



## **WESTGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL- No. 5365**

# **SCHOOL STAFF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

At Westgrove Primary School we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from our School Vision and Values statements as outlined in our Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy.

### **Rationale:**

To provide direction on the acceptable use of social media by; all school staff at Westgrove Primary School. To assist staff to choose appropriate online community sites for use with students, and to maintain professional standards in their own use of social media.

**School staff** means an individual working in a school environment who is:

- (a) directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
- (b) a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary)

Areas addressed include the use of social media sites in student learning activities and in teacher and student relationships, and the differentiation between online community sites and personal social networking sites.

**Online community sites** such as wikis, Office 365 including associated sites and some educational sites are used primarily for collaboration and shared knowledge construction.

**Personal social networking sites** are centred on an individual rather than a group and include Facebook, WhatsApp, Messenger, Instagram and other related sites. Such sites are used primarily for sharing personal information such as photos and updates and cannot be accessed on the school network.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

To provide guidelines that all school staff will understand and abide by. To ensure the competent and responsible use of mainstream social networking sites whilst maintaining their safety, security and privacy at all times.

1. Online behaviour should at all times demonstrate respect of each person.
2. The Child Protection and Child Safe protocols and policies must always be observed.
3. Staff and student online interaction must occur only in an educational context.
4. Staff and students must behave in an ethical manner when interacting and using online community sites and resources.
5. Staff personal social networking online must be congruent with the professional standards expected of a teacher.
6. Professional development programs are provided for staff on the appropriate use of social media.
7. Educational programs are provided for students to ensure the appropriate use of social network and community learning sites on the Internet.

### **1. Expectations for the use of personal social media**

- Social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram or Messenger must not be used by staff as a platform for learning activities with students.
- Staff should not accept students as 'friends' on their own social network sites or interact with students on social networking sites.
- Refrain from accepting ex-students or parents for a period of three years after they have left the school.
- Refrain from providing personal contact information to students.

- Staff must not discuss students or co-workers or publicly criticise school policies or personnel on social networking sites.
- Be aware that people classified as 'friends' have the ability to download and share your information with others.
- Remember that once something is posted to a social networking site, it may remain available online even if you think it is removed, and it may be far-reaching.
- Set and maintain social networking privacy settings at the most restrictive level.
- Not use a social networking site to identify or discuss students, colleagues or place of employment.
- Staff must not post images that include students on social networking sites.
- Not post images of colleagues without their consent.
- Not post image of school logo.

## **MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS (STAFF SOCIAL NETWORKING PAGES)**

- Determine whether a particular posting could put your effectiveness as a teacher at risk. Post only what you want the world to see.
- Do not use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libellous.
- Exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colourful language, guesswork, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterisations.
- Discuss with personal friends the need for discretion when they post images or information about you on their own social network pages. Explain to them that once material is posted and identifiable, it is impossible to control its rapid sharing into school communities.
- Maintain control of security, privacy and access to your personal pages and information.
- Visit your profile's security and privacy settings. At a minimum, educators should have all privacy settings set to 'only friends'. Do not use 'Friends of Friends' and 'Networks and Friends' as these open your content to a large group of unknown people. Your privacy and that of your family may be at risk.
- Be cautious when installing the external applications that work with the social networking site. Examples of these sites are calendar programs and games.

## **2. Expectations for the use of educational networking sites**

- Staff are encouraged to use online learning communities with their students in order to achieve educational outcomes.
- When using online community sites with students, consideration must always be given to the age and developmental level of the students.
- Staff must ensure that they prepare students to act in accordance with the guiding principles before using online community sites for learning.
- The use of online community sites must be authorised by the Principal or his/her delegate.
- Students must not be asked to falsify their age or identity to register on any site for educational purposes.
- Staff must respect student's rights to privacy in academic work, records and results when posting online.
- The learning activity must not be linked back to student's own personal social network pages. Social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Messenger or similar must not be used by staff as learning tools for students.

## **PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN USING ONLINE LEARNING COMMUNITIES WITH STUDENTS**

Discuss any use of online community sites with the Principal or his/her delegate outlining the activity and its educational goals.

If not included in the internet agreement, obtain parental permission before students are asked to register with online community websites.

Keep a record of the student's login names (students should not publish their real names on a public site). Clearly communicate to students their responsibility for appropriate interaction with others and suitable content posting online.

Obtain permission from the Principal before school or staff photographs or other identifying photographs are posted online.

Ensure another teacher or member of the school leadership team has full administrator access to the site.

Monitor the site frequently and actively review the content.

**STAFF ARE REQUIRED TO EDUCATE STUDENTS USING SOCIAL MEDIA OF ANY KIND TO:**

- Respect themselves and others when publishing or communicating online.
- Keep communication channels transparent and supervised by adults.
- Create a sensible/plain username or identity.
- Set social network sites to private security setting. This usually means 'friends only' can see the student's pages and details.
- Keep personal information private.
- Not share usernames and passwords with anyone.
- Report any attacks or inappropriate content directed at them.

**Related School Policies**

- Child Safe Policy

**Evaluation:**

This Policy was last ratified by School Council on: 12 November 2019

This Policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle in 2022 or where necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.