Social Media Policy

CONTEXT STATEMENT

Social media is an interactive digital platform for learning and communicating within and between communities and individuals. An online community enables a group of digital users with a shared interest to create, share or consume online content. Social media allows for local and global connections that are immediate, generally open to all and easy to use.

Building a learning community includes being open to new learning, new ways of working and communicating and creating positive learning experiences. Catholic school communities model, teach and learn together in the digital space informed by their commitment to the dignity and worth of each person while building respectful relationships in real time and online.

The goal for school communities in using social media is to enhance learning and communications connections, leave a positive digital footprint, represent their schools well, communicate responsibly and safely, and show respect for others.

UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS, PHILOSOPHY & RATIONALE

We at Samaritan College believe that:

- We seek to establish a culture of respect, transparency, trust and integrity in all aspects of school life. We seek to model our Catholic school values of respect, dignity and justice in the context of current times;
- The use of social media websites and applications by organisations as a means of communicating has grown rapidly over the last few years. Social media is a legitimate tool for aiding communication and enhancing teaching and development;
- The Catholic Education Office endorses and encourages the use of social media;
- This policy aims to raise the opportunities that social media presents for communication and learning. Balancing these with the risks that come with the use of any new technology and consideration of the needs of children, particularly vulnerable children*;
- We are committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for all persons covered by this policy.

PURPOSES / AIMS

PURPOSES:

The purpose of the Samaritan College social media program is to:

- Provide up to date information that is useful for parents and caregivers about current and upcoming events;
- Share with and communicate stories, current events, news and achievements to the community;
- Engage with community members, potential members and other stakeholders providing useful information and resources;
- Enhance communications with community member and others, building relationships.

AIMS:

The Samaritan College Social Media Policy will:

- Inform students, staff, volunteers and contractors of regulations relating to social media use at Samaritan College;
- Promote respectful relationships;
- Ensure the highest level of duty of care for all staff and students.

GUIDELINES & PROCEDURE

The Co-Principals will:

- Be responsible for the total oversight of this policy and procedures;
- Be responsible for the overall safety of all students, staff and volunteers;
- Provide relevant training to students and staff in the use of social media;
- Train and advise staff of their responsibilities in relation to social media and ensure that social media interactions with students and staff are appropriate;
- Ensure protective practices are in place to safeguard students and staff;
- Provide structures for staff and students to identify and report offensive online material or behaviour;
- Take responsibility for final decision making on the outcomes of inappropriate social media use;
- Act quickly to seek remedy for issues when they arise and support staff and students through these processes;
- Ensure that IT access has appropriate safeguards in place to protect students;
- Advise and support staff in the appropriate course of action when dealing with social media concerns;
- Liaise with parents to ensure that appropriate communication is a feature of supporting the resolution of social media issues.

The Staff will:

- Not have current students in their education community as 'friends' on their personal/private sites (as part of the *Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with children and young people* document and Code of Conduct for Catholic School Teachers in SA);
- Maintain a positive online presence and protect their online identity;
- Ensure all material published is respectful of all individuals and the employer, Samaritan College;
- Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading;
- Ensure all information posted or commented upon is appropriate to the individual's area of expertise and authority and does not breach any confidentiality guidelines;
- Work in a positive manner with the parent community, seeking to build relationships which support positive student learning;
- Keep the Co-Principals informed of breaches of social media protocols;
- Keep detailed records of all breaches of social media protocols;
- Remove all inappropriate material as soon as it is found.

The Students will:

- Follow the Information Communication Technology and Electronic Devices Access and Use Policy and Social Media Policy of the college;
- Avoid any involvement with material or activities that could put at risk personal safety, or the privacy, safety or security of the college or other members of the college community;
- Ensure that published material does not contain inappropriate content and is not offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist, or is otherwise unlawful;
- Not engage with college staff directly through social media.

The Parents/Caregivers will:

- Support this policy, guidelines and procedures;
- Maintain open and supportive levels of communication with the Co-Principals and other college staff when addressing issues;
- Use appropriate channels of communication in resolving all issues;
- Seek to model respectful relationships in all dealings with college staff, parents and students.

The College Board will:

- Participate in the development, implementation and review of this policy in accordance with legal requirements and the Church's teachings;
- Support the provision of the necessary budget resources to ensure that appropriate structures exist to achieve the aims of this policy;

DEFINITIONS

Social media:

Social media (sometimes referred to as 'social networking') are online services and tools for publishing, sharing and discussing information. The list of social media types is extensive with new and innovative social media sites being developed almost every day. Staff can determine what social media platform adds value to their particular need.

This list is provided as a guide to the types of social media currently available:

- *Social networking sites*: are websites that allow you to create a personal profile about yourself and then chat and share information with others such as family and friends e.g. Facebook, Edmodo, Myspace, Linkedin, Yammer);
- *Video, audio and photo sharing websites*: are sites that allow you to upload and share videos, sounds and photos which can be viewed/heard by web users the world over e.g. Flickr, YouTube, iTunes U, Vimeo, SoundCloud;
- *Blog:* A blog (short for web log) is a kind of online diary, where you regularly post about your life, your passions, business, news or other interests. It is a way of having your own space in the virtual world e.g. WordPress, Blogger;
- *Microblogging apps:* are websites that post micro-blog like posts to announce what you are currently doing e.g. Twitter, Yammer, Tumblr;
- *Location-based apps (also known as geolocation):* are applications with the capability to detect and record where you and other people are located;
- *Wikis:* are websites where users create, edit and share information about a particular subject or topic e.g. Wikipedia, Wikispaces;
- *Online gaming:* are games played over some form of computer network and are often based around a community of users e.g. Steam;
- *News aggregation:* news aggregators provide a list of the latest news stories published by users from a range of different websites e.g. Digg;
- *Ning:* is an online platform for people and organisations to create custom social networks around specific interests. Ning offers the ability to create an invited, closed, community website with a customised appearance and feel, featuring sets such as forums, blogs, photos and videos;
- *Forums or message boards:* are online discussion sites where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages;
- *Online multiplayer gaming platforms:* are multiplayer video games which are capable of supporting hundreds or thousands of players simultaneously and usually feature at least one persistent 'world' (e.g. World of Warcraft).

* Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children, in the context of this policy, refer to those children whose circumstances and/or personal characteristics place them at increased risk of harm when using social media. This may include children under Court Orders where contact between a child and another person, including a family member, may be unlawful e.g. children under the Guardianship of the Minister, children subject to a Witness Protection Order, or children subject to a Family Court Order.

SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

- CESA Acceptable Use of ICT - Baseline Standard
- CESA Social Media Guidelines
- *Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with children and young people*
- CESA Code of Conduct
- Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner
- Samaritan Privacy and Consent Form

ADMINISTRATION

This policy will be reviewed annually by the College, unless otherwise required.

Review Date: September   2017