



St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School

Clontarf, Dublin 3

Social Media Policy

Introduction

The community of St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School acknowledges the increasing use of social media sites for purposes that are connected to the school. The Board of Management of St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School recognizes the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers.

This policy aims to encourage the safe use of social media by the school, its staff, parents/guardians and pupils. The school respects privacy and understands that staff and parents/guardians may use social media forums in their private lives. However, personal communications likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or the school's reputation and/or a teacher's reputation are to be discouraged as they may expose the user and/or the school to legal action.

Scope of the Policy

The policy covers the use of all social media platforms used by pupils, teachers, staff and parents/guardians where said platforms may be connected in any way to the running of and/or activities within the school.

All those connected to the school should bear in mind that the information they share through the use of social media platforms, even in a private setting, are subject to copyright, data protection, freedom of information and defamation laws and policy.

General terms of use

The terms of use apply to the use of all social media platforms by all those who have a connection to the school. This includes but is not limited to, public facing applications such as open discussion forums and internally facing uses such as project blogs regardless of whether they are hosted on the school network or not. Where applications allow for the posting of messages online, users must be mindful of the laws that may be applicable to such postings.

Social Media/Networking Applications

- Must not be used to publish any content which may result in the actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claim for damages. This includes but is not limited to material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Must not be used for the promotion of personal financial interests, commercial ventures or personal campaigns.
- Must not be used for actions that would put school representatives in breach of school codes of conduct or policies relating to staff.
- Must not be used to discuss or advise anything to school matters, staff, pupils or parents.
- Employees should not identify themselves as a representative of the school.
- References should not be made to any staff member, pupil, parent or school activity/event unless prior permission has been obtained and agreed with the Principal.
- Staff should be aware that if their out-of-work activity causes potential embarrassment for the employer or detrimentally effects the employer's reputation then the employer is entitled to take disciplinary action. Violation of this policy will be considered a gross misconduct and can result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee.

Guidance/ protection for staff on the use of social media

- Use of social media in work time for personal use is not permitted.
- Social networking sites such as Facebook or Instagram must not be used by staff as a platform for learning activities.
- Staff and student online interaction must only occur in an educational context.
- Staff are advised to NOT accept ex-pupils or parents of current pupils as friends on personal social media sites.
- Staff must not discuss pupils or colleagues or publicly criticize school policies or personnel on social networking sites.
- Staff are personally responsible for content that they publish online. Staff need to be mindful that what they publish will be public for a long time.
- The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the online world. If staff identify themselves online as affiliated with St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School then they need to be aware that they are by definition representing the entire school community. Staff should ensure that content associated with them is consistent with their work at the school and the school's values and ethos.
- Staff should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information in regards to St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School or its members.
- When contributing online, staff should not post confidential student information.

Guidance/ Protection for pupils on social networking

- No pupil may access social networking sites during the school working day.
- No pupils may use personal mobile phones during the school working day.
- No pupils may use personal recording devices during the school working day.
- No school computers/iPads are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of the school day.
- The school has a zero tolerance to cyber bullying.
- No pupil may upload content to YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat or alternative sites, of themselves and/or other pupils while on the school grounds, on school trips, and/or in school uniform.

Parent Guidelines

Classroom blogs and other Social Media tools (WhatsApp) open up communication between pupils, parents and teachers. This kind of collaboration and communication can have a large impact on learning at St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School. The school encourages parents to participate in such activities *when appropriate* but requests that parents act responsibly and respectfully at all times, understanding that their conduct not only reflects on the school community, but will be a model for our pupils also. The school does not have any responsibility, control or vetting powers over the content of class WhatsApp groups.

Parents should:

- Be aware that many social media sites have age restrictions and DO HAVE implications for their primary aged children. Parents need to monitor their children's online social media activity and read the terms and conditions of various social media sites and applications their children are interested in using.
- Online postings and conversations are not private. Do not share confidential information, internal school discussions, or specific information about pupils, staff or other parents.
- Parents should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information in regards to St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School community and its members.
- Parents should not share communications (individual or to the whole school community) from the school to public social media platforms (including WhatsApp).

Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

It was ratified by the Board of Management on

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson of the Board of Management