

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY (And Defamation Of Social Media)

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Author	Linda Elder
Reviewer	Karen McCord
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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 these technologies and services are used effectively, responsibly and safely.

While recognising the benefits of social media applications as a popular medium of communication, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our responsibilities to the School, the wider community, our legal obligations and the reputation of Australian International School – Dubai (AIS Dubai).

The use of social networking applications also has implications for our responsibility to safeguard children and young people.

This policy sets out a framework of good practice that students, staff, parents and the wider School community are expected to follow when using social media. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that social media is used responsibly and that the confidentiality and privacy of students and staff, as well as the reputation of AIS Dubai, are safeguarded.

2. Purpose of Policy

This policy applies to **AIS Dubai students, staff, parents, guardians and the wider School community**.

Under no circumstances may the **Australian International School – Dubai (AIS Dubai)** name, logo, branding or trademarks be used or published on any personal web space or online or offline medium without prior consent from the School.

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 AIS Dubai.

This policy applies to personal web spaces such as social networking sites, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, X, blogs, chatrooms, forums, WhatsApp, YouTube and other content-sharing platforms.

The policy also applies to internal digital platforms used to support student learning and communication, including **Microsoft Teams, OneDrive and other School-approved digital platforms**.

The internet is a fast-moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media. The principles set out in this policy must therefore be followed irrespective of the medium.

3. Principles – We Are Responsible and Respectful

- Users should be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and School-related lives appropriately separate and should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between their personal interests and the interests of AIS Dubai.
- Users should not engage in activities involving social media which might bring **AIS Dubai** into disrepute.
- Users should not represent their personal views as those of AIS Dubai on any social media platform, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X or WhatsApp groups.
- Users should not discuss or publish personal or confidential information about students, staff, parents or members of the wider School community on social media.
- Users should not use social media or the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse, threaten, bully, harass or defame students, family members, colleagues, other professionals, organisations or AIS Dubai.
- Users should consider the potential impact of anything they post, share or forward online and should behave respectfully and responsibly at all times.

4. Personal Use of Social Media

Students and members of the wider School community should not identify themselves as official representatives of AIS Dubai through their personal social media accounts unless specifically authorised by the School.

Students should not have contact through personal social media accounts with any member of AIS Dubai staff. Communication between students and staff should take place only through approved School communication platforms, such as **School email, Microsoft Teams or other authorised School systems**.

Information that students, staff, parents or members of the wider School community have access to as part of their involvement with AIS Dubai, including personal or confidential information, should not be discussed or published on personal web spaces or social media.

Photographs, videos or other images of students, families, staff, School events, School uniforms, logos or School premises should not be published on personal or public social media without appropriate permission.

School email addresses should not be used for setting up personal social media accounts.

All students, staff, parents and members of the wider community are strongly advised to ensure that the privacy settings of their personal social media accounts are appropriately configured. Users should keep passwords confidential, change them regularly and exercise care when posting information online.

Students and members of the wider School community should not post images or videos from School events on public social media platforms where appropriate permission has not been obtained.

5. Using Social Media

Students should only use official School digital platforms for communicating with staff, or with other students for educational purposes.

Microsoft Teams, OneDrive and other School-approved digital platforms are the appropriate systems for School-related communication and learning. No other medium should be used for communication with staff without prior approval.

AIS Dubai manages its official School website and authorised social media accounts. Only authorised members of the School community may create or manage an account representing AIS Dubai.

Any additional social media account, page or group representing AIS Dubai must receive appropriate School approval before being created.

Official School social media accounts should be managed responsibly and must protect student privacy, safeguarding requirements and the reputation of AIS Dubai.

Use of certain digital media by students during School hours is permissible where it forms part of an approved educational activity and the appropriate permissions and supervision are in place.

As part of the curriculum and student wellbeing programme, students will be taught about keeping themselves safe online, responsible digital citizenship, privacy and appropriate social media use.

6. Monitoring of Internet Use

AIS Dubai may monitor the use of its internet, online content, online services and School email and ICT systems where necessary for safeguarding, security, operational and compliance purposes and in accordance with applicable requirements.

Users of AIS Dubai email and internet services should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the School's ICT systems or networks, subject to applicable UAE laws and School procedures.

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

The School's ICT systems must not be used to bully, harass, threaten, defame or otherwise cause harm to another person.

7. Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this policy that leads to a breach of confidentiality, defamation, cyberbullying, harassment, inappropriate disclosure of personal information, damage to the reputation of AIS Dubai, misuse of the School's name or branding, or any illegal act may result in appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions in line with AIS Dubai policies and procedures.

For students, consequences may include warnings, parent involvement, counselling or wellbeing support, disciplinary action, suspension or, in serious cases, exclusion from the School.

Serious incidents may be referred to the relevant UAE authorities where appropriate or where required by law.

Parents and members of the wider School community may also be subject to appropriate action where their online conduct has a significant impact on the safety, wellbeing or reputation of the AIS Dubai community.

Where a genuine concern or complaint exists, members of the School community are encouraged to raise it directly with AIS Dubai through the appropriate School communication and complaints procedures rather than through public social media.

8. Monitoring and Review

This policy has been developed for implementation across the **Australian International School – Dubai (AIS Dubai)** community and will be reviewed annually by School Leadership and the relevant Compliance personnel.

The policy will be reviewed to ensure continued alignment with applicable **UAE legislation, KHDA requirements and expectations, safeguarding standards and AIS Dubai policies and procedures.**

[Any updates to this policy will be communicated through appropriate School channels.](#)