

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

“The internet can help us to be better citizens but access to digital networks entails a responsibility for our neighbour whom we do not see but who is nonetheless real and has a dignity which must be respected...”

The internet can be used wisely to build a society which is healthy and open to sharing,”
-Pope Francis, 2016

1 RATIONALE

At Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School, we believe that everyone in our community has a right to be treated respectfully and to feel safe in every environment. All members of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to protect members of the school community from any harm that could have been foreseen, including those that may be encountered within the online learning environment.

Due to the significant changes in our educational, social and technological contexts, social media is now a part of our daily lives. As a member of our school community it is important to consider the contributions that are made to social media. The purpose of the Social Media Policy is to ensure that all members of the Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School community are aware of the responsible use of social media and to ensure the online safety of the school community, thus, aiming to prevent the misuse of social media.

Social media may include (but are not limited to):

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+)
- Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube, Picasa)
- Blogs (work and personal interests)
- Micro-blogs (e.g. Twitter)
- Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups)
- Shared online spaces (e.g. Wikis, Nings, Google Apps)
- Video and Web Conferences (e.g. Skype, Google Hangouts, Jabber)
- Email and instant messaging
- All other emerging electronic/digital communication applications.
- Sharing economy websites (Rover, Gumtree)
- Educational APPS (Seesaw)

2 GOALS

The Social Media Policy aims to:

- Build a positive school community
- Enact Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School's values in the virtual world of social media
- Comply with Victorian Legislation related to social media use
- Create clear and respectful boundaries around the use of social media in relation to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School and anyone associated with the school
- Enact Occupational Health and Safety measures to ensure that all members of the school community are not victimised or bullied
- Inform and support to all staff as they engage in social media for:
 - official use
 - professional use
 - personal use

3 IMPLEMENTATION

The Social Media Policy will be made available to all staff and parents/ guardians.

The Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School Social Media-Parent/Guardian Agreement will be part presented to parents/guardians as part of the enrolment procedure and the Principal will dialogue with the new parents/guardians to ensure that the purpose of the agreement is understood and signed by the parents/guardians. The signed agreement will be kept at school.

The school will remind the parents/guardians of their duties relating to the Social Media Agreement annually at the beginning of the school year.

The school will organise Social Media Parent/Guardian Information opportunities biennially so that we build shared understandings and the purpose of this policy is clearly understood by all members of our school community.

Employees must at all times comply with state and federal laws relating to the use of communication devices. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

The school expects members of the Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School community:

- To set and maintain legal and high ethical standards in their use of social networking
- To only post positive communications that help build and support the school community
- To act in an honest, respectful, and considerate manner when online that is in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- Agreeing to and signing the Social Media Agreement
- Not posting anything about the school or its members on Social Media without authorised consent
- Enacting the Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School values when contributing to Social Media about Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School and anyone associated with the school
- Creating a safe, secure and positive school environment for all members of our school community both in the real and online/ virtual spaces
- Seeking face to face dialogue with their child's Teacher, School Curriculum Leaders, Deputy Principal and Principal about any areas of school life that need clarification or where there is a difference of opinion instead of using social media
- Teaching their child/children how to engage in face to face dialogue as a means to solving issues instead of using social media
- Being a positive role model to their child/children in relation to Social Media use
- Only taking photos/ video of their own child during school events and not sharing the photo on social media if another child is captured in the image.

Staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to the Social Media Policy
- Creating a safe, secure and positive school environment for all members of our school community both in the real and virtual spaces
- Providing parents/guardians with diverse opportunities to communicate directly to them about any aspect of school life that need clarification or where there is a difference of opinion instead of through social media
- Enacting Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School values when contributing to social media about Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish Primary School and anyone associated with the school.
- The School will send a reminder to parents via the Newsletter and the school website of their responsibilities relating to the social media.

5 EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed regularly (biennially) and as part of the school's review cycle.

6 FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parents/Guardians need to be familiar with the Social Media Policy and endorse the Social Media-Parent/Guardian Agreement with their signature when enrolling their child. Parents/Guardians will be encouraged to attend social media information nights that the school arranges.

7 REFERENCE

Guidelines for incorporating Social media into Acceptable Use Policies, CECV, January 2014

Social Media Policy, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, 13 April 2015

Catholic Herald, 25 January 2016

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2016/01/25/pope-francis-text-messages-and-social-media-are-a-gift-from-god/>

Some children are subject to a Family Court Order prohibiting publication in any form of their image and if those orders are breached it can mean a significant penalty for those involved.