Appropriate Use of Social Media Policy and Procedures

Rationale

The school recognises that the internet, mobile phones and social media can provide valuable opportunities for communication, learning and connection. Social media can also cause harm to individuals, groups and the broader school community when used inappropriately. The school expects all members of the school community to use social media in ways that protect student learning, wellbeing, privacy and the reputation of others.

Purpose

This policy provides guidance for parents, carers, students and community members about appropriate use of social media in matters connected to the school. It also outlines how concerns about online content should be raised and managed.

Scope

This policy applies to social media use by parents, carers, students and community members where that use:

- refers to the school, staff, students or families
- affects student learning, wellbeing, safety or inclusion
- affects the reputation, privacy or cultural safety of members of the school community
- involves school-related events, activities, images or communications.

Principles of appropriate use

All members of the school community are expected to:

- communicate respectfully and constructively
- avoid posting content that is offensive, threatening, defamatory, harassing or discriminatory
- avoid identifying students, staff or families without appropriate consent
- protect the privacy of others, including in photos, videos and comments
- raise complaints, concerns or enquiries directly with the school rather than through public social media channels
- model safe and responsible online behaviour for children and young people.

Age restrictions on social media accounts

From 10 December 2025, Australian law prevents young people under 16 years of age from creating or maintaining accounts on specified social media platforms. Children under 16 years may still be able to access publicly available content that does not require an account.

The school expects parents and carers to be aware of these age restrictions and to support their children to comply with them. Where school staff become aware of concerns relating to student safety or possible non-compliance that affects student wellbeing or the school community, the matter may be addressed through the school's student wellbeing, behaviour or safeguarding processes.

Age-restricted platforms identified in the material provided include:

Facebook; Instagram; Kick; Reddit; Snapchat; Threads; TikTok; Twitch; X; YouTube. Other platforms with similar features may also be covered.

Guidance for parents and carers

Parents and carers play an important role in supervising and guiding their child's online behaviour. Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- monitor their child's access to social media and online platforms at home
- discuss safe, respectful and lawful online behaviour
- consider whether content is relevant, positive and helpful before posting
- avoid posting material that names or identifies other students without consent
- avoid discussing school complaints or disputes on public platforms
- contact the school directly if they have a compliment, complaint or enquiry.

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Responding to inappropriate online content

If a parent, carer or community member encounters concerning online content connected to the school community, they should:

- refrain from responding in a way that escalates the matter
- keep a record of the content, such as a screenshot or copy, where appropriate
- if the content is explicit, pornographic or exploitative of minors, keep a record of the URL only and do not print or share the material
- report the matter to the platform provider and block the offending user where appropriate
- contact the school principal if the content involves the school, affects a child's learning, or affects the school community
- contact police where there are immediate safety concerns or potentially criminal matters.

Privacy and images

Before posting photos or videos online, members of the school community should consider whether other children or adults appear in the background and whether consent has been obtained where needed. Naming or tagging students online should be avoided unless appropriate permission has been given.

Possible consequences

Inappropriate online behaviour may have school, civil or criminal consequences. Serious matters may be referred to police or other relevant authorities where required.