Social Media Policy
Including WhatsApp Guidelines

This policy is applicable to the whole school including Boarding and Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information Sharing Category	Internal Use
Policy Owner	Head Master
Reviewers	Bursar Head Master Compliance Officer
Authorised by	Head Master
Date Published	30th November 2023

Review Log	
	May 2022
	November 2023
Date of next review	November 2026

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SOCIAL MEDIA

This policy provides guidance for employees, and all others connected with the school, interacting with pupils or operating on the school's premises (e.g. self-employed contractors, peripatetic teachers, third party hirers) on the use of social media. All references to 'employees' also apply to these other service providers.

DEFINITIONS

"Social Media" means apps/websites/tools for sharing information and images. This includes but is not limited to: Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, Soundcloud, and Flickr. This definition also extends to WhatsApp and similar platforms (e.g. Telegram, Signal) even where operating on a closed non-public group.

"Post" means post, publish or otherwise release information/images into the public domain.

The Director of Marketing and Admissions is responsible for managing, monitoring, amending or removing content published on School social media.

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

The principles in this policy apply to both school and personal social media accounts. Staff must keep school and personal social media accounts separate and note that the school may observe content publicly available on personal social media. Personal social media or blogging should not generally be undertaken during School hours.

PRINCIPLES

Images of school events /trips may be posted by the Headteacher, Director of Marketing and Admissions and other SLT members. Other staff may post images from trips via the school trips mobile.

All such posts, especially images must be made in accordance with parental permission. If in any doubt, do not post before seek clarification from the Headteacher, Bursar or Director of Marketing and Admissions.

Employees must:

- comply with the Staff Handbook, Data Protection Policy and other applicable policies when using social media in reference to the school, its employees, pupils and parents.
- be mindful that social media posts may impact on the image of themselves and/or the school and may remain in the public domain.
- obtain appropriate permission before referring to or posting images of current or former employees, pupils and parents, or using any copyrighted material, trademarks, service marks or other intellectual property.

Employees must not:

- post anything inappropriate or harmful to the school, employees, pupils or parents.
- post commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment.

- post any confidential information. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, employees should check with the Headmaster and/or the Bursar.
- post images of pupils or adults whilst at work on personal social media
- post their personal opinion (posts should always reflect their position in the school.)
- follow students' personal accounts.
- post students' full names (only first names or initials, if appropriate.)
- post specific locations whilst on school trips.
- set up their own school accounts (all requests must come through the Headteacher, Bursar or Director of Marketing.)
- take someone else's content and share as their own.

ISSUES ARISING AND ESCALATION

Any online content generating media attention, complaints or legal questions, must be referred immediately to the Bursar.

If any online content threatens to become antagonistic, employees should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of the Headmaster or Bursar.

Any infringements of this policy should be reported to the Headteacher, Bursar or Director of Marketing, and may result in disciplinary action.

Subject to applicable law, after-hours online activity that violates St John's Beaumont Code of Conduct or any other company policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action.

WHATSAPP

The School uses WhatsApp to provide parents with a convenient channel for receiving information about school trips and residential trips. The guidelines below are for using the WhatsApp Broadcast List for trip-related communication.

WHATSAPP BROADCAST LIST USAGE

Enrolment:

Parents or guardians of pupils participating in school trips will be asked to consent to their numbers being added to the WhatsApp Broadcast List relevant to the trip.

Receive Trip Updates:

The WhatsApp Broadcast List will be used to send media (photos and videos), important trip updates, announcements, and essential information regarding the trips arrival/departure and expected time of arrival back at the School.

Viewing Only:

The WhatsApp Broadcast List is strictly for sharing information from the trip to parents. It is not to be used for direct communication with trip leaders or staff.

Communication with Trip Leaders/Staff:

To communicate with trip leaders or staff, parents need to follow these guidelines:

- **Email**: Send trip-related queries or concerns via email to the designated trip leader(s) using their school email addresses.
- **Phone Calls**: For emergencies or urgent matters during the trip, contact the trip leader using the emergency phone number provided during the trip information session or in trip-related documents.

Parents and guardians are expected to adhere to this policy. Cooperation in following this policy is crucial to ensure smooth and efficient communication.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

During information evenings or through other communications pertaining to the trip, parents will be informed about the WhatsApp Broadcast List. Its use and purpose. Contact details for trip leaders and staff will be provided for situations where direct communication is necessary. The WhatsApp Broadcast List will streamline communication and help parents keep up to date with trips and ensure all participants are safe and well.

The WhatsApp Broadcast feature allows Trip Leaders to send key information to parents and guardians via WhatsApp. Information will appear as a message for each recipient, not as a group, so no contact details will be shared with other recipients.