

SACRED HEART PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY (PARENTS)

Version Number: 2

Approval by: Education Board

Responsible Officers:

Education Board

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage acceptable and beneficial use of social media by parents/carers at Sacred Heart Primary School (the school). It is recognised that most parents may use or interact with social media.

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, parents also need to understand the school's expectations when using social media, as there are risks that must be appropriately managed.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the *Safeguarding Children and Young People, Code of Conduct* (refer to Appendix 1).

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, LinkedIn, Instagram, blogs, forums, discussion boards, chat rooms, Wikis, Twitter, vodcasts, podcasts and YouTube.

Social Media Risks

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

- reputational damage to organisations and people, including falsely representing or impersonating another person;
- disclosure of confidential information and breach of privacy laws;
- posting of offensive, bullying, harassing, and discriminatory material; and
- misuse of intellectual property and breach of copyright laws.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Parents must recognise:

- that 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; and
- their ability to serve as a positive role model for students.

If you have a concern about any online posts related to the school, report it to the school principal. A social media incident report will be initiated and documented.

3. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

General use

It is recognised that parents may use social media. However, it is also recognised that such use may impact on the relationship with the school and the school community (other families etc).

Accordingly, parents using social media must:

- not bring the school into disrepute; and
- ensure steps are taken to make sure friends, family and other acquaintances are aware of the need to use discretion when they post images or information about other children on their own social media forums.

Use of Photos

During a school activity, any photographs taken of Sacred Heart children cannot be posted on social media. Activities include excursions, concerts, camps and sports days.

As a courtesy, permission must be sought from other parents before posting any photos of Sacred Heart children taken in a social environment or during after school sports activities.

Social Media Groups

Closed social media groups on forums, including Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, cannot include the school's name, unless permission has been sought from the principal. These groups include Sacred Heart sports team and year level groups.

4. SECURITY, PRIVACY and ACCESS

To avoid breaching this policy, it is recommended that users should:

- ensure the privacy settings of their social media profiles are appropriately set. For example, Facebook accounts could be set to 'only friends', rather than 'friends of friends' or 'networks and friends'. This restriction limits your content to those known to you rather than a larger group of unknown people.
- recognise that even if they implement the maximum security settings for their social media profiles, the security settings on social media forums cannot guarantee that communications placed online do not become more publicly available than was intended. You should always assume that posts or communications online may become public.

5. CONSEQUENCES OF POLICY BREACH

Non-compliance with this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action. Depending on the seriousness of the circumstances, disciplinary action can affect the enrolment process.

6. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every two years to take into account any new technologies, legislation, expectations or practices.

APPENDIX 1

Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct Sacred Heart Primary School, Croydon July, 2016

"Central to the mission of Sacred Heart is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially."

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at **Sacred Heart Primary School** against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members at **Sacred Heart Primary School** are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe Child Safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's child safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times.
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse as stated in "Protect - Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools".
- treating everyone in the school community with respect.
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child.
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification).
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination).
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities).
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership in conjunction with the Mandatory Reporting policy.
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*.
- reporting any child safety concerns to the school's leadership (or child safety officer if the school has appointed someone to this role).
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe.
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offense by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children, except for circumstances as outlined in Personal Learning Plans and/or behaviour management plans).
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps).
- put children at risk of abuse.
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- engage in open discussions of a mature/adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities).
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children.
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children.
- discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability.
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school leadership's knowledge and/or consent (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate. Refer to the Child Safe Policy for procedures regarding consent.
- have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary eg by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work) . Refer to the Social Media Policy for guidelines.
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account with students
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses with students.
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardian.
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- staff will not consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.