

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



PREAMBLE

St Columba College is an R-12 Anglican and Catholic College which seeks to establish a culture of respect, transparency, trust and integrity in all aspects of College life. As a Christian organisation we seek to model to our students love of neighbour and self, expecting our students, parents and staff to use social media in a way that promotes our values.

The College recognises that all communication by staff with past and present students complies with the *Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people : guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings* document and the St Columba College *ICT Acceptable Use Policy*.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

St Columba College recognises and embraces the multimedia platforms provided by contemporary communication tools including social media, and advocates their appropriate use in an educational environment. Social media may be defined as any form of digital, interactive online publication or presence including but not limited to, social networks, forums, blogs and wikis. Examples include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, educational forums and wikis.

1. Goal

To provide a safe and respectful digital environment for all persons covered by this policy.

2. Aims

- 2.1 To inform families, students, staff, volunteers and contractors of College regulations relating to social media use at St Columba College;
- 2.2 To promote respectful relationships;
- 2.3 To ensure the best possible duty of care and protection for all students.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all students, staff, volunteers and contractors working within or for St Columba College who use a social media platform in a professional or personal capacity or through their learning relationship with peers or colleagues;
- 3.2 Staff will be held accountable for their actions inside and outside of school hours where their actions have a negative impact on the wellbeing of St Columba College students or colleagues at the College;
- 3.3 Students will be held accountable for their actions inside and outside of school hours where their actions have a negative impact on the wellbeing of other St Columba College students or staff of the College. In addressing inappropriate social media behaviours, the existing St Columba College Behaviour Management Policy will apply.



4. Role of the Executive Principal

- 4.1 Be responsible for the total oversight of this Policy and procedures;
- 4.2 Take responsibility for final decision making on the outcomes of inappropriate use of social media;
- 4.3 Ensure that appropriate structures exist to achieve the aims of this Policy;
- 4.4 Initiate regular reviews of the procedures and guidelines that support this Policy;
- 4.5 Provide support for Heads of School and other key leaders within the College structure in implementing this Policy;
- 4.6 Provide relevant training to students and staff in the use of social media;
- 4.7 Ensure protective practices are in place to safeguard students and staff;
- 4.8 Provide structures for staff and students to identify and report offensive online material or behaviour;
- 4.9 Act quickly to seek remedy for issues when they arise and support staff and students through these processes;
- 4.10 Ensure that IT access has appropriate safeguards in place to protect students.

5. Role of the Heads of School

- 5.1 Advise the Executive Principal of any instances of inappropriate use of social media;
- 5.2 Advise and support staff of the appropriate course of action when dealing with social media concerns;
- 5.3 Be responsible for the overall safety of all students, staff and volunteers within their Sub School;
- 5.4 Train and advise Senior Leaders and teachers of their responsibilities in relation to social media and ensure that social media interactions with students and staff are appropriate;
- 5.5 Keep detailed records of all breaches of social media protocols;
- 5.6 Liaise with parents to ensure that excellent communication is a feature of supporting the resolution of social media issues.

6. Role of Staff

- 6.1 As staff members of St Columba College you must understand and nurture your professional public forum and exercise responsible use of social media in your personal and professional life;
- 6.2 At all times staff must comply with the guidelines outlined in the *Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people : guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings* document;
- 6.3 Maintain a positive online presence and protect their online identity;
- 6.4 Ensure all material published is respectful of all individuals and the employer - St Columba College;
- 6.5 Ensure that published material does not contain 'inappropriate, unlawful or offensive content.'



- 6.6 Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading;
- 6.7 Ensure all information posted or commented upon is appropriate to the individual's area of expertise and authority, and does not breach any confidentiality guidelines;
- 6.8 It is not appropriate to use material connected to your professional work on your personal site;
- 6.9 Work in a positive manner with the parent community, seeking to build relationships which support positive student learning;
- 6.10 Keep the Head of School/Executive Principal informed about breaches of social media protocols.
- 6.11 Refer all inappropriate social media concerns to Heads of Section for record keepings and appropriate action;
- 6.12 Ensure approval is granted for any classroom led social media activity from the Head of School.

7. Role of Students

- 7.1 Be aware of and follow the ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Social Media Policy of the College;
- 7.2 Avoid any involvement with digital material or activities that could put at risk personal safety, or the privacy, safety or security of the school or other members of the College community;
- 7.3 Seek support if you become aware of inappropriate use of social media or digital material;
- 7.4 Ensure that published material does not contain 'inappropriate content' and is not offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, or is otherwise unlawful.

8. Role of Parents

- 8.1 Support this Policy with its guidelines and procedures;
- 8.2 Maintain open and supportive levels of communication with teachers and other College staff when addressing issues;
- 8.3 Use appropriate channels of communication in resolving all issues;
- 8.4 Seek to model respectful relationships in all dealings with College staff, parents and students.

9. Examples of Inappropriate Content in Social Media

Inappropriate content may include, but is not limited to:

- 9.1 Pornographic material/ images;
- 9.2 Abusive, offensive language or threats;
- 9.3 Bullying, harassing, defamatory comments;
- 9.4 Offensive comments regarding race, religious sensitivity, sexual orientation, physical characteristics, gender, ability, disability, and economic status;
- 9.5 Personal and/or cultural attacks or insults;
- 9.6 Content that promotes hate of any kind;
- 9.7 Libellous or defamatory comments;

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- 9.8 Unauthorised copyright material;
- 9.9 Impersonating or creating an alias by using another person's online profile to access social networking;
- 9.10 Content that is detrimental in any way.

10. Staff Procedures for Addressing Inappropriate Use of Social Media

When making or receiving a complaint regarding alleged inappropriate use of Social Media

Staff will

- Speak with their Line Report Manager or
- Speak with the Head of School (Teacher) or the Business Manager (Educational Support Officer) or
- Speak directly with the Executive Principal and
- Bring all documenting evidence of the complaint, i.e. print out of incident.

The Executive Principal will

- Advise a staff member or members if they have been inappropriately named on a Social Media site;
- Initiate any investigations as deemed appropriate;
- Advise staff member of outcomes of the investigation as appropriate;
- Formalise appropriate responses;
- Initiate any procedures regarding staff misconduct as per the policy and procedures for dealing with issues of misconduct.