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1. Social Media Policy

The purpose of this policy is to encourage acceptable and beneficial use of social media by staff employed at Saint Spyridon College, Adelaide. It is recognised that most employees may use or interact with social media at work and in a personal context.

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

With the rapid expansion of social media, Saint Spyridon College, Adelaide recognises the need to have a policy for employees who use social media, either as part of their job, or in a personal capacity, to give guidance as to the School’s expectations regarding their behaviour on social media and the workplace risks that must be appropriately managed.

1. Social Media Risks

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

* reputational damage to the School and individuals;
* 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; and
* breaching accepted child protection practices in terms of appropriate communication with students.

1. Definition of Social Media

Online social media enables easier communication via the internet and the sharing of information and resources in an interactive way. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications. For the purposes of this policy, social media includes social networking.

Social networking is a service, platform, or site that focuses on building and reflecting of [social relations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_relation). Social network services include, but are not limited to, blogs, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn.

1. Guiding Principles

Employees must recognise:

* 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 their role at the School and must be consistent with the beliefs and ethos of the School and professional expectations and standards;
* their ability to serve as a positive role model for students and as a representative of the School is a critical aspect of their employment; and
* social media activities may be visible to current, past or prospective staff, students and parents.

*“Golden rules”:* Employees will avoid the potential of breaching this policy and compromising the professional expectations of them at the School if they do not use personal social media forums to:

* post any materialabout the School (e.g. students, parents, policies, employees etc); or
* post inappropriate material about themselves; or
* make inappropriate contact with members of the school community.

1. Work Related use of Social Media

The use of online learning communities by employees for educational purposes must be in accordance with other relevant School policies and procedures relating to online learning.

When using social media for work related purposes, employees must:

* Disclose they are a Saint Spyridon College, Adelaide employee.
* Disclose only publicly available information. If unsure this should be referred to the Principal.
* Obtain the consent of the Principal before:
  + posting any material that may be perceived as being made “on behalf” of the School (eg. any commentary, School information, photographs of the School, students, staff or other identifying images); and
  + using the School’s logo, trademarks, official photographs or any other intellectual property of proprietary materials; and

not post inappropriate material or commentary that breaches other policies outlining expected behaviours of employees at the School.

If there could be reasonable concerns that posting any material could be considered inappropriate (eg. in light of potential privacy or copyright obligations), then an employee must first raise those concerns with the Principal before posting the material.

Employees must ensure that:

* any content published is factually accurate and complies with relevant School policies;
* they do not knowingly use the identity of another School staff member;
* they do not bring the reputation or brand of the School into disrepute;
* they are not the first to make a Saint Spyridon College, Adelaide announcement unless they have received the appropriate clearances from the Principal; and
* they do not imply that they are in any way authorised to speak on the School’s behalf.

If offering a personal perspective on a School matter, the content should state this is a personal opinion and it should not cause damage to Saint Spyridon College, Adelaide or its commercial interests.

1. Personal use of Social Media

It is recognised that employees may use social media in their personal life. However, it is also recognised that such use may impact on the employment relationship.

There are circumstances in which inappropriate use outside the workplace can breach the duties an employee has to Saint Spyridon College, Adelaide. These duties include obeying lawful commands of the School and its management, to display due care and skill in the performance of work, of confidentiality, of fidelity and not to commit misconduct.

Whether the inappropriate use breaches these duties or not depends on the actual conduct, the circumstances and situation and whether there is a sufficient connection to the employment relationship. In general terms, something can be considered work-related if it is about the School, other employees or other stakeholders such as students, parents and is generally about what the School or another party is or isn’t doing.

Accordingly, employees’ personal use of social media must:

* not bring the School into disrepute or interfere with, or compromise their duties or responsibilities to the School or students;
* comply with other policies of the School and professional standards that outline expected behaviours of employees when posting personal comments that relate to, or can be identified as relating to, School issues; and
* take steps to ensure that friends, family or other acquaintances are aware of the need to use discretion when they post images or information about the employee on their own social media forums.

To avoid potentially breaching this policy or compromising the professional expectations of them as employees at the School, it is recommended that employees’ use of social media not involve connections with the following persons on social media forums (for example, being “friends” on Facebook):

* recent former students (ie. enrolled at the School within a two-year period before connecting); or
* parents of current students;

unless special circumstances exist (eg. a parent is a personal friend or a former student is a relative) and the employee has advised the Principal of the connection and the circumstances.

Students

Employees must NOT connect with students or interact with, or post images of, students on their own private social media forums (for example, employees must not be “friends” with students on Facebook).

An exception to this requirement is when prior approval for the connection has been obtained from the Principal on the basis that an employee and a student will appropriately interact within the valid context of a legitimate purpose (for example, both are family members/relatives or both are members of a community sporting team and interactions are purely for the purpose of participating in that sport).

1. Security, Privacy and Access

To avoid potentially breaching this policy or compromising the professional expectations of them as employees at the School, it is recommended that employees:

* ensure the privacy settings of their social media profiles are appropriately set to avoid putting their privacy at risk; and
* 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 (employees should always assume that posts or communications online may become public).

Employees must understand that the type of security settings used cannot excuse breaches of this policy if the material posted is inappropriate and becomes more publicly available than was intended.

1. Consequences of Breaching this Policy

Employees who are in breach of this policy, or suspected of being in breach of this policy, will be dealt with in accordance with this policy and the normal disciplinary process that applies at Saint Spyridon College, Adelaide. In severe or repeated instances, or where a fundamental breach of the employment contract occurs, termination of the employment contract may occur.

1. Authorisation

This procedure was approved by;

Britta Corones,

Principal

Saint Spyridon College

Adelaide 02/01/2019