

# Social Media Use to Support Student Learning Policy

*(Ratified by School Council: March 2024)*

## 1. Rationale

- a) Social media provides students and teachers with unprecedented opportunities to connect and collaborate with individuals, organisations and groups world-wide. Enhancing their global identity and allowing them to connect their learning to real world applications while giving/receiving authentic feedback to/from a real audience.
- b) The use of social media carries with its responsibilities. Users must, at all times, must remember that when using social media, they are using it for educational purposes alone.

## 2. Purpose

- a) To provide a practical guide to support Glen Waverley Primary School students and employees to understand and meet the obligations and recommended standards of behaviour set out within existing instruments, policies and guidelines when using social media tools for personal and professional purposes.
- b) Teachers, students and parents are increasingly using digital technologies for professional purposes (i.e., teaching and learning) and personal purposes (i.e., communicating, creating and socialising) thus challenging the traditional concepts of learning in a school setting and that of privacy.
- c) Department of Education (DE) employees in schools who are interested in using social media tools to engage children and young people must have a clear educational context to support the teaching and learning.
- d) Social media must be used in a responsible and professional manner at all times. Social media are not to be used for inappropriate activities for example, delivery of adult content, fraud, defamation, breach of copyright, unlawful discrimination or vilification, harassment of any form, cyber bullying, stalking, privacy violations and illegal activity, including illegal peer-to-peer file sharing.

### 3. **Definition of Social Media**

In the context of this policy, social media is the term used for internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information among people. Additional social media tools may include (although are not limited to):

- Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Myspace, Edmodo)
- Video and photo sharing websites (e.g., Flickr, Youtube)
- Blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs/ micro-blogs (e.g., X (formally Twitter))
- Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g., Google groups, Whirlpool)
- Wikis (e.g., Wikipedia, PB Works, WordPress)
- Vodcasts and podcasts
- Video conferences and web conferences
- Email and instant messaging
- All other emerging electronic/digital communication applications
- Instant messaging (e.g., WhatsApp, Kids Messenger)

Social media functions may be included as part of a larger learning platform (e.g., GSuite for Education, Microsoft 365).

### 4. **Aims**

- a. To assist and improve teaching and learning by increasing access to worldwide and current information.
- b. To improve students' digital literacy.
- c. To develop skills in safe and appropriate internet usage.

### 5. **Guidelines and Implementation**

Social media may be used by staff to support student learning if there is an appropriate educational purpose – this means that social media use:

- is directly related to achieving the learning outcomes defined in Victorian curriculum frameworks, and
- offers benefits for student learning that may not be able to be met in face-to-face contexts or through the use of other technologies.

Social media use must be planned and be reflected in school-based curriculum documents (for example, a learning area/level plan, a unit of work/learning sequence).

Social media use must be approved by the school principal or their nominee(s). Nominees may include a curriculum or level leader who approves social media use when they review curriculum planning documents as part of their usual practice.

Staff use of social media to support student learning must be consistent with the professional conduct, personal conduct and professional competence expected of them

by their colleagues and the community, as outlined in any relevant codes of conducts, or local school or department policies, including Part 11 of Ministerial Order 1038 (Conduct and Duties), the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees, the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct and, for teachers, the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct.

Social media use must in all cases comply with relevant legislation and department policies, including in relation to staff conduct, privacy, copyright, information security and child safety. This includes:

- ensuring that there is parent/carer notification or consent to their child's use of social media, and that social media use is age-appropriate (for example, platforms/applications that are rated 13+ are not used with primary-school-aged children) – refer to Parent/carer notification or consent for student use of social media, below, for further information.
- ensuring that material sourced or created by staff that includes non-original or third-party content copied under licences or exceptions that apply to education institutions are not visible to the public.

Where possible, social media accounts that support student learning must use department/school credentialing (for example, department/school email address), rather than personal credentialing (for example, home email address).

If social media platforms/applications only allow users to have one personal account (i.e. there is no mechanism for staff or students to use department/school credentialing). Staff should avoid using such platforms/applications if an alternative platform/application can be used in its place that allows users to create a social media account with department/school credentialing.

Staff must not:

- 'friend' or accept a 'friend' request from a student on/using a personal social media account.
- 'follow' a student on/using a personal social media account.

unless it is objectively appropriate, for example where the student is also a family member of the staff member.

The principal is responsible for determining what is objectively appropriate in such circumstances, but may seek advice from Employee Conduct Branch on (03) 7022 0005 or [employee.conduct@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:employee.conduct@education.vic.gov.au)

If a staff member becomes aware that a student at the school is 'following' them on a personal social media account (where 'following' an account does not require permission from the account holder), the staff member must ask the student to 'unfollow' them and notify the school and/or parent/carer if the student does not do so.

In supporting student learning, staff should avoid using public social media platforms/applications (for example, Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok), unless there is a specific educational need for the use of an online public forum.

Where the platform/application allows it, at least 2 staff members should have administrative rights to any social media page or group. Each administrator should have their own login to the platform. Where the platform does not allow multiple individual administrators, and a shared administrative login is required, the password must be changed when an administrator leaves the role and/or platform/application. If a staff member leaves the school (e.g. moves to another school or leaves the profession), administrative rights to the account must be removed for that staff member or the account deleted. See EduPass – Identity and Access Management in Schools for further information.

Students should be actively involved in the decisions about which social media websites and applications are used, and how they are used. This acknowledges that students have unique perspectives on learning, teaching, and schooling, and should have the opportunity to actively shape their own education.

## **6. Appropriate Use at School**

- a. The primary purpose of social media in the classroom is to provide students with additional tools which promote personalised and differentiated student-centric learning.
- b. At no time during school hours can a student use social media in a way that is not directly related to their learning task. This is to be strictly adhered to and appropriate use will be heavily monitored by teachers (in the classroom and during specialist sessions). For the purpose of appropriate use, school hours are considered to commence when the student enters the school grounds and cease once the student exits the school grounds.
- c. Students that use social media inappropriately during school time may have access to the school's network and computers revoked in accordance with the Digital Learning and Cyber bullying Policy. If inappropriate behaviour persists, parents will be contacted, and consequences implemented that are in line with the school's Student Management and Behaviour Guidelines.
- d. Students are to seek permission from the teacher prior to posting images, video or sound recording onto social media.

## **7. Violation of Acceptable Use of Social Media**

If a *staff member* is found to be misusing social media in any manner, then this matter will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Principal and in accordance with DE guidelines.

If a *student* is found to be misusing social media in any manner, then this matter will be handled on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the 'Student Acceptable Use of Digital Learning Agreement' and/or the 'iPad User Agreement'.

If a *visitor or volunteer* within the school is found to be misusing social media in any manner, they will be referred to the Principal and directed to vacate the school

premises. Further action as warranted by the Principal may be taken on a case-by-case basis.

## **8. The Digital Learning Working Group (Curriculum Team)**

The Digital Learning Working Group will be formed each year and it will consist of at least five members of the teaching staff, ranging from Foundation to Year Six and include a member of the Specialist Teaching Team. The Team Leader may also be a member of the School Executive Team. The Digital Learning Vertical Team will meet on a regular basis to discuss curriculum matters and monitor progress against goals outlined in the School Strategic Plan (SSP) and the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP).

## **9. Budget Expenditure**

The Digital Learning Sub-Program Budget is to be managed by the Digital Learning Working Group Leader. The amount of funds available may vary in accordance with whole school priorities and the distribution of funds as outlined in the annual Student Resource Package, Indicative Budget and Confirmed Budget.

## **10. Related Legislation and Guidelines**

Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Resources

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/infrastructure/pages/acceptableuse.aspx>

ICT Infrastructure Backup and Recovery – Schools

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/ict-infrastructure-backup-recovery/policy>

ICT Software in Schools – Risk Assessment

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/ict-software-schools-risk-assessment/policy>

ICT Support for Schools

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/ict-support-schools/policy>

E-Smart Schools

<https://www.alannahandmadeline.org.au/what-we-do/prevention-programs/esmart/esmart-schools>

Council of International Schools (CIS)

<http://www.cois.org/>

Bully Stoppers

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/socialmedia.aspx>

## **11. RELATED POLICIES**

Curriculum Policy

Parent Complaints Policy

ICT as a Teaching and Learning Tool Policy

1:1 iPad Acceptable Use Agreement

ICT Usage and Cyber bullying Policy

Multimedia Resources Policy

**12. POLICY EVALUATION**

Evaluation will be conducted biannually by the Digital Learning Working Group.

**13. DUE DATE FOR REVIEW**

Due for review in March 2026.