



# EPSOM

## COLLEGE

### **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR STAFF, PUPILS, PARENTS AND THE WIDER SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

#### **Introduction**

While recognising the benefits of social networks, this policy sets out the principles that pupils, staff and the wider College community are expected to follow when using social media.

It is crucial that all stakeholders in Epsom College, including pupils, parents, staff and the public at large have confidence in the College. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that the use of social media is responsibly undertaken and that confidentiality of pupils and staff and the reputation of the College are safeguarded.

**All members of the College community must be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate.**

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to Epsom College pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community.

**Under no circumstances may the Epsom College logo or crest, be used or published on any digital channel or on any online or offline medium without prior consent of the Director of Marketing and Communications.**

**These are registered trademarks, patents and the intellectual property of Epsom College.**

This policy covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official College purposes, including sites, channels and pages hosted and maintained on behalf of the College.

This policy applies to personal webspaces such as, but not limited to, social networking sites, blogs, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias, and content sharing sites. The internet is a fast-moving space and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media – the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the platform.

#### **Related Policies**

- ICT Acceptable Use Policies for Staff
- Policy on Pupils' Use of ICT, Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Equipment
- Staff handbooks, rules and procedures
- Guidance for Pupils
- Use of the Internet Policy

All of these policies can be found on the College website.

## **Principles – Be Responsible and Respectful**

- Users should be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional/school lives separate. They should not put themselves in a position where there could be a conflict between the school and their personal interests;
- Users should not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Epsom College into disrepute;
- Users should not represent their personal views as those of Epsom College, or post in such a manner that might allow a member of the public to misunderstand their personal views as being those of the College, no matter the intention;
- Users should not discuss personal information about other pupils, members of staff or members of the wider community online;
- Users should not discuss or post information relating to the operation, running, maintenance of, or events taking place within, Epsom College;
- Users should not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations or Epsom College.

## **Personal use of Social Media**

Pupils, parents and members of the wider school community should not identify themselves as members of Epsom College on social media and/or their personal web spaces, unless specifically linked to an approved job role within the College where it serves a purpose to professionally market the school, and it has been previously agreed with the Director of Marketing and Communications.

This is to prevent information being linked with the College and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, pupils and parents and the wider College community.

Pupils should not have contact through any personal social medium with any member of staff, whether from Epsom College or any other school, other than those mediums approved by the Senior Leadership Team or the Admissions and Marketing Department, unless the staff concerned are family members.

If pupils and members of the wider College community wish to communicate with staff they should only do so through official school sites created for this purpose, which at present are iSAMS or Epsom College email accounts.

Information that pupils and members of the wider community have access to as part of their involvement with Epsom College, including personal information, should not be discussed on social media or personal web spaces.

Photographs, videos or any other types of image of pupils and their families, or images depicting staff members, clothing with school logos or images identifying school premises should not be published on personal or public web space without prior permission from the College.

College email addresses should not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff, pupils, parents and the wider College community should not edit open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia that relate to Epsom College. The source of the correction will be recorded and Epsom College reserves the right to amend these details for their sole purpose.

Parents are welcome to take photographs of (and where appropriate, film) their own children taking part in College events, subject to the guidelines covered in detail in the Policy on Taking, Storing and Using Images of Pupils. The key points in this Policy that relate to Social Media are that:

- Parents are asked not to take photographs of other pupils, except incidentally as part of a group shot, without the prior agreement of that pupil's Parents.
- Parents are reminded that such images are for personal use only. Images which may, expressly or not, identify other pupils should not be made accessible to others via the internet (for example on social media platforms), or published in any other way.

The College accepts that some sites may be used for professional purposes to highlight a personal profile with summarised details, e.g. LinkedIn. The College would advise that care is taken to maintain an up to date profile and a high level of presentation on such sites if Epsom College is listed.

Staff who run blogging/microblogging sites which have a professional and/or educational status should seek prior approval, as well as guidance and advice, from the Director of Marketing and Communications regarding prudence and endorsement of views if there is any link referencing Epsom College.

### **Using Social Media - Epsom College**

Pupils should only use official school email for communicating with staff, or with other pupils to communicate with one another for the purposes of an educational context.

The Admissions and Marketing team have full responsibility for running the school's official website and social media channels.

No social media platforms may be set up by any member of the College community which have a direct or indirect connection with Epsom College, without the approval of the Director of Marketing and Communications.

Whilst pupils and the wider College community are encouraged to interact with these social media sites they should do so with responsibility and respect.

### **Monitoring of Internet Use**

Epsom College monitors usage of its internet, online content, online services and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users.

Users of Epsom College email and internet services should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the school's ICT system.

### **Breaches of this Policy**

Any breach of this policy that leads to a breach of confidentiality, defamation or damage to the reputation of Epsom College or any illegal acts or acts that render Epsom College liable to third parties may result in legal action, disciplinary action or sanctions in line with the published school policies for staff and pupils.

Guidelines for safe Social Media usage can be found on the following websites:

<http://www.staysafeonline.org/>

<http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/online-safety/pages/social-networking.aspx>

[http://www.getsafeonline.org/social-networking/social-networking-sites/#.Uq7\\_0IPs084](http://www.getsafeonline.org/social-networking/social-networking-sites/#.Uq7_0IPs084)