

St. Andrews International School Samakee

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Student, Staff & Parent/Carer Social Media and Mobile Devices Policy

Policy and Practice Statement

Here at Samakee, the welfare and well being of students and staff are paramount. The aim of the Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice by establishing clear and acceptable guidelines. This can be achieved by balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile devices are effective tools of communication. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption and which are most susceptible to misuse, including exploitation and bullying. This policy applies to all individuals who have access to mobile devices

Mobile Devices - Students

In general, children should not bring valuable items to school, as they can be easily lost or stolen, a distressful experience for a child. While we fully acknowledge a parent’s right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to school, we strongly discourage children from doing so; teaching and learning need to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Should parents need to contact children or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures, via the school office.

In Upper School, we recognise that mobile phones are a part of everyday life for some children and play an important role in helping some children feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that mobile devices can provide a distraction in school. therefore:

- Upper School students must keep their mobile phones in their lockers, switched off or on silent mode
- Phones may be used to call parents/drivers, etc at the end of the school day
- Parents and students will sign the Acceptable Use Policy which includes mobile phones
- Unauthorised use of mobile phones will result in confiscation

We are happy for children to bring a smartwatch into school, but the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- Smartwatches are not to be used for gaming, for watching videos, taking photos or for engaging in social media;
- If children are found to be making/receiving calls, gaming or taking photos during the school day, the teacher must take the device and keep it until the end of the day.

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- Children in middle school may not wear an imoo watch or a similar device. In accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy we must ensure that photographs of children are not used on different platforms without prior permission

Parents are asked not to:

- Call their children during the school day. Any messages for children must be relayed either through the class teacher or through the school office
- Answer calls from their child during the school day. If there are any issues, the school will make direct contact with parents.

Mobile Devices - Staff

- Should not make or receive calls/ text while in contact with children (the school's group 'Whatsapp 'Urgent updates group should only be used in emergency situations and/or be checked at such times as bad weather)
- Staff phones should be on silent
- Staff should security access protect their phone
- Use should be limited to non-contact sessions where no children are present. Staff should be respectful and considerate towards colleagues and others and be mindful of setting an example.

Mobile phones - Work Related

At Samakee we recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication and use for, on and off-site activities. However, staff should ensure that:

- If taking photos or videos on residential and/or for the purpose of Tapestry observations and assessment, this information is uploaded to the school drive as soon as is appropriate and removed from personal devices
- Phone communication should be through the appropriate channels - (School Office or SLT)
- Staff should not freely share their personal contact information with parents

Mobile Phones - Parents, Carers and Visitors

We ask that parents' and visitors' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment. During certain special events we do allow parents to photograph or video school events using their mobile phones – but we insist that parents do not publish images (eg on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.

Social Media - Student

The use of social networking sites by students within the school is prohibited.

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Social Media - Staff

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner. Staff must never add students as friends into their personal accounts. Staff must not post pictures of school events without consent from SLT. Staff must not use social networking sites within working hours. Staff need to use social networking in an appropriate manner and in a way that does not put their professional reputation into question. Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality. Staff must not post negative comments about the school, students, parents or colleagues.

Social Media - Parents/Carers

Parents and carers have responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include Firefly, the school website, emails, letters, verbal discussion and the private school Facebook group, Instagram and Twitter pages.

Parents are not allowed to post pictures of students other than their own children on social networking sites. Parents should make inquiries or complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites. Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

Dealing with Bullying Involving Social Media

The Samakee Anti Bullying Policy makes sanctions regarding bullying using new technologies very clear. Use of social networking sites to harass, bully or intimidate any member of the school community, be that pupil, staff member or parent/family member are covered by this policy irrespective of when/where the post was made.