



Social Media Policy

Rationale:

The purpose of this policy is to set out guiding principles for the acceptable use of social media by the College Advisory Board, students, parents, teachers and non-teaching staff of the College community.

It is also intended as a guide to other members of the College Community such as Volunteers, Contractors and guests of the school.

This policy applies to **students** when students are using any social media at school, at home, during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities (where permitted).

The policy applies to **staff** when they are at school, at home, during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities, when they are acting in their professional role, in all dealings with members of the school community and if they are in any way identifying themselves with the College in their use of social media.

Social Media:

Refers to all social networking sites; such as, but not limited to:

- Facebook,
- LinkedIn,
- YouTube,
- Skype,
- Snap Chat,
- Instagram,
- Twitter,
- WeChatt

Rights and Responsibilities:

Members of the School community are expected to give due respect to the reputation and good reputation of the School.

When using Social Media, our school community is expected to ensure that they:

- Respect the rights and confidentiality of others
- Do not impersonate or falsely represent another person
- Do not bully, intimidate, abuse, harass or threaten others
- Do not make defamatory comments
- Do not use obscene or offensive language towards others
- Do not post content that is hateful, threatening, pornographic or incites violence against others
- Do not harm the reputation and good standing of the school or those within its community
- Do not use criticism to portray a person as socially, mentally, physically or intellectually inferior.

Procedure

A breach of this policy may also involve a breach of other school policies, such as:

- Electronic Communications Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Student Mobile Electronic Devices Policy
- Secondary School Student Acceptable Use of Digital Technologies Agreement

All Breaches of policy will be investigated on a case by case basis by the Principal or their delegate, such as the Deputy Principal or the School Leader.

All reports of cyber bullying and other social networking misuses will be fully investigated.

It is important to note that some online activities are illegal and as such will be reported to the Police. This includes harassment of others and publishing (or in some cases, merely the possession) of inappropriate images.

Students expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on the School's network or any electronic device the student chooses to bring to School.

If there are reasonable grounds to believe that Social Media sites may have inappropriate images on them, or if it is believed that any electronic device may have been used to distribute inappropriate material via social media, the device will be confiscated from the student.

Depending on the suspected nature of the inappropriate content, staff may request the student to open the phone or provide password access to a computer, in the presence of a Senior Member of the college and a member of the IT staff.

A student who has been requested to open a device must comply with this request.

If the student does not comply with the request the device will be kept in the possession of the School until the request has been complied with.

Sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

- the loss of computer privileges,
- detention,
- suspension or
- expulsion from the School.

Students must be aware that in certain circumstances, where a crime has been committed, they may be subject to a criminal investigation by the Police over which the School will have no control.

Staff who breach this policy may be suspended or face loss of employment if the breach adversely affects the good reputation of the School and/or it breaches other policies or legislation regarding bullying and harassment.

Parents/guardians who breach this policy may be asked to withdraw their child from the School, in cases which adversely reflect on the school or cause harm to members of its community.

The purpose of this policy is to set out guiding principles for the acceptable use of social media by staff employed at the school, along with protocols for using the internet in the classroom. The policy addresses the use of social media sites in student learning activities and in teacher and student relationships. The policy also differentiates between online sites available for learning and personal social networking sites. Online sites available for learning are directly related to achieving School curriculum outcomes.

Personal social networking sites are centred on an individual rather than a group and include Facebook, Snap Chat and other related sites. These types of sites are used primarily for sharing personal information such as photos, recordings, updates and chat.

Guiding Principles:

1. Online behaviour should at all times reflect the College's core values (integrity, excellence, compassion and justice) and a respect for the dignity of each person, in keeping with the Catholic ethos of the College.
2. All College protocol and policy documents must always be observed.
3. Staff and student online interaction must only occur in an educational context.
4. Staff and students must behave in an ethical manner when interacting and using online sites available for learning.
5. Staff should familiarise themselves with the support provided in school for appropriate use of social media.

Policy:

1. Staff are encouraged to use online sites available for learning with their students in order to achieve educational outcomes.
2. When using online sites available for learning, consideration must always be given to the age and developmental needs of the students.
3. Staff must ensure that they prepare students to act in accordance with the guiding principles before using online sites available for learning.
4. The use of any blocked online sites for learning must be approved/authorised by the IT Manager,
5. Parental or guardian permission must be obtained for any online sites available for learning which involve community networking.
6. Students must not falsify their age or provide any misleading information to register on any site for educational purposes.
7. Staff must respect students' rights to privacy when posting comments, marks or work online.
8. The learning activity must not be linked back to a student's own personal social networking page.
9. Social networking sites such as Facebook must not be used by staff as learning tools for students.
10. Always discuss any use of online sites for learning which involve community networking with the IT Manager prior to use
11. If a site is not approved for use, you **MUST** obtain permission from the IT Manger to have this site approved for student use (Not all sites will be approved)
12. Clearly communicate to students their responsibility for appropriate interaction with others and suitable content posting online.
13. Never post staff photographs or other identifying photographs online without permission.
14. Approved IT staff are required to monitor sites frequently and actively review the content.
15. Where using internet sites for research or showing video clips (such as You-Tube), all sites to be browsed or video clips should be checked beforehand to ensure all material encountered is acceptable and age-appropriate and approved by the IT Manager.

Staff are required to educate students using social media of any kind to:

- Respect themselves and others when publishing or communicating online.
- Keep communication channels transparent and supervised by adults.
- Create a sensible/plain username or identity.
- Keep personal information private.
- Not share usernames and passwords.
- Report any attacks or inappropriate content directed at them

Staff Personal Social Network Pages

- Social networking sites such as Facebook must not be used by staff as a platform for learning activities with students.
- Staff are not permitted to accept students as 'friends' on their own social network sites or interact with students on social networking sites.
- Staff are advised to use professional discretion before accepting ex-students or parents of current students as friends.
- Staff also need to consider carefully any on-line interaction with family members who may have school connections.
- Staff must not discuss students or colleagues or publicly criticise school policies or personnel on social networking sites.
- Staff must not post images that include students on social networking sites.
- Appropriate professional standards are required by all college staff.

Version 1
Date Created: 13/03/21
Created By: Susan Carroll
Date to be Reviewed: 13/03/2022
Reviewed by: