

Social Media Policy

The American International School in Cape Town

Version: 1 July 2019

1. Introduction

The American International School in Cape Town (hereafter referred to as AISCT) recognizes the evolution of social media as a mechanism of communication in education and a mechanism of communication in our daily lives. It has become an important and powerful tool from which huge benefit can be derived. However, if social media is not used responsibly, it presents huge risks to individuals and organizations. The negative consequences of social media use can have long-lasting repercussions. To optimize the responsible use of social media, AISCT encourages and expects that its staff, students and parents use social media in adherence with appropriate and acceptable practices governing such use.

While AISCT facilitates an open and expressive environment and respects the right to free speech, it also recognizes the obligation of all to ensure that communications are lawful and do not cause harm to third parties.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to govern the use by AISCT employees, students and parents in the communication of any AISCT-related information and the appropriate use of any social media platforms in any communications that may be linked to AISCT in any way, whether these platforms are enabled by AISCT or by third parties.

It is important to remember that most individuals, whether students, parents or educators, can be linked with AISCT, even if they do not list AISCT as their school, the school their child attends or their place of work. This is due to assumptions that can be made from viewing an individual's social media platforms (e.g., most of their friends attend AISCT, so it is likely that the individual in question attends AISCT) or assumptions that can be made from viewing content regarding the individual on another social media platform (e.g., being "tagged" in a school photograph by a friend or by the school).

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all users of AISCT information and information systems that fall under the control of AISCT. It also applies to the expression of opinions or comments by AISCT's employees, students, and parents on social media, which may in any manner link employees, students and parents to AISCT. This Policy supersedes any previous Policy.

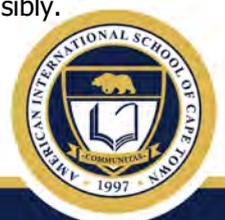
4. Glossary of terms

For purposes of this Policy, "**social media**" means any facility for online publication and commentary, including, without limitation, blogs, wikis and platforms such as Facebook, Google Plus, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube, and any other forms of communication that may now and in the future be classified or generally regarded as social media.

5. Statements

General

- 5.1 AISCT recognizes the opportunities and challenges provided for communication by social media platforms for employees, students, and parents.
- 5.2 AISCT's Policy is to encourage employees, students, and parents to use social media responsibly.



5.3 AISCT's Policy is to empower users of AISCT's information, information systems, and third-party information systems facilitated by social media platforms, to understand both the benefits and potential risks related to using social media, so that they may enhance their use and avoid or mitigate the associated risks.

5.4 AISCT also recognizes that the evolution of social media is occurring at an unprecedented rate and that this Policy will, therefore, need regular review to ensure that it remains relevant, assists in the governance of the use of social media by employees, students and parents and facilitates the continuous education of educators, students and parents.

AISCT employees

5.5 AISCT employees shall

5.5.1 Not engage in communications with students at AISCT which in the context of the educator/student relationship are in any manner inappropriate and shall guard against entering into communications originated by students addressed to them which are inappropriate in any way.

5.5.2 Take appropriate steps to warn students who initiate inappropriate communications of any nature (including on social media) that such communication is inappropriate and, if necessary, will follow appropriate disciplinary channels in dealing with inappropriate communications.

5.5.3 Should an employee become aware of inappropriate communication between any member of staff and a student, this should instantly be reported to the Headmaster.

5.5.4 Should an employee become aware of a discussion, thread, posting, comment, statement or misrepresentation about AISCT, its employees, students or parents, the Headmaster should be alerted to this as soon as possible. The employee should not engage in any form of communication regarding this thread or post on behalf of AISCT unless explicitly instructed otherwise.

Social Media provided by AISCT

5.6 All persons using social media platforms made available on AISCT's information systems, and its websites, shall adhere to this Policy and the terms and conditions governing the use of the websites and each of the social media platforms.

Social Media for employees, parents, and students

5.6.1 AISCT's employees, students, and parents using any social media platform in any manner which may link their use to AISCT shall:

5.6.2 Adhere to relevant policies, procedures and standards published by AISCT governing the publication or reproduction of information from AISCT, AISCT's information security and communications by AISCT employees.

5.6.3 If they have the authority to make such claims on behalf of AISCT then they must state and outline the detail of this authority in these communications. However, simply stating authority does not remove any potential liability for them in terms of this Policy.

5.6.4 If they do not have the authority, they must clearly state that the content is their own opinion and does not represent the opinions of AISCT or any other individual at AISCT. **However, this disclaimer does not remove any potential liability for them in terms of this Policy.**

5.6.5 Not use the AISCT name or logo, or any other information, which may link the user to AISCT without the prior written consent of the Headmaster.

5.6.6 Adhere to the terms and conditions governing the use of social media on the social media platforms that they use.

5.6.7 Not communicate unsolicited communications of any type or;

5.6.8 Impersonate third parties in a manner that is intended or does confuse or deceive acceptance of the communication by them.

5.6.9 AISCT's employees, students and parents using any social media platform that may in any manner link such use with AISCT, shall not post any information or alternatively re-post/re-tweet any information emanating from AISCT or a third person that includes:

5.6.9.1 Content that may be used for any unlawful purposes or the furtherance of illegal activities



- 5.6.9.2 Any person's private information (including video recordings, photographs or images of the person) of whatever nature, without the prior consent of the person.
- 5.6.9.3 Any threats of violence or harm of any type.
- 5.6.9.4 Any content that amounts to hate speech – hate speech is harmful or hateful content that discriminates on the basis of prohibited grounds such as race, religion, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation.
- 5.6.9.5 Any obscene or pornographic images.
- 5.6.9.6 Any communication or image which may be defamatory or violates the personal rights of any party
- 5.6.9.7 Any communication which is offensive, threatening, abusive, harassing or harmful.
- 5.6.9.8 Any communication which infringes the intellectual property rights of any third person
- 5.6.9.9 Any information that is fraudulent or untrue.
- 5.6.9.10 Information detrimental to AISCT itself or any educator, learner or parent at AISCT.

Remember that even if you did not originate the content you will be responsible for material that you retweet, share or like on social media.

You have the right to freedom of expression, but that right may not unjustifiably infringe on the rights of others – for example someone else's right to a good reputation, dignity or privacy.

6. Enforcement of this Policy

6.1. The terms of this Policy shall have the force of a contractual agreement between AISCT, its employees, students (duly assisted by their parents) and parents.

6.2 This Policy shall be enforced by those parties chosen by AISCT to do so.

6.3 If disciplinary proceedings are appropriate, they will be conducted in terms of the disciplinary procedures in force at AISCT at the time.

7. Related policies, standards, procedures and guidelines

7.1. Technology Acceptable Use Policy

7.2. Student-Parent Handbook

