



**HURLINGHAM  
SCHOOL**

# **Social Media and Mobile Devices in School Code of Conduct for Parents and Visitors**

This policy is made available to all parents, prospective parents, staff and prospective employees of Hurlingham School on our website, and a hard copy can also be viewed at our School Office and applies to all aspects of Hurlingham School's work, including the Nursery and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

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## **Statement of intent**

### **Social Media**

We understand the benefits of using social media; however, if misused, the school community can be negatively affected, such as damage to the school's reputation.

This code of conduct sets out clear procedures for how we expect parents to conduct themselves on social media and when using messenger apps, with regard to the school and its reputation.

We ask that parents read this document, complete the declaration form and ensure that they always act in accordance with the stipulations detailed below.

### **Mobile Technology**

We recognise that mobile technology offers valuable benefits. Our school embraces this technology but requires that it is used in an acceptable and responsible way.

This code of conduct is intended to address the use by parents and visitors to the school of non-school owned electronic devices to access the internet via the school's internet connection, to access or store school information, or to make photographs, video, or audio recordings at school. These devices include smart phones, tablets, laptops, wearable technology and any similar devices. If you are unsure whether your device is captured by this policy please check with the school's Head of Media and Computing Resources. These devices are referred to as 'mobile devices' in this policy.

## **1. Legal framework**

This document has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

This document operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Taking, Using and Storing Images of Children Policy

## **2. Online safety and social media conduct**

The school expects parents to behave in a civilised nature online and will not tolerate any of the following online behaviour:

- Posting defamatory content about parents, pupils, the school or its employees
- Complaining about the school's values and methods on social media
- Posting content containing confidential information regarding the school or any members of its community, e.g. a complaint outcome
- Contacting school employees through social media, including requesting to 'follow' or 'friend' them, or sending them private messages
- Creating or joining private groups or chats that victimise or harass a member of staff or the school in general
- Posting images of any staff members or pupils without their prior consent

Parents' social media usage will be in accordance with the school's Social Media Policy. The school retains the right to request that any damaging material is removed from social media websites.

If parents wish to raise a complaint, the school has a Complaints Procedures Policy in place.

Breaches of this code of conduct will be taken seriously by the school and, in the event of illegal, defamatory, or discriminatory content, breaches could lead to prosecution. Parents are instructed not to post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this code of conduct.

## **3. Online messaging**

The school expects parents to use messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, for purposes beneficial to themselves and the school, and will not accept any of the following behaviour:

- Sending abusive messages to fellow parents
- Sending abusive messages to members of staff
- Sending frequent messages to members of staff
- Sending abusive messages about members of staff, parents, pupils or the school
- Sharing confidential or sensitive information about members of staff, parents, pupils or the school
- Bringing the school or its staff into disrepute

The school appreciates the simplicity and ease of instant messaging; keeping in contact outside of school can benefit the school community by keeping it closer. The school does not, however, condone parents sending frequent and unimportant messages to staff. Parents should understand that staff should not be contacted outside of working hours. If parents wish to talk to staff, parents should arrange a meeting with the teacher by email using their official school email address.

Should any problems arise from contact over messaging apps, the school will act quickly by contacting parents directly, to stop any issues continuing. The school can request a meeting with parents if any misconduct, such as sending abusive messages or posting defamatory content, occurs online.

The School's complaints procedure will be followed as normal if any members of the parent teacher association or governing board cause any issues through their conduct whilst using online messaging.

The Head can, with the permission of the parent, view messages sent between members of the parental body to deal with problems quickly and effectively.

The Head can request that 'group chats' are closed down should any problems continue between parents or parental bodies.

#### **4. Photography and images**

Parents and carers may take photographs, videos or audio recordings of their children at school events for their own personal use. 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 Facebook), or published in any other way.

#### **Parents should only share photos of their own children on social media.**

Parents and visitors must not take photos of other children, staff members or volunteers, nor post them on social media without the consent of those within the images or, where applicable, their parents.

Other visitors may use their own mobile devices to make photographs, video, or audio recordings in school provided they first obtain permission to take photographs, films or recordings of the relevant individuals. This includes people who might be identifiable in the background. Permission will, under nearly all circumstances, not be granted should the images have the potential to include children.

No one must use mobile devices to record people at times when they do not expect to be recorded, and devices must not be used that would enable a third party acting remotely to take photographs, video, or audio recordings in school.

#### **5. Use of Mobile Devices in School**

Parents and visitors to the School may use their own mobile devices in the following locations:

- In a classroom where there are no EYFS (Nursery or Reception Pupils) present and, in the case of visitors, only with the permission and under the supervision of the teacher.
- In the school environs – Main Hall, Dance and Drama Studio or Large Music Room and in the Arts Centre during performances, in the School Offices on the Ground Floor and the Admin offices on the Second Floor of the Putney Bridge Road site.

Parents and visitors to the school are responsible for their mobile device at all times. The School is not responsible for the loss or theft of or damage to the mobile device or storage media on the device (e.g.

removable memory card) howsoever caused. The School Office must be notified immediately of any damage, loss, or theft of a mobile device, and these incidents will be logged.

Mobile devices must be turned off when in a prohibited area and/or at a prohibited time. This is most notably in all of Hurlingham Nursery School and any areas in the Prep-School where Reception (EYFS) Pupils are present.

The school reserves the right to refuse parents and visitors permission to use their own mobile devices on school premises.

## **6. Access to the School's internet connection**

The school provides a wireless network solely for use in conjunction with the school owned laptops. Parents and visitors are not given the Wi-Fi password except in very exceptional circumstances and for use only under the close supervision of the Head of Media and Computing Resources.

## **7. Responsibility**

Parents are responsible for supporting the school by monitoring their own use of social media and online messaging. Parents must adhere to the **Social Media and Mobile Devices in School Code of Conduct for Parents** at all times.

Parents are responsible for ensuring they support the school by monitoring their children's use of social media and online messaging. Parents must support their children in adhering to the Pupil Code of Conduct.

The school takes any security incident involving a parent or visitor's personal device very seriously and will always investigate a reported incident. Loss or theft of the mobile device should be reported to Reception in the first instance. Data protection incidents should be reported immediately to the Principal who is the school's data protection controller.

## **8. Monitoring and review**

The Head and the Head of Digital Strategy will review this code of conduct on an **annual** basis and will communicate any changes to all teachers and parents.

*This Code of Conduct is intended to be viewed in conjunction with the School's Social Media Policy. Staff usage of their own devices and social media is covered in the Staff Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement.*

Date created: September 2021

Date of last review: September 2023

Date of next review: June 2024