



121 Social Media Policy

Part A: Introduction

1. Background

Social media involves the use of internet and web-based communication platforms to provide immediate communication and interaction at any time and location. Social media platforms provide the means for users to express their opinions, comments, ideas and criticisms on any issue. It can be an effective business and social tool through its capacity to engage, inform, educate and interact with the school community, the local community and the global community.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- to inform and guide the way members of the CPPS community interact in their use of social media;
- to protect the safety, wellbeing, integrity and reputation of students, staff, parents and the wider school community in any use of social media.

3. Aims

- To ensure that rules or guidelines of social media websites, programs and applications are observed by the school community.
- To ensure that students are not exposed to inappropriate content or communications that may affect their safety or wellbeing.
- To prevent and avoid damage to the reputation of the school (including staff, students and parents) caused by irresponsible or unauthorised use of social media.
- To encourage appropriate monitoring and supervision of student usage on internet enabled devices outside of school premises.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, students, parents, families and members of the CPPS community and should be read in conjunction with other policies related to behaviour, professional conduct and responsibilities, and use of information and communications technologies. These include school policies (eg AUP, ICT Usage, eSmart) as well as policies issued by external bodies such as DET.

5. Definition

Social media is the creation, sharing and exchange of information through online social interactions and platforms. It includes all social networking sites and platforms. These include, but are not limited to, popular platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google+ and YouTube, as well as blogs, wikis, email, forums, and photo and video sharing websites.

Part B: Policy

6. Standards of Conduct and Behaviour

6.1 CPPS community members are expected to maintain the same high standards of conduct and behaviour online as would be expected in the physical school environment. This includes:

- being impartial and professional;
- behaving with respect and courtesy, and without harassment;
- dealing appropriately with information, and recognising that some information needs to remain confidential;
- being sensitive to the diversity of colleagues, peers, students and the community;
- taking reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest or perceptions thereof;
- protecting the integrity and reputation of CPPS, its staff, students and families;
- complying with applicable laws and legislation, including copyright, intellectual property, privacy, financial disclosure, defamation and other such applicable laws;

- protecting the privacy and security of CPPS, its employees, students, families, partners and suppliers.
- 6.2 All official communication via social media must be authorised by the Principal.
- Only employees authorised by the Principal may create social media identities, profiles or accounts that use the CPPS name, emblem or brand, or are designed to represent the school in any way.
 - Only employees authorised by the Principal may officially represent CPPS in school social media platforms.
- 6.3 Staff and students posting comments on official school communications should observe the standards of conduct and behaviour above (6.1).
- 6.4 CPPS reserves the right to delete posts or comments that are deemed to be defamatory or offensive.

7. Personal Use of Social Media

The school recognises that many individuals make use of social media in their personal lives. This policy does not intend to discourage nor unduly limit any personal expression or online activities.

However, school community members should recognise the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to the school in certain circumstances via the personal use of social media when you can be identified as a school community member. Accordingly, you should comply with this policy to ensure that the risk of such damage is minimised.

7.1 Your Responsibilities

- You are personally responsible for the content published by you, or in your name, in a personal capacity on any form of social media platform.
- Where your comments or profile can identify you as a school community member, you must:
 - only disclose and discuss publicly available information;
 - ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant school policies and the DET Code of Ethics;
 - expressly state on all postings identifying you as a school community member that the stated views are your own and are not those of the school;
 - be polite and respectful to all people you interact with;
 - adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform or website, as well as comply with all copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws.

7.2 You must not:

- post any derogatory or inflammatory comments regarding the school or its staff, students or parents;
- post material that is, or might be construed as, threatening, harassing, bullying or discriminatory towards another school community member;
- post material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful;
- imply that you are authorised to speak as a representative of the school, or give the impression that the views you express are those of the school;
- use the identity or likeness of another school community member;
- use a school email address or any school logos or insignia that may give the impression of official support or endorsement of your personal comment;
- use or disclose any confidential information or personal information obtained in your capacity as a school community member;
- make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the school's reputation or bring it into disrepute.

8. Disciplinary Action

- 8.1 Non-compliance with this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action. Issues will be dealt with by the school Principal on a case by case basis with consideration to the possible damage to other individuals and to the reputation of CPPS. In serious instances, issues may also be referred to the Police for further action if any laws are broken.

8.2 The misuse of social media may be a breach of enrolment conditions, or of employment or contractual obligations. Misconduct, sexual harassment, discrimination or any other unlawful contravention could lead to suspension of enrolment, termination of employment, or legal proceedings.

9. Identification and Reporting of Inappropriate Use

Any inappropriate or unlawful content that may have been published in breach of this policy should be reported to the school Principal.

Additional Advice and Guidelines

Staff, students and parents are expected to show respect to all members of the school community.

When individuals choose to go public with opinions, such as on social media sites or via a blog or personal web site, they are legally responsible for their comments. Individuals can be held personally liable for any comments deemed to be defamatory or derogatory, offensive, proprietary, inaccurate or libellous.

Student Guidelines

When using social media, students are expected to ensure that they:

- read and comply with the terms and conditions of social media sites as many of them have age restrictions for their use (eg Facebook and Instagram are restricted to those 13 years of age and above);
- are aware of what they are posting online as social media sites and applications are public forums;
- are not permitted to join a staff member's areas on social networking sites. If a student attempts to do this, the member of staff is to refuse the student access and inform the Principal. The student's parents will be informed if this happens.
- will not access social networking sites during the school day without permission and supervision from a member of the school teaching staff;
- do not post content that is hateful, threatening, pornographic, or incites violence against others;
- respect the rights and confidentiality of others;
- follow the CPPS Standards of Conduct and Behaviour (section 6 above) when writing online;
- do not impersonate or falsely represent another person;
- remain safe online and never give out personal information. This includes surnames, phone numbers, addresses, dates of birth and photographs;
- do not bully, intimidate abuse, harass or threaten others;
- do not make defamatory comments;
- do not use offensive or threatening language or resort to personal abuse towards other members of the school community;
- do not harm the reputation of CPPS or those within its community
- do not upload video, audio or photographs of any member of the CPPS community (student, parents or staff) without seeking and gaining appropriate permission;
- do not upload any video or photographs of any student where they can be identified as a CPPS student by their uniform or any other means.

Parent Guidelines

Classroom blogs and other social media tools open up communication between students, parents and teachers. This kind of communication and collaboration can have a large impact on student learning. The school encourages parents to participate in such activities when appropriate but requests that parents act responsibly and respectfully at all times, understanding that their conduct not only reflects on the school community, but will be a model for our students as well.

Parents should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Be aware that **many social media sites have age restrictions** that have implications for their children. Parents need to monitor their children's online social media activity, and read the terms and conditions of social media sites and applications their children wish to use. Parents need to be aware that many of them have age restrictions for their use (eg Facebook and Instagram are restricted to those 13 years of age and above).

- Parents need to be aware that they are in breach of terms and conditions if they set up a personal account for their children to use if they knowingly understand that age restrictions apply.
- Be responsible for being aware of and informed about their children's online activity and be proactive in the supervision and guidance of their children taking into account this policy.
- Before uploading photos, audio or video, parents need to seek appropriate permission from any individual involved. This most particularly applies in relation to the privacy of all members of the CPPS community.
- Online postings and conversations are not private. Do not share confidential information, internal school discussions, or specific information about students, staff or other parents.
- Be conscious of the fact that expert advice given is that all users of social media sites should do whatever they can to **not identify any child** by name or associate them with a particular school.
- Parents will not attempt to destroy or harm any information online.
- Parents will not use classroom social media sites for any illegal activity, including violation of data privacy laws.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to read and/or participate in social media activities. Parents should not distribute any information that might be deemed personal about other students participating in social media activities. This includes photographs.
- Parents should not upload or include any information that does not also meet the student guidelines above.
- Parents should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information in regards to the CPPS community and its members.
- Parents assisting with classroom activities should not make use of social media sites while involved in such activities.

Staff and Teacher Guidelines

CPPS expects that all employees exercise sound judgement and common sense when using social media, whether at work, home or elsewhere. Employees using social media in a personal capacity must take due care to ensure that any comments, opinions, photographs or contributions made online are their own, as private citizens, and cannot be interpreted as an official statement or position of CPPS.

Staff should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Staff and student online interaction must occur only in an educational context.
- Staff should not accept students as 'friends' on their own social networking sites or interact with students on social networking sites.
- Staff are advised to NOT accept ex-students or parents of current students as friends on personal social media sites.
- Staff must not discuss students or colleagues or publicly criticise school policies or personnel on social networking sites.
- Plan for the inclusion of cybersafety awareness within the curriculum.
- While staff have permission to post photographs of students to the class blog they do not have permission to post details that would identify any child.
- Staff are personally responsible for all content they publish online. Staff need to be mindful that what they publish will be public for a long time.
- Staff online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration consistent with the standards that apply on school premises and in accordance with the school's values.
- Staff using social media in a personal capacity must take due care to ensure that any comments, opinions, photographs or contributions made online are their own, as private citizens, and cannot be interpreted as an official statement or position of CPPS.
- Staff should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information in regards to the CPPS community and its members.
- Staff should not post any confidential student information when contributing online.
- Staff should visit their profile's security and privacy settings on social networking sites. At a minimum, staff should have all privacy settings set to 'only friends'.

This policy was last ratified by school council in September 2017