

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEDIA POLICY

Updated August 2022

It is important that a consistent approach to dealing with the media be followed by all staff at all times. This will ensure that good stories are properly publicised and potentially damaging stories are minimised.

To ensure that the school's corporate image is protected and enhanced in the media, the following procedures should be followed.

1. If the story is a positive story, the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications should be informed, and he/she will ensure that a press release is issued to the relevant media.
2. If the story offers an opportunity for a photograph, the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications will either take the photograph, or will notify the press to send a photographer to cover the story.
3. Although staff can take photographs for publicity purposes, staff should not issue photographs directly to the media.
4. In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and subsequent GDPR changes, parental approval must be gained for publishing photographs and information about a pupil's activities and achievements. The Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications must maintain a list of those pupils for whom approval has been refused.
5. Stories are sent out to the media with the approval of the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications and, in the final stages, the Head (or Deputy Head where appropriate).
6. Any general enquiries from the media should be forwarded onto the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications.

DEALING WITH ADVERSE PUBLICITY

It may be necessary to field press interest in a story that portrays the school in a negative light. It may also be necessary to deal with an unexpected press story brought about by a crisis that concerns the school, its staff, or pupils. In all such cases, the following procedures must be followed.

1. No comment should be made to the press without the authority of the Head, or Deputy Head.
2. The Head, or one of the Deputy Heads, if necessary, should brief the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications as soon as possible.
3. Individuals involved should notify the Head and the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications of all relevant details and facts as soon as possible.
4. The Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications will either brief the press on the details, or will issue a press statement, according to the nature of the story.
5. The contents of the press statement must be approved by the Head teacher.



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6. According to the nature of the story, the press are invited to interview key personnel with the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications present.
7. The Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications will brief all interviewees prior to the press interviews. Interviewees must adhere to the “corporate” line agreed with the Head.
8. All subsequent media enquiries should be passed to the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the GDPR policy and with the staff code of conduct relating to social media use. It should also be considered in line with the acceptable use agreement for all IT at Shrewsbury High School.



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