

Review – August 2024

Reviewer – Head of Marketing, Principal

Social Media Policy

Rationale

This policy is designed to uphold RGSGQ's commitment to safeguarding children, protecting the school's reputation, and ensuring the integrity of its staff and the broader community. It governs the acceptable use of social media, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the school's positive image.

This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Youtube and all other social networking sites, internet postings, blogs, and chat apps. It applies to the use of social media for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect our school in any way.

This policy covers all staff, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers, agency workers, students and parents.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines for the acceptable use of social media to ensure that all online interactions uphold the school's values and positively reflect on the school.
- Legitimize social media accounts associated with the school by ensuring they are uniformly managed and effectively operated.
- Protect and maintain the school's good reputation through consistent and responsible management of social media platforms.

RGSGQ aims to:

- Protect the privacy, safety, and well-being of students, staff, and the school community by setting clear boundaries for online interactions.
- Utilize social media as an effective tool for communication with the broader community, while ensuring that messaging is consistent and aligned with school goals.
- Establishing procedures for addressing and mitigating potential online crises or negative content that could harm the school's image or community.
- Ensuring all social media accounts representing the school adhere to uniform standards, enhancing the credibility and professionalism of the school's online presence.

Procedures – Role of staff

- Staff must ensure that all content shared on social media platforms is respectful, appropriate, legally compliant, and professional. Posts should always aim to enhance the reputation of the school and reflect the values of RGSGQ.
- Staff members should clearly separate personal content from school-related content. Posts about school activities, events, or students should only be shared on official RGSGQ social media platforms, maintaining a clear boundary between personal and professional profiles.
- Photos and videos of students shared on the official RGSGQ accounts must adhere to the photo consent agreement previously set with parents. It is crucial to respect this agreement to ensure the privacy and safety of students.
- Teachers are prohibited from adding current students as 'friends' or accepting friend requests from students on personal or official accounts. This is to preserve professional boundaries and ensure appropriate online behaviour.
- Staff are not allowed to 'friend' or follow current students or former students under the age of 18 on any social media platform. This applies to both personal and official accounts to ensure the safety and privacy of minors.
- Teachers and staff are strictly prohibited from posting photos, videos, or other media featuring students on their personal social media accounts. All media content related to school activities or students must only be posted on official RGSGQ platforms and with the appropriate permissions.
- Staff members who wish to create or run educational online platforms, such as blogs, websites, or social media pages, must seek approval from the school management. This ensures that all content aligns with RGSGQ policies and professional standards.
- Staff are not permitted to engage in personal social media influencing activities, including promoting brands, products, or services, through their personal accounts. This ensures no conflicts of interest arise and that professional conduct is upheld.
- Neither students, staff or parents are permitted to create social media accounts that imitate the official RGSGQ account. This includes using the school's name, logo, or branding to impersonate the official account. Official school communication must come from authorized channels to ensure that accurate and trustworthy information is shared with the school community.

Procedures – Role of students

- Students must ensure that all interactions on social media are respectful, courteous, and appropriate. Students are expected to avoid offensive language, bullying, or any behaviour that could harm others or reflect poorly on the school.
- Students should refrain from posting school-related content, including activities, events, or discussions involving other students or staff, on personal social media accounts. Any posts related to the school should be made through official RGSGQ platforms or with proper permission.
- Students must not share personal information, such as addresses, phone numbers, or sensitive details about themselves or others, on social media. They should also be mindful of sharing photos or videos that may invade others' privacy without consent.

- Neither students, staff or parents are permitted to create social media accounts that imitate the official RGSGQ account. This includes using the school's name, logo, or branding to impersonate the official account. Official school communication must come from authorized channels to ensure that accurate and trustworthy information is shared with the school community.
- The use of social media by students during school hours is prohibited, unless explicitly allowed for educational purposes under teacher supervision. This ensures that students remain focused on their studies and maintain appropriate engagement with school activities during class time.
- Students are encouraged to report any incidents of online misbehaviour or inappropriate social media use by their peers, such as bullying, harassment, or the sharing of harmful content. Reporting such incidents helps create a safer and more supportive online environment for the entire school community.

Procedures - Role of parents

Parents are expected to:

- Engage respectfully and thoughtfully on social media when discussing or interacting with the school, staff, or other parents. Disrespectful, defamatory, or inflammatory comments should be avoided, as they can damage relationships and harm the school's reputation.
- Adhere to the school's photo consent policy. If parents take photos or videos at school events, they should not post images of students other than their own unless they have obtained permission from those students' parents. This ensures the privacy and safety of all children are respected.
- When discussing school-related matters, parents should respect the school's policies, staff, and procedures. Concerns or issues should be raised directly with the school through appropriate channels rather than aired on social media, where it could lead to misunderstandings or miscommunication.
- Parents should model positive and constructive online behaviour for their children by engaging in respectful dialogue, promoting a safe and supportive online environment, and upholding the values of the school community.
- Neither students, staff or parents are permitted to create social media accounts that imitate the official RGSGQ account. This includes using the school's name, logo, or branding to impersonate the official account. Official school communication must come from authorized channels to ensure that accurate and trustworthy information is shared with the school community.