

Social Media Policy

1. Introduction

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to engage and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that we use these technologies and services effectively.

While recognising the benefits of a range of social media applications as a popular medium of communication, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation. For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This policy sets out a framework of good practice that students, staff and the wider community are expected to follow when using social media. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that the use of social media is taken responsibly and that confidentiality of students and staff and the reputation of the school are safeguarded.

2. Purpose of policy

This policy applies to GEMS Founders School – Dubai South (GFD) students, staff, parents and the wider school community.

Under no circumstances can GEMS Founders School - Dubai South logos, typefaces or brands be used or published on any personal web space or on any online or offline medium without prior consent. These are registered trademarks, patents and the property of GEMS Founders School – Dubai South.

This policy covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official school purposes, including sites hosted and maintained on behalf of the school.

This policy applies to personal web space such as social networking sites (for example *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *SnapChat*, *TikTok*), blogs or microblogs such as *Twitter*, *chatrooms*, *forums*, *podcasts*, *WhatsApp*, open access online encyclopedias such as *Wikipedia*, social bookmarking sites such as *del.icio.us* and content sharing sites such as *flickr* and *YouTube*. The policy also applies to internal sites used to engage students in their learning, such as *MS TEAMS* and *OneDrive*.

3. Principles – We Are Responsible and Respectful

- Users should be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional/school lives separate. They should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between the school and their personal interests;
- Users should not engage in activities involving social media which might bring GFD into disrepute;
- Users should not represent their personal views as those of GFD on any social medium eg. Facebook, Twitter or WhatsApp Groups
- Users should not discuss personal information about other students, school and the wider community they interact with on any social media;



- Users should not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations or the school.

4. Personal use of Social Media

Students and members of the wider school community should not identify themselves as members of GEMS Founders school – Dubai South in their personal web-space, unless specifically linked to an approved job role within the school community where it serves a purpose to professionally market the school. This is to prevent information being linked with the school and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, students and parents and the wider school community.

Students should not have contact through any personal social medium with any member of staff from GFD or any other school, other than those mediums approved by the school.

If students and members of the wider school community wish to communicate with staff they should only do so through the approved and official email communication, MS TEAMS or contact via the school Parent Relations Executive (PRE).

Information that students and members of the wider community have access to as part of their involvement with GFD, including personal information, should not be discussed on their personal web space.

Photographs, videos or any other types of image of students and their families or images depicting staff members, clothing with school logos or images identifying school premises should not be published on personal or public web space without prior permission from the school.

School email addresses should never be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media. All staff, parents, students and members of the wider community are strongly advised to ensure that appropriate privacy levels of their personal sites are set and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. All staff, parents, students and members of the wider community should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online.

Information staff members have access to as part of their employment, including personal information about students and their family members, colleagues, other affiliated parties and school corporate information must not be discussed in their personal web space. Students and the wider school community should not post images or videos from school events on any public social media site unless permission is sought by the school.

Sites such as LinkedIn may be used for professional purposes to highlight a personal profile with summarised detail. However, the school advises that care is taken to maintain an up to date profile and a high level of presentation on such sites if GFD is listed.

5. Using Social Media

Students should only use official school sites for communicating with staff, or with other students to communicate with one another for the purposes of an educational context.



The school is responsible for its official website, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts. The Parent Association may hold an account for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to support our community.

Any other social media platforms may be set up by a leader of the school community, following GEMS Communication Social Media Guidelines.

Usage of certain media is permissible during school hours by students, provided requisite permissions are sought and granted in accordance to school policy.

As part of the curriculum, students will be taught about keeping themselves safe when online.

6. Monitoring of Internet Use

GFD monitors usage of its internet, online content, online services and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users.

Users of GFD email and internet services should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the school’s ICT system.

All students, staff and members of wider community should refrain from downloading unauthorised, unwarranted and inappropriate content using the school network.

7. Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this policy that leads to a breach of confidentiality, defamation or damage to the reputation of GFD or any illegal acts or acts that render the school liable to third parties may result in legal action, disciplinary action or sanctions in line with the published school policies.

Monitoring and review

Signed *[Signature]* Date 17/07/2024
Head of Primary

Signed *[Signature]* Date: 17/07/2024
Teaching and Learning Coach

Signed *[Signature]* Date: 17/07/2024
Principal/CEO

Next policy review dates:

February 2025
June 2025