

Policy No.: TIADPolicy_Academics_2021/29

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Policy to be reviewed again in April 2024

Overview

The Indian Academy Dubai recognises the need for students, faculty and staff to actively participate on social media. It is inherent, in the digital age that our school community members interlink on social media platforms to connect with prospective families, students and alumni as well as enhance the classroom experience. This may include promotional materials, educational content, and school activities, among others. While social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks associated with it hence the need to regulate its use. In the social media world, the lines are often blurred between what is public or private, personal or professional. These guidelines are designed to create a template of good behavior, honesty, and individual accountability on social media. This policy will make clear what standards are expected of anyone who is associated with the Indian Academy Dubai school and uses social media as well as the actions that may be taken when it is considered a member of staff may have breached the terms of this policy.

Definition

Social media refers to online tools and services that allow any Internet user to create and publish content. Many of these sites use personal profiles where users post information about themselves. Social media allows those with common interests to share content easily, expanding the reach of their ideas and work. It encompasses online electronic tools that help the school community to communicate effectively. Specific examples of popular social media tools include image sharing (Flickr, Picasa, Photobucket), video sharing (YouTube, MyDSD, Ustream), Social networking (Facebook or Twitter), Instagram blogs (DSD Blogs, blogger, blogspot), wikis, discussion among others.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and student use of social media, including:

- a. on behalf of the school
- b. as part of their work directly with pupils
- c. in their wider professional lives; and 1
- d. in their personal lives.
- e. In keeping with the dynamic nature of social media, this guideline document will evolve and change as needed.

This policy is bound and guided by the relevant and applicable UAE legislation that governs Social Media Use, statutory guidance, and other school and KHDA regulations.

Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) clarify what the school considers to be appropriate and inappropriate use of social networking by staff;
- (b) encourage social networking to be used in a beneficial and positive way;
- (c) safeguard staff, pupils, parents and members of the public from abuse through social networking;
- (d) safeguard the reputation of the school, other schools, other organisations and employers from unwarranted abuse through social networking; and
- (e) set out the procedures that will be followed where it is considered that staff have inappropriately or unlawfully used social networking.

School Related Social Media

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit personal or private social media use by employees acting outside of the scope of their employment using personal technology. Likewise, nothing in this policy shall prohibit personal or private social media use by students outside of the school environment using personal technology.

Creation of or access to personal social media by students or employees which creates a disruption or an eminent risk of substantial disruption to the school environment may result in disciplinary action or referral to law enforcement.

General Guidelines

i. Use good judgment

We expect good judgment in all situations. Behave in a way that will make you and others proud and reflect well on the school. Always know and follow the school's Code of Ethics and Responsible Computer Use Policy. Avoid making comments that will put the name of the school into disrepute.

Regardless of privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared on your

social network is public information. Bear in mind you are the school's ambassadors on Social media.

ii. Be respectful

Always treat others in a respectful, positive, and considerate manner.

iii. Be Responsible and Ethical

Because you represent the school, please stick to discussing only those school-related matters that are within your area of responsibility and you are knowledgeable about. Refer all questions to the competent departments or sections to deal with.

Members should be open about their affiliation with the school and the role/position they hold. Avoid misrepresenting yourself.

Share and interact in a way that will enhance your reputation, the reputation of others, and the reputation of the school, rather than damage them.

iv. Be a good listener

Keep in mind, one of the biggest benefits of social media is that it gives others another way to talk to you, ask questions directly, and share feedback.

Be responsive to others when conversing online. Provide answers, thank people for their comments, and ask for further feedback, etc.

v. Be accurate and appropriate

Check all work for correct use of grammar and spelling before posting. Always use formal language when dealing with matters that involve the school or the name of the school.

A significant part of the interaction on blogs, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and other social networks involves passing on interesting content or sharing links to helpful resources.

However, never blindly repost a link without looking at the content first.

vi. In case you don't get it right...

Be sure to correct any mistake you make immediately, and make it clear what you've done to fix the mistake.

Apologise for the mistake if the situation warrants it.

Be aware of the permanency of the Internet and think before you post. Once something is sent out, it may be permanent and unable to be retracted.

If it's a major mistake (e.g. exposing private information or reporting confidential information), please let your Section head or Supervisor know immediately so the school can take the proper correctional steps to help minimise the impact it may have.

vii. Privacy and Confidentiality

Do not publish, post, or release information that is considered confidential or private. Online "conversations" are never private.

Use grievance channels of the school.

viii. Respect Private and Personal Information

To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide or divulge online.

Avoid talking revealing personal schedules or situations.

Never share or transmit personal information of students, parents, faculty, staff, or colleagues online.

While taking care when posting to safeguard people's privacy, be sure – as necessary and appropriate – to give proper credit to sources. In cases of doubt, privacy should be the default.

Always respect the privacy of school community members.

Cyber criminals, online stalkers and identity thieves are a real threat. Never share personal information, including, but not limited to, social Security numbers, phone numbers, addresses, birth dates, and pictures with parties you don't know or on insecure sites.

Users should keep their passwords secure and never share passwords with others. If someone tampers with your blog, email, or social networking account without you knowing about it, you could be held accountable.

Personal opinions and views should be clearly stated as such to avoid misrepresenting official school positions on substantive matters. Always use a disclaimer where necessary.

ix. Post Images with Care

Respect the brand, trademark, copyright information and/or images of the school.

Do not post photos of students who are on the "Do Not Photo" list. (Always seek permission before posting information that has the potential of infringing on other people's privacy).

All posts must follow the Social Media Responsible Use Guidelines and the Community of Respect.

The use of TIAD logos or images on your personal social networking sites is prohibited. If you wish to promote a specific event or activity, you may do so only by means of a link or by 'tagging' to the official School account or website.

Teachers are encouraged to moderate content posted on class blogs and social media related sites used as classroom extensions.

Always obey copyright laws. As an academic institution, intellectual property rights are very important.

Access to social media sites using school resources should be for instructional purposes directly related to employment responsibilities and/or educator's curriculum.

Adhere to the standards of professional practice and maintain appropriate school relationships at all times. Maintain a public, professional relationship with students and their parents.

Personally identifiable student information, including photographs, shall not be included in personal social media.

Parents Social Media Guidelines

Social media presents a powerful tool that open up communication between students, parents, and teachers. This kind of communication and collaboration has the potential of making an immense impact on learning. TIAD encourages parents to view and participate by adding comments to classroom projects when appropriate. The schools recognises and values the feedback shared by parents on all Social platforms and treats them with utmost respect it deserves as formal channels of feedback.

Parents forms an important layer of support in developing a safe online environment and appropriate use of social media and

They are encouraged to monitor your child's use of social media and have frank conversations with children about proper online relationships and behaviors.

‘Befriend’ your children online in order to view your child’s online posts and always regulate their online activities.

Parents should clearly communicate their position to the relevant Section Head or Class Teacher should they have any reservations on their child’s involvement in any project using online social media applications. If their child is featuring in any post, they do not feel comfortable in, they are free to let the school know, and corrective steps will be taken.

Parents will need to sign an authorization agreement with the school to use student’s pictures of videos for class use or school promotional purposes.

Parents will not use classroom or school social media sites for any illegal activity, including violation of data privacy laws.

Parents are expected to abide by the relevant privacy laws and may not divulge any information deemed private by the school or about the school.

Parents are expected to share, support and promote the Image of the school online. All comments should be constructive and should try by all means portray the image of the school in a positive manner. Disagree courteously, without disparaging comments. All grievances should be channeled via the appropriate grievance channels of the school.

Students: Social Media Guidelines

In accordance with the schools Code of Ethics, All TIAD students are expected to set and maintain high ethical standards in their use of social networking ensuring a school specific framework is in place. Students are expected to act responsibly and be accountable for their actions and always maintain high standards associated with the Indian Academy brand.

Parents and teachers alike are expected to constantly monitor student’s activities in accordance with the regulatory school Code of Conduct and ethics and applicable regulations.

Cyberbullying is considered an act of harassment, refrain from any conduct that may be deemed bullying or harassment as it is punishable by law.

Students are made to understand the copyright law, fair use act and creative commons while they use and share content.

Students must take care of technology equipment and explore appropriate and safe sites for research and learning. Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration.

Blogs, wikis and podcasts etc. are considered an extension of the classroom. The general classroom guidelines are applicable, and students be guided by such. What is inappropriate in the classroom should be deemed inappropriate on social media o maintain a safe and productive learning environment.

Ask permission before posting pictures or videos of others. Maintain consistent, acceptable behavior online and offline.

Students learn that self- image is important and how their future career/ higher educational perspectives look up candidates' social media accounts to see how they represent themselves in public.

Students are made to understand what makes good and bad netiquette and why. Our students learn about the importance of using online citations to respect copyright laws and eschew plagiarism giving credit to the original source.

Basically, our students are expected to be effective, thoughtful, and ethical digital creators.

School Official Handles

Instagram:

@Theindianacademydubai <https://www.instagram.com/theindianacademydubai/>

Twitter:

@tia_dubai https://twitter.com/tia_dubai

Facebook:

The Indian Academy

The school reserves the right to monitor all staff Social Media use, including when staff are making personal use of social media, on any school systems or equipment. Misuse of social media – even personal use on school equipment is a breach of the school's acceptable use. (Refer to the School ICT Policy)

Regards,



SHINY DAVISON

Principal