging with social media, both at corporate and individual level. Having a corporate presence on social networking sites can lend credibility when engaging parents, prospective parents, students, staff and the wider community and we believe it can build stronger, more successful business relationships, as well as providing a platform for encouraging responsible use.

Through the use of social media, OIS intends to promote itself respectfully and appropriately to current students and parents, potential students and parents and the wider community. OIS's use of social media, managed by elected School staff, will enable the School to engage with this audience. We will use the facility to raise awareness of good news stories and open up possibilities for teaching and learning amongst students.

WHO OWNS AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT RELATING TOOXFORD INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL?

OIS is the owner of the content it uploads relating to OIS's officially branded' social media sites.

This content is managed and updated by elected members of staff from OIS.

Content uploaded by independent members of the community and any member of staff and students not elected to represent School through 'official' channels on any OIS site and on other social media sites, is not necessarily the view represented by OIS.

WHO FROM OXFORD INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL CAN ENGAGE IN SOCIAL MEDIA?

OIS employees and students are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy, providing comments remain appropriate at all times.

EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON ALL SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

As a student or member of staff at OIS you should follow these guiding principles:

- The standard of your conduct as a student or employee at OIS, both online and offline is important. The way you act online, if inappropriate, could lead to disciplinary action. Please read and understand our guidance for staff and students. You should think through what this information means for you in practice, and if needed, take steps to change the way you use social networking sites.

- If you identify yourself as an employee or pupil of OIS, you should act responsibly at all times and uphold the reputation of the School. Even if you do not identify yourself, be aware that your conduct online could still result in disciplinary action if it impacts on School reputation.

- In no circumstances should staff and students post anything offensive, sensitive, disrespectful or inappropriate to the business of OIS, its employees, its students, parents, management and former staff and students, either in their own activity on independent social media sites or in social media sites managed by OIS.

- In the case of any comments or interaction made on a social networking site adjudged to be inappropriate we will ask the relevant person to remove the remarks/actions in question and further action and investigation, where necessary, will be taken with the individuals concerned.

- Staff and students should always pause and give careful thought before posting and replying to comments. Responses should not be rushed but dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner.

- Staff and students should always respect proprietary information, content and confidentiality.

- Please note that publication and commentary on social media sites carries exactly the same obligations as to any other kind of publication or commentary. Therefore, throughout all issues involving social media policy, staff and students should understand that whatever behavior is deemed inappropriate or illegal offline will also be deemed inappropriate and illegal online.

    - For example, manipulated photos that are intended to mock individuals would be considered offensive if printed and pinned on workplace or School notice boards, and are no less offensive when shared online, even when privately shared between friends.

    - This rule includes all areas of defamation, libel, discrimination, obscenity, harassment, data protection, bullying, trade descriptions, offensive content, confidential information, adult content, mention of illegal substances, legal involvement of the business, brand reputation, IP rights and confidentiality of sensitive business information.

- Use of the OIS logo, branding and strap lines may not be used without permission from the company.
- Employees using corporate social media profiles on behalf of OIS must adhere to a certain tone and style for all posts, using professionalism at all times.
- Employees and students should add a disclaimer to personal social media sites or biographies to make clear that the views and opinions stated are their own and not those of the company.
- It is acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialogue with the community on social media sites, but students and staff must not publish confidential information about OIS. Confidential information includes things such as details of current projects, financial information, research, and internal School affairs.
- Protect your own privacy - Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the OIS website. Privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limited access. Do not post information that you would not want the public to see.

- Remember that everything you post online is public, even with the strictest privacy settings. Once something is online, it can be copied and redistributed. Presume that everything you post online will be permanent and will be shared.
- Respect copyright laws – It is critical that you show respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others, including OIS's own copyrights and brands. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is a good general practice to provide links to others' work rather than reproduce it.
- Respect your audience, OIS, and your colleagues, parents and staff. The public in general, and OIS's employees, students, parents, management and ex-students and staff, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Do not say anything contradictory or in conflict with the OIS website. Always be respectful. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion.
- Protect OIS supporters, employees, parents, students, staff, ex-staff, business partners and suppliers. Key School partners, teachers, students, ex-students or parents should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify a contact byname without permission and never discuss confidential details of engagement.
- Be the first to respond to your own mistakes - if you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.
- Think about consequences - for example, consider what might happen if an OIS employee is in a meeting with a prospective business partner, prospective parent, parent or contact and during the meeting the person pulls out a print-out of your blog which says something negative about the School, students or staff here. As this will reflect negatively on School you could be the subject of disciplinary action and we will ask you to remove your comments.
- Disclaimers - wherever practical, you must use a disclaimer saying that while you work for, or attend OIS; anything you publish is your personal opinion, and not necessarily the opinion of OIS.

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

- The best way to be interesting, stay out of trouble, and have fun is to write about what you know. There is a good chance of being embarrassed by a real expert, or of being inaccurate if you write about topics you are not knowledgeable about.

- Quality matters - use a spell-checker. If you're not design-oriented, ask someone who is whether your blog looks smart, and take their advice on how to improve it.

- If in doubt over a post, or if something does not feel right, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it, or ask someone else to look at it first.

SETTING UP SOCIAL MEDIA

Assistance in setting up certain social media accounts and their settings, where relevant, can be obtained from OIS's Marketing Manager.

Social media identities, logon IDs and user names may not use OIS's name without prior approval from the Executive Committee and Marketing Manager.

Staff members and students can always seek advice about training in the appropriate use of social media from relevant parties at OIS.

STAFF SPECIFIC REPRESENTATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Whilst OIS is happy for staff to engage in social media, staff should not under any circumstances connect with or follow students at School on sites such as Facebook and Twitter, thus ensuring professional boundaries are maintained at all times.
So that students do not take Facebook or Twitter declinations as a slight, we will communicate to students that School policy prohibits staff from engaging in online social networking with students.

NETWORKING WITH PARENTS

School staff are allowed to network online with parents through sites such as LinkedIn and must conduct themselves in their online interactions with parents according to the same standard of behavior that is demanded of in-person interactions with professionalism governing at all times.

GENERAL NOTES FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

The sharing of confidential organizational information, such as personal details, without the express permission of the School is not welcome. It is unacceptable to share, transmit or otherwise make external any content relating to the School.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF OXFORD INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL'S SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY IS BREACHEDBY STAFF MEMBERS OR STUDENTS?

Complaints about the use of social networking sites or other online activity will be taken as seriously as real-world events. Cyber-bullying for example, can be intrusive and distressing, and sharing confidential information online can be more damaging than sharing it verbally. When considering the circumstances of a complaint involving online activity, it can be useful to make a direct comparison with a real-world activity to ensure the seriousness of the complaint is judged appropriately.

If there is considered to be inappropriate posting or activity, or posting could potentially cause damage to the School and its reputation or indeed staff and students within the School, the following steps will be taken: -

Where possible the incident will be documented through a screen capture, in which the URL should be visible and the quality should make the message, image or other example of misconduct easy to review.

Activity will be evaluated to ensure that the staff member or student in question was in fact the person who posted or published the content, or potentially had ownership / control of the domain on which the content was published.
The School's Executive Committee will review and investigate the incident promptly and effectively before taking an appropriate cause of action with the persons concerned.

Social networking sites are a relatively new phenomenon, and social norms of conduct and behavior continue to evolve. It is important to intelligently review and reapply the principles of this policy as new situations emerge. In that light, we will keep this information under regular review, and would welcome feedback on its use in practice.
Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations through this document, it is recognized that this policy cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgments are made in situations not covered by this document and these will be made in the best interests of OIS.