CAMBRIDGE
ENGLISH SCHOOL
مدرسة كيمبردج الإنجليزية

‘Students achieving their full potential as active thinkers
and self-motivated, life-long learners within a supportive environment’

Social Media and Networking Policy

Prepared by:	**Date: 1st December 2025**
Reviewed by:	**Date: 18th December 2025**
To be reviewed:	**Date: 18th December 2026**

1. Policy Statement

To ensure clarity of use and guidance for staff, pupils and all users regarding the use of social media and networking applications. This policy is designed to protect individual members of staff, pupils and all users. This policy applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during school / working hours or otherwise. This policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using school IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff, pupils or any other IT/internet enabled equipment. Anyone setting up a social media account that is directly connected to Cambridge English School (CES) (using the name of CES, a CES logo, or clearly attached to CES in some way) must follow all the guidelines in this policy.

2. Rationale

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new, relevant and exciting ways. It is important that we can use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with duties to the school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

The school use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard our pupils. The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff and pupils at CES.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Safeguard all pupils and promote wellbeing;
- Ensure users are not exposed to risk because of their actions;
- Use social media in a respectful, positive and productive way, which respects all parties involved;
- Ensure that the reputation of CES, including its staff and pupils is protected and that stakeholders understand their ambassadorial role regarding the school.
- Protect the school from legal risks;
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the school.

3. Definitions and Scope

The school defines social media as ’any websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking’. Social networking sites and tools include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok,

LinkedIn, MySpace, Flickr, YouTube and Instagram. It also includes forums and discussion boards such as Yahoo! Groups, Teams or Google Groups, online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, and any other web sites which allow individual users or organisations to use simple publishing tools.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds. 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.

4. School-sanctioned use of social media and/or social media accounts using the name of CES, a CES logo, or clearly attached to CES in some way

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum, and to support student learning and to share news with the wider CES community. There are also many possibilities for using social media to enhance and develop pupils' learning and to keep the CES community and our supporters in touch with the school. When using school social media accounts and/or social media accounts using the name of CES, a CES logo, or clearly attached to CES in some way, the following practices must be observed:

4.1. The content of any school-sanctioned social media site and/or social media accounts using the name of CES, a CES logo, or clearly attached to CES in some way, should be entirely professional and should reflect well on the school.

4.2. Staff must not publish photographs of pupils without the written consent of parents or the pupil themselves if they are deemed of the age and ability to provide their own consent. Standard practice is to publish only the first name and initial of surname, unless permission has been given by parents or pupils (if deemed of the age and ability to provide their own consent) for the full name to be used. School sanctioned social media sites must use images of children in suitable clothing.

4.3. Any links to external sites from the accounts must be appropriate and safe; if they are shared these must be verified as reputable sites. Only appropriate hashtags should ever be used.

4.4. Any inappropriate comments on, or abuse of, school-sanctioned social media and/or social media accounts using the name of CES, a CES logo, or clearly attached to CES in some way, should immediately be removed and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). It is the responsibility of everyone using the site and social media in general to report abuse immediately.

5. Use of social media in practice for staff - for personal and professional use

5.1. Staff must not have 1:1 communication, including direct messaging (DM), with pupils through any social media, apart from via school email accounts, Engage and MS Teams, as part of the Schools Online Learning.

5.2. Staff should not request or accept any current student at the school of any age or any ex-student of the school under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber

or similar on any personal social media account unless they are the parent of the pupil or a close family member.

5.3. It is advisable that staff do not have contact with past pupils (above school age). Staff may remain in communication with past pupils via a school email account or the school social media accounts.

5.4. Any communication received from current pupils on any personal social media sites must be reported immediately to the DSL.

5.5. If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any student in any social media, these must immediately be reported to the DSL.

5.6. Members of staff must ensure that, wherever possible, and where the social media site allows, their privacy settings on social media sites are set so that pupils cannot access information relating to their personal lives or follow them on their personal accounts.

5.7. All email communication between staff and pupils of the school-on-school business must be made from an official school email account. Staff should not use personal email accounts or personal mobile phones to contact pupils of the school, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances such as school trips or away matches that have been given prior approval by the Heads. Prior approval may also be given by the Heads for staff to communicate professionally with pupils on school premises for safety reasons.

5.8. Staff should not post or publish on the internet or on any social networking site, any reference to the school, their colleagues, parents or pupils or discuss pupils or colleagues or criticise the school or staff. Staff may like, share or make appropriate comment in response to the school's official social media accounts, in accordance with Section 4.

5.9. Staff must not post images on any unofficial CES social media account that includes pupils, unless sharing posts made from a school official social media account.

5.10. Staff are instructed to consider the reputation of the school in any posts or comments related to the school on any social media accounts. Reputational breaches by staff are dealt with via the Principal and HR.

6. Guidance and advice for staff

Most common social networking sites are inherently insecure places to have discussions which contain any sensitive information. Privacy laws can be violated, and the reputation of our school can be damaged if the public sees a discussion of any sensitive information taking place on social networking. Staff should be aware that these types of cases can result in disciplinary action.

Private and confidential Information

Staff may not share information which is private and confidential about the school. This includes information about services, programmes, financial, strategy, and any other internal confidential or sensitive workplace information that has not been publicly released by the school. These are given as examples only and do not cover the range of what the school considers private and confidential. If staff have any questions about whether information is private and confidential, they must speak to SLT before releasing it.

Workplace Privacy

The school respects staff member rights to privacy and to express themselves. However, the school and staff members must also respect, and diligently protect, the privacy of fellow staff members, pupils, parents, and others. Privacy and confidentiality must be maintained in every possible way. Staff must not discuss pupil or family related information via social networking and public social media, texting, or online unless it is an approved medium and for a school related purpose.

Staff are advised to be extremely cautious in conversations with other staff, parents and volunteers in social networking, on the basis that privacy laws can be violated even if a person's name is not shared. The school will honour the privacy rights of current and past employees, current and past pupils and their families, and anyone else associated with the school, by seeking permission before writing about or displaying internal school happenings which might be a breach of their privacy and confidentiality.

Privacy and Security Settings

The school recommends staff use security and privacy settings provided by social networking sites. Regardless of privacy settings, staff are advised to be respectful and responsible in all activity if it in any way involves or references the school. Staff must understand that on-line content is difficult, if not impossible to retract once posted or sent.

Blogging and Websites

If staff are developing a website or writing a blog that will mention the school and/or, staff, pupils, and parents, they MUST get permission first before writing anything and advise the Heads or Principal they are intending to do this. The Heads and Principal may choose to inspect this from time to time. It is important that staff make appropriate decisions about work-related blogging and the content of blogs, personal websites, postings on wikis and other interactive sites. Staff are advised to use caution with postings on video or picture-sharing sites, or in comments made elsewhere on the public internet and in responding to comments from posts either publicly or via email. If staff are assisting pupils to develop a website or blog, this must first be approved by the Head/SLT member and the Head /SLT member must be given password access.

Legal Liability

Staff should recognise that there is the possibility of being legally liable for something inappropriate which is shared online.

Media

If a member of the media or non-traditional online media (including bloggers) contacts a member of staff about the business of the school (e.g., programmes, services, pupils, parents, clubs, policies, practices, or additional business information of any kind), the individual must contact the principal.

7. Use of social media in practice for pupils

7.1. Pupils use of social media on any school IT systems, including MS Teams and accounts accessed at any time (including during online learning) and equipment/devices and any personal devices (including hand held devices, watches or any other internet enabled device) brought on to the school site or at a school activity, must comply with the rules and regulations of the school. Pupils should also follow any additional code of conduct / guidelines put in place for online learning from home.

7.2. Pupils must not access any social media that is for adults only or if the pupil does not meet the minimum age requirement.

7.3. Anonymous sites must not be accessed as there is a high risk that inappropriate comments can be exchanged, causing distress or endangerment.

7.4. Bad, including offensive, explicit or abusive, language and inappropriate pictures must never be included in messages.

7.5. All messages should be regulated and not include anything that could be upsetting or defamatory towards others or the school.

7.6. Pupils must take responsibility for keeping details of their accounts private, using full privacy settings and logging off properly and not allowing others to use their accounts.

7.7. Pupils must report anything offensive or upsetting that they see online to the appropriate bodies, either by using the “report abuse” tabs or by speaking to their parents or a member of staff.

7.8. It is a serious offence to use another person’s account, or to create an account in another person's name without their consent.

7.9. Pupils should not regard anything posted online as private and should remember that harassment, defamatory attitudes and racism are just some issues which could lead to prosecution.

7.10. An individual's "Digital Footprint" is becoming increasingly significant when it comes to job and university applications. If unfortunate decisions are made, it will be extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, to eliminate the evidence.

7.11. If pupils see inappropriate postings by other pupils, they must inform the school so that steps can be taken to avoid possible repercussions.

7.12. Pupils must have permission from the relevant Head or Principal for any social media accounts using the name of CES, a CES logo, or clearly attached to CES in some way

8. Use of social media in practice for parents

8.1. Positive contributions to the school social media, such as Instagram and Twitter, are welcomed.

8.2. Any concerns or issues about the school, its pupils or staff should be expressed directly to the school and not be voiced on social media.

8.3. Parents must obtain permission before posting pictures that contain other parents or their children, unless sharing or liking a post from the school's official social media account.

8.4. If parents become aware of inappropriate use of social media by their own or other people's children, they should contact the school so that the school can work with the parents to educate young people on safe and appropriate behaviour.

8.5. If parents become aware of the inappropriate use of social media by other parents or school staff, they should inform the school so that steps can be taken to remedy the situation.

Further Guidance

Further guidance on educating and safeguarding young people online and responding to incidents:

http://www.saferinternet.org.uk

www.childnet.com/cyberbullying-guidance

Staff's signature:_____ Date:_____

Student’s signature:_____ Date:_____

Parent’s signature:_____ Date:_____