

WhatsApp Policy

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September 2024	September 2025

Policy statement

At all times, Queen's Qatar place the wellbeing of students and staff at the centre of decisions: through robust safeguarding and online safety policies and practices. Consequently, as more evidence of the effects of mobile phone usage emerges, our schools will work to positively encourage limited reliance on the use of mobile phones during the school day.

Student and Teacher WhatsApp

During the school day students will not be able to access their mobile phones, and all communication will be via official school channels. Equally, school staff will not be accessing their phones when they are directly or indirectly in contact with students; this includes, but is not limited to, lessons, duties, and transitions.

For parents & visitors, we also ask that they refrain from using mobile phones while on the school site.

Due to the limited use of mobile phones during the school day, WhatsApp is not an effective method of communication and official channels will always be used: Toddle, Teams, email and voice calls. We actively discourage our staff from sharing their personal mobile phone details with parents.

The school may utilise Whatsapp broadcast groups with the sole purpose of sharing information with the community, for example upcoming events or school trips. Parents can opt into joining these groups. These groups are intended for one way communication only.

Parent/Guardian WhatsApp Groups

Parent/Guardian WhatsApp groups, which operate independently of the school, can be a useful way to connect parents in a particular class or year/grade group.

Class WhatsApp groups can be voluntarily set up by the parents in each class/year/grade. There is no requirement for parents/guardians to join these groups and participation is voluntary. Ideally these group chats are useful places to receive updates and reminders about school events, as well as sharing parenting advice.

The messages in the class or year/grade WhatsApp groups come from parents/guardians in their personal capacity. The school does not post directly on any WhatsApp parent/guardian groups.

Confidentiality about any discussions concerning children is of paramount importance. When writing, remember that whatever you say on social media may be forwarded to someone else and in a few minutes it may be seen by multiple people.

The law in Qatar is very strict about posting negative statements about people, businesses or organizations. The school will not tolerate any form of defamation or intentional harm practiced through social media forums. In order to prevent any miscommunications here are some guidelines:

- If you have a query or concern about a teacher or the school leadership, you should talk to them directly. Face to face is always the best way.
- The Class WhatsApp group must not be used to discuss complaints or grievances. These should be discussed directly with the class teacher and/or the school leadership;
- Parents/Guardians using any social media forum must at all times demonstrate respect for all members of the school community (including all students and personnel);
- Messages posted should be supportive and respectful of all other group users;
- Class WhatsApp groups should be accessible to all parents with children in the class, who wish to join;
- Parents and students must not breach confidentiality, defame or make derogatory remarks to any person in the school community. Instances of proven and intentional breach of the above may result in sanctions;
- Class WhatsApp groups must be conducted with these requirements in mind and the school reserves the right to inspect and moderate content to ensure compliance with official requirements.

This policy refers to the use of any internet platform or electronic means used for the dissemination of views, opinions and discussions about children educated by Artemis Education and Artemis Education Schools, policies and practices and those employed by the group.