



Collegiate Girls' High School

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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. Policy Statement

This document is the social media policy of Collegiate Girls' High School, as approved by the School Governing Body on (date to be confirmed). The policy has been drafted in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996; the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 ('SASA'); the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996; applicable provincial legislation on school education, and the Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-related Information Act 70 of 2002.

The purpose of this policy is to govern the appropriate use of social media platforms by educators, non-educators and learners. The school recognises the evolution of social media as a mode of communication, but also realises that to optimise the use of social media, it must be used responsibly.

The school respects the individual privacy of educators, non-educators and learners. However, this privacy does not extend to their work-related conduct or to the use of equipment, resources or supplies provided by the school.

In terms of the Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-related Information Act 70 of 2002, "any person ... may intercept any communication if he or she is a party to the communication, unless such communication is intercepted by such person for purposes of committing an offence".¹ The school may

¹ Section 4(1).

therefore intercept any communication that is conveyed through the school's information systems or social media platforms and that refers to any information regarding the school.

2. Philosophy

The school is committed to the highest standards of conduct and ethics, and its success is built on integrity in all school matters. The school recognises that emerging online collaboration is changing the way in which individuals and organisations communicate, and that social media platforms constitute a large part of people's lives during and after school hours. Therefore, the school encourages ethical and responsible engagement on all social media platforms.

3. Application

This policy applies to the expression of opinions and comments by educators, non-educators and learners on social media that may in any manner be linked to the school.

4. Definitions

(a) Information systems – the systems consisting of the network of all communication channels used within the school.

(b) Intercept – the acquisition of the contents of any communication, by any means, so as to make some or all of the contents of a communication available to a person other than the sender or recipient or intended recipient thereof, and includes the:

- (i) monitoring of any such communication by means of a monitoring device;
- (ii) viewing, examination or inspection of the contents of any indirect communication; and
- (iii) diversion of any indirect communication from its intended destination to any other destination.

(c) ICT – information and communication technology.

(d) School – the School Governing Body, as well as any person to whom particular authority or functions have been delegated in terms of this policy.

(e) School management – the principal or a member of the school staff delegated by the principal.

(f) Social media – the means of interaction among people during which they create, share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social media can include, but is not limited to text, audio, video, images, podcasts, blogs, wikis and photo-sharing, including YouTube, Flickr and Instagram, as well as online social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Myspace and any other multimedia communications.

(g) Social media platforms – blogs, micro-blogs, wikis, social networks, social bookmarking services, user rating services and any other online collaboration, sharing or publishing platform, whether accessed via the web, a mobile device, text messaging or any other existing and/or future communication medium.

5. Engaging in social media communication on behalf of the school

(a) Only persons who are authorised by the Principal (“authorised persons”) may engage in social media communication on behalf of the school.

(b) Only authorised persons may comment on any aspect of the school and/or any matter in which the school is involved. When making such comment, the authorised person must identify him/herself.

(c) An authorised person who engages in social media communication on behalf of the school must ensure that he/she is familiar with the school’s view on specific issues, and should not express views that are inconsistent with those set out by the school.

(d) If an authorised person is not familiar with or is unsure of the school's position on any particular issue, he/she should seek clarity from the Principal.

(e) The school may instruct authorised persons to avoid certain subjects/topics, and has the right to monitor and review authorised persons' comments and submissions. The school shall take appropriate action against any authorised person who makes comments or submissions that have not been authorised by the school.

6. Educators, non-educators, learners and parents using social media for official and non-official purposes should be aware of the following:

- a) The approved social media sites may only be used for official purposes when using the school's information systems.
- b) The message that the school wants to convey to other users must be clearly defined.
- c) Postings must be kept legal, ethical and respectful.
- d) Educators, non-educators and learners may not engage in online communication activities that could bring the school into disrepute, and have a responsibility to avoid establishing online relationships and/or interests that could adversely influence or impair their capacity to act with integrity and objectivity in relation to the school as well as other educators, non-educators and learners. In addition, they should refrain from engaging in any social media activities that may bring the school into disrepute, and will be held accountable for any such behaviour.
- e) Personal details of educators, non-educators, learners and parents may not be disclosed. Educators, non-educators, learners and parents should take note that the school may from time to time share photos on social media sites that were taken during official school activities. People may then be 'tagged'. Users of these social media sites are advised to check their security settings if they prefer to review postings in which they were 'tagged'. Educators, non-educators and learners are

advised to block other users who they do not know or do not want to be associated with, from accessing their profiles.

- f) The school does not accept any responsibility or liability for weak security settings on the social media profile of any person associated with the school.
- g) If any educator, non-educator, learner or parent posts a remark, photo or video on any social media platform that may harm the reputation of the school, and affiliation to the school is identified, known or presumed, such educator, non-educator or learner will be subject to disciplinary and legal action. Legal action may be taken against a parent who jeopardises the school's reputation.
- h) All information that is published must be accurate, and confidential information may not be disclosed.
- i) Copyright laws must be adhered to.
- j) Only the official approved logo of the school may be used when participating in social media communication on behalf of the school.
- k) Statements to the media must first be approved by the School Governing Body.

7. Policy amendments

The School Governing Body may from time to time amend, supplement, modify or alter this policy.