BRITANNICA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, SHANGHAI

Social Media Policy

Updated September 2026

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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy aims to:

- Set guidelines and rules on the use of school's social media channels
- Establish clear expectations for the way members of the school community engage with each other online
- Support the school's policies on data protection, online safety and safeguarding

Staff, students and parents/carers are required to read, understand and comply with this social media policy.

This policy applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during school/working hours or otherwise.

It applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using:

- School IT facilities and equipment
- Equipment belonging to members of staff and students.
- Any other IT/Internet-enabled equipment

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. Everyone must also operate in line with the school's equalities, harassment, child protection, safer recruitment, and online safety and ICT acceptable use policies.

1.1 Definition of social media

For the purposes of this document, 'social media' is considered to include all technologies that allow individuals to communicate and share information (including photos and video). This includes group messaging services such as WhatsApp.

2. USE OF OFFICIAL SCHOOL SOCIAL MEDIA

The school's official social media channels are as follows:

- Facebook, Instagram, wechat, Weibo and youtube

These accounts are managed by Director of M and A. Staff members who have not been authorised by the Principal to manage, or post to, the account, must not access, or attempt to access, these accounts.

If you have suggestions for something you'd like to appear on our school social media channel(s), please speak to the Principal.

2.1 Facebook

Amend as appropriate.

The school will post on Facebook:

- Alerts about changes (e.g., changes to procedures, severe weather updates, staffing changes)
- Reminders (e.g., approaching deadlines, events or class activities, reminders about policies/procedures)
- Advertisements for school events or activities
- Job vacancies or requests for volunteers
- Links to newsletters, guidance and factsheets for parents and carers
- Achievements of students and staff

- Photos or posts about school trips, events and activities
- Seasonal greetings and messages about religious festivals
- Invitations to provide feedback

The school **will not** post on Facebook:

- Names and photos of individuals (unless they have given consent)
- Harmful or abusive comments
- Messages to specific people
- Political statements
- Advertisements for businesses unless directly related to the school
- Links to staff members' personal account
- Surveys that reveal personal information about individuals
- The sale of goods for commercial gain

2.2 Moderation

Staff responsible for our social media accounts will delete as soon as reasonably possible:

- Abusive, racist, sexist, homophobic or inflammatory comments
- Comments we consider to be spam
- Personal information, such as telephone numbers, address details, etc.
- Posts that advertise commercial activity or ask for donations, such as selling items or "fund raisers"
- Surveys that have not been approved and where data privacy rights have not been made clear and personal data handling measures have not been considered.

Every reasonable effort will be taken to politely address concerns or behaviour of individual users, following the school's complaints policy. If users are repeatedly abusive or inappropriate, they will be blocked.

Staff responsible for our social media accounts will also ensure that all content shared on social media platforms is age appropriate for the school community.

2.3 Following other social media users

Amend as appropriate.

The school:

- Will only 'like' Facebook pages with a non-commercial interest – being 'liked' by us does not imply endorsement of any kind

3. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY STAFF

Please note while we recommend members of staff make their private social media profiles unidentifiable to students, we understand many staff will use sites such as X (formerly Twitter) or LinkedIn for professional purposes. It is up to you to decide what is acceptable use for your staff and to amend this section accordingly.

The school expects all staff (including governors and volunteers) to consider the safety of students and the risks (reputational and financial) to the school when using social media channels, including when doing so in a personal capacity. Staff are also responsible for checking and maintaining appropriate privacy and security settings of their personal social media accounts.

Staff members will report any safeguarding issues they become aware of.

When using social media, staff **must not**:

- Use personal accounts to conduct school business.
- Accept 'friend requests' from, or communicate with, students past or present.
- Complain about the school, individual students, colleagues or parents/carers.
- Reference or share information about individual students, colleagues or parents/carers.
- Post images of students
- Express personal views or opinions that could be interpreted as those of the school.
- Link their social media profile to their work email account.

Any concerns regarding a member of staff's personal use of social media will be dealt with in line with the staff behaviour policy.

Any communication received from current students (unless they are family members) on any personal social media accounts will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or member of the senior leadership team immediately.

(Advisable) Staff should not have contact via personal accounts with past students (if ongoing communication is required, this should be using via official school channels).

4. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY STUDENTS

The school encourages students to

- Be respectful to members of staff, and the school, at all times
- Be respectful to other students and parents/carers
- Direct any complaints or concerns through the school's official channels, so they can be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure

Students **should not** use social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff or other students
- Complain about the school
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other students or parents/carers
- Post images of other staff or students without their permission

Any concerns about a pupil's social media use will be dealt with in line with the school's behaviour policy.

5. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY PARENTS/CARERS

The school expects parents/carers to help us model safe, responsible and appropriate social media use for our students.

When communicating with the school via official communication channels, or using private/independent channels to talk about the school, parents and carers should:

- Be respectful towards, and about, members of staff and the school at all times
- Be respectful of, and about, other parents/carers and other students and children

- Direct any complaints or concerns through the school's official channels, so they can be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure

Parents/carers **should not** use social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff, other parents/carers or students
- Complain about the school
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other parents/carers or students
- Draw attention to, or discuss, behaviour incidents
- Post images of children other than their own

Every reasonable effort will be taken to politely address concerns or behaviour of individual users, following the school's complaints policy. If users are repeatedly abusive or post inappropriate content that's affects the school's community and policy, will be blocked by the designated moderator.

6. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

Training is given to all staff during new staff induction and INSET

Parents receive training at the start of the year in online safety workshops, which cover the use of mobile phones/cameras/devices

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, for legitimate business purposes. This includes ascertaining and demonstrating that expected standards are being met by those using the systems, and for the detection and investigation of unauthorised use of the systems (including where this is necessary to prevent or detect crime). We also reserve the right to disable social media traffic on key networks within the school where the use of social networking is not appropriate, such as wi-fi and wired networks used for teaching.

The Principal will monitor the implementation of this policy, including making sure that it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the school.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

On behalf of the Board, the Director of Education is responsible for approving this policy.

8. RELATED POLICIES

- Safeguarding & Child Protection policy
- ICT and Internet Acceptable use policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff Behaviour/ Code of Conduct policy
- Mobile Phone Use policy

- Insert any other relevant policies