



Social Media Policy 2026-2027

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Purpose

This policy aims to:

- set guidelines and rules for the use of the British School Quito's social media channels;
- establish clear expectations for the way members of the British School Quito's community engage with each other online;
- support the school's safeguarding, online safety and data protection processes.

Scope

For the purposes of this document, social media and social networking are 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) and online gaming platforms (such as Minecraft).

This policy applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during school/working hours or outside these times. It applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using:

- school IT equipment, facilities and networks;
- devices or equipment belonging to members of staff and students;
- any other IT/internet-enabled devices, equipment and networks.

All members of the school community 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 or other legislation.

All members of the British School Quito community must operate in line with the school's policies, and all staff, academic or administrative, are required to read, understand and comply with this policy.

Definition of Social Media

For the purposes of this policy, '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.

Legislation and Guidance

While breaches of this policy will be considered a serious conduct matter which may lead to disciplinary action being taken under the school's Behaviour and Disciplinary policies, inappropriate use of social media or social networking may also result in criminal liability under laws relating to:

- **confidentiality and privacy** (notably the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 and Ley Orgánica de Protección de Datos Personales (LOPD) 2021)
- **equality** (including the Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010 and Constitution of Ecuador Article 11; Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural)
- **libel, defamation, harassment and breach of copyright** (Protocolos y Rutas de actuación, Ministry of Education Digital Violence Protocol (2023); Código Orgánico Integral Penal (COIP); Código Orgánico de la Economía Social de los Conocimientos, Creatividad e Innovación (COESCCI)

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the British School Quito community share responsibility for the safe and appropriate use of social media. Key responsibilities are summarised in the table below and set out in more detail in the relevant sections of this policy.

Role	Responsibilities	Further detail
Regional Head of Schools	Approves this policy on behalf of the Board.	Monitoring and review
Principal	Is responsible for the implementation of this policy; authorises staff to manage or post to the school's official social media accounts; receives concerns about breaches of this policy; and, working with the IT Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead, monitors its effectiveness.	Reporting Monitoring and review
IT Manager	Maintains appropriate filtering and monitoring of the school's IT systems and networks, including access to social media; supports the security of the school's official social media accounts (for example, strong passwords, two-factor authentication and the prompt removal of access when staff leave or change roles); reports any concerns found through monitoring to the Designated Safeguarding Lead; supports the Principal in reviewing how well the policy is working.	Monitoring of and access to social media Monitoring and review
Head of Marketing and Admissions (HOMA)	Manages the school's Facebook and Instagram accounts, receives suggestions for content, and ensures that posts and comments are moderated in line with this policy.	Use of official school social media Moderation
HR	Manages the school's LinkedIn account in line with this policy.	Use of official school social media
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Receives reports of safeguarding concerns arising from the use of social media, including any communication from current pupils to staff members' personal accounts.	Personal use of social media by staff
Staff	Consider the safety of pupils and the risks to the school when using social media; maintain appropriate privacy and security settings on personal accounts; and report any safeguarding issues they become aware of.	Personal use of social media by staff
Pupils	Use social media respectfully and raise any complaints or concerns through the school's official channels.	Personal use of social media by pupils
Parents/carers	Help the school model safe, responsible and appropriate social media use for pupils, and raise any complaints or concerns through the school's official channels.	Personal use of social media by parents/carers

Use of Official School Social Media

The school's official social media channels are:

- Facebook [Facebook](#)
- Instagram [Instagram](#)
- LinkedIn [The British School Quito: Posts | LinkedIn](#)

Facebook and Instagram accounts are managed by Head of Marketing and Admissions (HOMA). LinkedIn is managed by HR. Staff members who have not been authorised by Principal/HOMA to manage, or post to, the account, must not access, or attempt to access, these accounts.

All social media posts must be considered for data protection compliance before publication (see Data Protection Policy). This includes ensuring no posting of images of students for whom appropriate permissions have not been obtained.

If any member of the school community has suggestions for something to appear on the school's social media channels, they should speak to Head of Marketing and Admissions.

Facebook

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
- links to newsletters, guidance and factsheets for parents/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

Instagram

The school follows the same guidelines for Instagram as for Facebook (see above), regarding both what will and will not be posted.

LinkedIn

The school posts on LinkedIn:

- job vacancies or requests for volunteers;
- achievements of students and staff;
- seasonal greetings and messages about religious festivals;

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

- Same as Facebook (see above)

Moderation

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

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

- false or misleading comments
- offensive, abusive 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
- surveys that have not been approved, as data privacy rights and personal data handling measures may not have been considered or made clear

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

Following Other Social Media Users

The school:

- will only 'like' Facebook/Instagram pages with a non-commercial interest. Being 'liked' by the school does not imply endorsement of any kind;

Personal Use of social media by staff

The school expects all staff (including governors and volunteers) to consider the safety of pupils 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 on 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 current pupils, unless they are directly related family members
- Complain about the school, individual pupils, colleagues or parents/carers
- Reference or share information about individual pupils, colleagues or families
- Post images of pupils
- 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 pupils (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.

Personal Use of Social Media by Pupils

We encourage pupils to:

- Be respectful to members of staff, and the school, always
- Be respectful to other pupils 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

Pupils should not use social media to:

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

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

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 pupils.

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 always
- Be respectful of, and about, other parents/carers and other pupils 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 pupils
- Complain about the school
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff, other parents/carers, or pupils
- 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, in line with the school's Concerns and Complaints Policy. However, if users are repeatedly abusive or post inappropriate content that affects the school's community and policies, the school will take every measure to ensure they are blocked by the designated moderator.

WhatsApp and Messaging Groups

WhatsApp and similar messaging platforms can provide quick and effective communication among groups, such as parents in a class. Parents/carers should follow the same social media guidelines (above) when using WhatsApp groups.

Monitoring of and Access to Social Media

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).

By using the school's IT resources and facilities, all members of the British School Quito community and other visitors give the school consent to monitor their activities. All should be aware that their use of social media and any information published by them may be monitored and reviewed.

We reserve the right to disable social media traffic on key networks within the school, such as wi-fi and wired networks used for teaching, where the use of social networking is not appropriate.

Reporting

Concerns about breaches of this policy should be sent to the Principal. Details of the investigation process and potential outcomes are set out in the Online Safety Policy.

Training and awareness

All staff receive regular online safety training, which includes the use and risks of social media, as part of their CPD and mandatory training plan. New staff receive online safety training, which includes the use of social media, as part of their induction, completed within the first 3 weeks

To support students and parents, the school will raise awareness about the appropriate use and potential risks of social media, and provide regular information through:

- curriculum-linked activities
- communications (e.g. letters, newsletters, website, learning platform)
- parent sessions, workshops and events
- campaigns (e.g. Safer Internet Day)
- signposting to trusted resources (e.g. [saferinternet.org.uk](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk), [childnet.com](https://www.childnet.com))
- providing information and resources to support online safety at home

Monitoring and review

Working with the IT Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Principal will monitor the implementation of this policy and ensure it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the school and the social media channels and tools available to users.

This policy will be reviewed each year.

On behalf of the Board, the Regional Head of Schools is responsible for approving this policy.

Related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Acceptable Use of IT
- Online Safety Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy