

# St. Therese's School, Essendon

## Social Media Policy - Students and Parents

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### Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to encourage acceptable and beneficial use of social media by students and parents of St. Therese's School. It is recognised that most people may use or interact with social media in their day to day lives.

There is great potential for the use of social media in school communities in terms of educational outcomes and as a means of communication.

However, students and parents also need to understand the expectations of the School when using social media in an educational or personal capacity as there are also risks that must be appropriately managed.

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### Social Media Risks

The following are some of the major risks associated with the use of social media:

- reputational damage to organisations and people;
  - disclosure of confidential information and breach of privacy laws;
  - posting of offensive, bullying, harassing, and discriminatory material;
  - misuse of intellectual property and breach of copyright laws
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### What is Social Media?

Social media is any form of online or web-based publication, forum or presence that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, forums, discussion boards, chat rooms, wikis etc.

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### Guiding Expectations

It is expected that parents/guardians adhere to the following expectations:

- Not posting photos, videos or comments that include other children at the school
- Not using social media on their own devices while on school premises
- Not accessing social media while helping at school or on school visits
- Raising queries, concerns and complaints directly with the school rather than posting them on social media – whether on their own pages, in closed groups (e.g. groups set up for school parents to communicate with each other) or on the school's pages
- Not posting anything malicious about the school or any member of the school community.

It is expected that students adhere to the following expectations:

- Not join any social networking sites if they are below the permitted age (13 for most sites including Facebook and Instagram)
- Tell their parents/guardians if they are using the sites, and when they are online
- Be aware how to report abuse and inappropriate content
- Not access social media on school devices, or on their own devices while they're at school
- Not make inappropriate comments (including in private messages) about the school, teachers or other students.

As a school community we must recognise:

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- online behaviour should at all times demonstrate respect for the dignity of each person;
- the need to behave in an ethical manner when using social media (even for personal communication) as those communications can reflect on our role at the School and must be consistent with the Catholic beliefs and ethos of the School and professional expectations and standards;
- adults ability to serve as a positive role model for students and as a representative of the School; and
- social media activities may be visible to current, past or prospective staff, students and parents.

### Further Reading

For further information on social media within a school community, see:

- Australian Government - eSafety Commissioner: **Photos, videos and social media**
  - <https://www.esafety.gov.au/education-resources/iparent/staying-safe/photos-videos-and-social-media>
- Victorian State Government - **Social Media & Your School**
  - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/bullystoppers/parentsocialmediaschoolcommunity.pdf>

### Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed as part of a cyclical process in accordance with the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

### References

This policy has been constructed with reference to:

- Catholic Education Office Melbourne - Social Media Policy (2018)
- *The School Run* - Social Media Policies (2018)

### Document Control

Version	Author	Purpose/Change	Date
0.1	Various STS L'ship Members	Initial policy drafting	Pre 2018
0.2	D. Parry	Various updates throughout policy	Mid 2018
1.0	STS Leadership Team	Policy reviewed	Mid 2019