

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY:

Social Media Acceptable Use

Introduction

Pinelands High School (PHS) recognizes that access to technology in school gives students, parents and teachers greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21st-century technology and communication skills.

To that end, this Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviours that users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices to communicate with anyone from the school community, or about the school with any member of the public.

- Students, parents and teachers are expected to follow the same rules for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of social media can result in disciplinary action.
- PHS makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of social media technologies.

Social networking/media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Whatsapp, etc.) can be a useful way to connect with others, share educational resources, create and curate educational content, and enhance the classroom experience. While social networking can be fun and valuable, there are some risks that should be kept in mind when using these tools. In the social media world, the lines are blurred between what is public or private, personal or professional.

These social networking/media guidelines have been created for all to follow when representing the school in the virtual world.

Legally in South Africa, anything posted on a social media site, even if shared privately, is subject to the same standards as anything published in a newspaper.

Forwarding items, even without additional comments or liking any posts is interpreted as affirming and sanctioning the content being forwarded, and you will be held liable for that content.

Group admins on WhatsApp are held liable to all content published to the group, as is anyone who does not proactively comment against any illegal content.

Please do the following:

- We expect you to use good judgment in all situations.
- You must know and follow the school's Code of Conduct and the Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared on your social network is public information.

Be respectful

Always treat others in a respectful, positive and considerate manner.

Be responsible and ethical

If you are approved to represent the school, unless you are specifically authorized to speak on behalf of the school as a spokesperson, you should state that the views expressed in your postings, etc. are your own. Adhere to discussing school-related matters that are within your area of responsibility. Be open about your affiliation with the school and the role/position you hold.

Be a good listener

- Keep in mind that one of the biggest benefits of social media is that it gives others another way to talk to you, ask questions directly and to share feedback.
- Be responsive to others when conversing online. Provide answers, thank people for their comments, and ask for further feedback, etc.
- Always be doing at least as much listening and responding as you do "talking."

Don't share the following:

Confidential information

Do not publish, post or release information that is considered confidential or not public. If it seems confidential, it probably is. Online "conversations" are never private. Do not use your birth date, address, and cell phone number on any public website.

Private and personal information

- To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide.
- NEVER give out or transmit personal information of students, parents, or co-workers

- Do not assume that information you may receive through social networking (such as e-mail addresses, customer names or telephone numbers) is the most up-to-date or correct.
- Always respect the privacy of the school community members.
- Avoid talking about your personal schedule or situations.
- Avoid talking about events or people associated with the school in a negative way, even if you remove all personal details (e.g. names)

Please be cautious with respect to:

Images

- Respect brand, trademark, copyright information and/or images of the school (if applicable).
- You may use photos and videos (products, etc.) that are available on the school's website or YouTube channel.
- It is generally not acceptable to post pictures of students without the expressed written consent of their parents.
- Do not post pictures of others (learners, co-workers, etc.) without their permission.

Other sites

A significant part of the interaction on blogs, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, TikTok and other social networks involves passing on interesting content or linking to helpful resources. However, the school is ultimately responsible for any content that is shared. Do not blindly repost a link without looking at the content first. Pay attention to the security warnings that pop up on your computer before clicking on unfamiliar links. They actually serve a purpose and protect you and the school.

When using Twitter, Facebook and other tools, be sure to follow their specified terms and conditions.

And if you don't get it right...

- Be sure to correct any mistake you make immediately, and make it clear what you have done to fix it.
- Apologize for the mistake if the situation warrants it.
- If it's a MAJOR mistake (e.g., exposing private information or reporting confidential information), please let someone know immediately so the school can take the proper steps to help minimize the impact it may have.

Netiquette

- Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Users should also recognize that among the valuable content online is unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet.
- Users should also remember **not to post anything online that they would not want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see**. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended. Even if you later delete the content you have posted, that content can still be found using Google Archives, or similar search engines. It is never completely gone.

Personal Safety

- If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it immediately to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff member if you are at school; parent or guardian if you are using the device at home).
- Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, ID number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission.
- Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and they should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Do not be mean. Do not send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else.

Engaging in these behaviours, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying is treated as a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained by others.

Familiarise yourself with the PHS Bullying policy, the content of which applies to cyberbullying as well.

Examples of Acceptable Use

I will:

- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behaviour online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Treat social media carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using social media.

Examples of Unacceptable Use

I will not:

- Use social media in a way that could be psychologically or physically harmful to me or others.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others - staff or students.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using social media.

Limitation of Liability

PHS will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

Computer Network Acceptable Use

EXPECTATIONS:

Learners are expected to demonstrate appropriate behaviour when using the Internet just as they are in a classroom or school grounds. Communications on the Internet are often public in nature and general school rules for behaviour and communications therefore apply. Learners are expected to always have a working username and password as teachers could decide (at any moment, even half way through a lesson) to make use of computer equipment for his/her lesson. If a learner is not sure of their account information, or is not sure of their password, it is the learner's responsibility to come during a break and make sure it is all working. **Mrs Meyering at the IT Office will assist** if needed. If the user's logon details do not work during a lesson, they will have to continue doing work without the computers and will be expected to catch up as soon as they have sorted out their login details. The use of the computer network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. Learners are personally responsible for their actions in utilizing the school's computer resources. Learners are expected never to access, keep or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see. It is expected that users will comply with the specified standards and rules set out below. The computer department has full right to access your personal drive at any time to make sure that the rules below are followed. Student cards **MUST** be present and visible at all times when using the computer room. If you do not have your student card with you, you are not allowed to use the computer's.

ACCEPTABLE USES:

Users are expected to **change their passwords on a regular basis** and to use Internet facilities primarily for:

- Direct educational purposes
- Constructive communication with other email users.

UNACCEPTABLE USES:

The following behaviour and uses are unacceptable:

- Using language that is considered offensive in anything you write or send – this includes impolite, antisocial, profane, abusive, racist, or sexist language.
- Attempting to access pornographic or sexually explicit material of any kind, via e-mail or any other internet facility. If found doing this, disciplinary action will be taken which could lead to suspension or expulsion.
- Sending or re-sending chain letters.
- Mail-bombing another person's e-mail account. This is bullying and will be punished accordingly.

- Using anyone else's logon and thereby impersonating and possibly incriminating another user. This is fraud.
- Giving your password to any other person – **You will be held responsible** for any infringements committed using your logon, along with anyone found to be using your logon. You will receive detention for letting someone else use your account.
- Attempting to hack into or interfere with any other accounts, including any attempt to break into the network, or spread viruses.
- **Downloading any games or other unauthorized software, movies, series or music onto any part of the network including your personal directory.** Any illegal software, movies, series or music found on your flash drive will be deleted automatically by the Computer Department staff.
- **Private Printing is not permitted.** This includes party invitations, photos etc. Each learner has a limit set for the number of pages they may need to print during the year. This is based on the average printed work expected in the subjects they take. If a learner exceeds his/her limit, he/she will need to see the Network Administrator and pay R0.50 for every additional print.

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension of computer privileges at PHS
- Suspension of grade privileges
- Removal from positions of leadership within PHS
- Disciplinary hearings
- Removal from school related social media groups
- Suspension or expulsion from PHS

PINELANDS HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY PARENT and LEARNER AGREEMENT

PARENT/GUARDIAN

As a parent/guardian of a learner at Pinelands High School, I have read the "iPad Acceptable Use Policy" as well as this "Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy". I undertake to be a partner with the school, in instilling in this learner an ethic of respect for others and for the law as it pertains to their use of the network and Internet.

I hereby give permission for my child/ward to use the school's e-mail facilities, computers, iPads and the Internet, when this may be called for by their teacher(s):

Parent/Guardian Name (print):

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

DATE: ____/____/20____

LEARNER AGREEMENT

As a user of the school technology, I agree to comply with the terms and rules of the "iPad Acceptable Use Policy" as well as this "Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy". I understand and accept that any violation of these Acceptable Use Policies will result in loss of network privileges, and punishment through the school's disciplinary system.

Learner Name & Surname:

Learner Signature: _____

DATE: ____/____/20____

