



Name of Policy: **Professional Standards**

Date approved: August 2022

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Staff Professional Standards, E-safety & Digital Guidance Policy

Property and Reputation

All staff have a responsibility to adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils, parents and the public in general. An individual member of staff's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting or bring the school into disrepute. This is supported by the employees own employment contract.

Mobile Phone Use, E-Safety & Social Networking

Social networking sites and blogging are extremely popular. Staff must not post material which damages the reputation of the school or which causes concern to others about their suitability to work with children and young people. Those who post material which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to allegations of misconduct. This does include posts made by others that are 'liked' forwarded or shared by members of staff.

At any time, it is unacceptable to use social networking sites at school, other than essential work-related communications via Royal School Whats App groups and Whats App team communications.

- The school accepts that employees will bring their phones to work.
- Staff mobiles must be kept on silent at all times and not handled or answered during lessons or meetings, except with the permission of the Principal or member of senior management.
- No member of staff should be ‘on their phone’ inside the classroom whilst undertaking their daily tasks and responsibilities.
- Staff should not leave the classroom during lessons to use their mobile phones.
- Mobile phones should only be used by staff during morning/lunch break and inappropriate areas of the school like a staff room or private office. The same applies to non-contact time.
- Any member of staff found using a mobile phone without considering the above may be subject to accusations of misconduct.
- In the event that an employee has a particular reason for a specified period of time, they may request, via the Principal, that they leave their phone on during working hours.
- Staff mobiles should be kept in a bag and not left on display.
- Photographs will only be taken of children during normal school activities. Staff can take and upload photos of children on a regular basis. The photos must be uploaded before the end of working day and then deleted from personal devices.
- Specific school cameras are available for use and it must be left in school after their use.
- Cameras and phones will never be taken into the toilets/changing areas.
- A child will never be photographed when they are changing clothes for an activity e.g. PE in school time.
- Parents visiting school/settling their children in, volunteers and other visitors are not permitted to take photographs during sessions unless instructed to do so by the Principal or senior management with responsibility for that occasion.

- Parents/Guardians, family members and school employed photographers may take photographs of a public activity like a sports day or a performance/assembly if they have been specifically invited into school and it is explicit in the instructions of the organisers that they can.
- Staff are not to give their home telephone number or their mobile phone number to pupils and parents. Mobile phone communication should be used sparingly and only when deemed necessary.
- Staff are not to make use of pupils' or parents' mobile phone numbers either to make or receive phone calls or to send to or receive from pupils' text messages.
- Staff should only communicate electronically with pupils via official school channels. Communication will only be from school royalbritish.org accounts or on the Google Classrooms, school website or by using the home school portal Engage.
- Staff should not enter into instant messaging communications on personal devices with pupils or parents at any time.
- Staff will not initiate, be part of or comment on social media groups like WhatsApp and Facebook in groups specific to individual year groups, classes or key stages. Doing so implies your agreement with views and opinions being expressed.
- Any staff member found to be responsible for class, year group or subject profile pages will be subject to investigation regard their professional conduct and will be required to remove them.
- School email, Engage portal and phone calls using a school phone (if necessary) are the only approved medium for communication with parents. All new staff receive training on the use of Engage system in induction weeks.

School email systems are the main line of communications between staff for school related business. Staff WhatsApp groups, year group groups, key stage announcements groups and all forms of WhatsApp used for 'school business' are to be approved by the Principal or Senior Management and supervised by the head of year group and/or the principal. Any staff found to be responsible for the setting up; administration and use of a whatsapp group that has not been approved; will be opening themselves up to accusations of misconduct as in breach of this policy.

The points below are guidance that specifically influences individuals and their adherence to the Policy.

- Pay particular attention to the security settings on all existing social networking sites and accounts. At their most basic all photos and content should be set to private and you as the user should be undiscoverable to the public.
- It is essential that staff and pupils are not 'friends' through social networking sites including photo sharing sites.
- There is no 'grey area' in this regard and this applies to children of other staff members who are your friends. If a child is a pupil at The Royal School (Irrespective of their social relationship to you) they must not be your friend on social media sites.
- Please be aware of leaving yourself subject to any allegations of inappropriate conduct through the communication with students and families through all forms of electronic media. This includes instant messaging, private chat and private messaging linked directly to social media accounts.

- The School Engage portal and email system exists as a medium through which all professional communication can take place particularly with parents and its use should be actively encouraged by all.
- The staff engaged in social media contact with pupils, immediately leave their intent open to misinterpretation and miscommunication. Simply, do not leave yourself open to this.

In summary of the main points above, the following is encouraged:

1. Check your security settings on all social media accounts. Including Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.
2. Check for old accounts; whether they are still active, including old pages you may have been part of at University, School or previous employment – their own settings may allow tagged pictures to be found by searching.
3. Check ‘third party’ websites from events you may have attended – were you photographed at a beach party? Were you photographed and tagged at a demonstration, nightclub or festival? Can these images be found with simple online searches? Have your friend tagged you – but your security settings provide no form of ‘check’ before any images are posted with your tag?
4. Search your own friends for people you may have added that you don’t know. Are these genuine profiles? Are they just friends of friends you have never met who you want to have access to your images and posts?

5. Remove pupils past and present from your friends list. This includes your own children if their accounts don't have the same security that yours does or their friends are able to see your posts, articles and media.
6. If you receive friend requests from pupils, it means they can find you so question how and do not accept them.
7. Consider using an alias, middle name or shortening first name to initials.
8. Don't be friends with colleagues who are not abiding by the simple requests above.
9. Report colleagues who are risking your own security and safety by not following the guidance above.
10. Yes of course you can have 'friends' who are colleagues and we hope you do have – If everyone follows the simple process above then everyone will stay safe, their content will remain private -as it should be and staff online presence will not be misinterpreted.

THE ROYAL SCHOOL remains an environment where we set, expect and uphold the highest standards. Our aim to be one of the very best British International Schools in Egypt is achievable.

