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Social Media Policy

Introduction: This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by all members of St Paul's N.S.

Definition of Social Media:

The term 'social media' covers a broad range of software applications. For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility of online publication and commentary including blogs, wikis and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube. It also covers all kinds of content that is shared online including text, photographs, images, video and audio files.

This policy is in addition to, and complements, any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

Rationale:

Emerging platforms for online collaboration are fundamentally changing the way we work, offering new ways to engage with pupils, parents, colleagues and the world at large. This policy aims to ensure the safe and responsible use of social media by all members of the school community. This is necessary in order to protect students, staff and the good name of our school.

Aims:

- Protect the integrity and good name of all members of the school community from online abuse.
- Outline behaviours which are unacceptable and the consequences for these.
- Provide guidance for staff on the appropriate use of social media.

Strategies that ensure safe and responsible use of social media within the school community at St Paul's N.S.

- Use strict privacy settings.
- Review all of the options on your privacy settings page. Many sites default settings tend to keep information public until a user makes it private
- Be selective and control what you post.

- Be selective about what you share by customising the recipients of your posts. Activities on Facebook, including the apps pupils use and games they play, can be viewed by others. Remember: Everything online happens in front of a vast, invisible, and often anonymous audience. Once something is out there, it doesn't go away as it can be copied and forwarded easily and quickly.
- Everything leaves a digital footprint. As a rule of thumb if you wouldn't be comfortable posting something (pictures comments etc.) on a noticeboard in the school corridor then don't post it online.
- You should never post personal details
- Remember that irresponsible online behaviour can damage your real life reputation.

Unacceptable uses of Social Media sites and their consequences:

Unacceptable use of Social Media sites will include:

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images that may cause harm to any member of the school community.
- Forwarding or 'Liking' material that is likely to cause offence or hurt to a third party.
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage the school's image or reputation.
- Creating a fake profile that impersonates any another member of the school community.
- Sending or posting material that is confidential to the school.
- Uses that violates copyright law, fail to observe licensing agreements or infringe on others intellectual property rights.
- Participating in the viewing or exchange of inappropriate images or obscene material.

All cases involving the inappropriate use of social media will be dealt with on an individual basis. Inappropriate use of social media is considered a serious breach of the school's 'Code of Behaviour'.

Guidelines for staff on the use of Social Media sites:

Staff should be guided by the following principles when incorporating Social Media into their teaching:

- The educational advantage of the use of the Social Media site in question should be clear and permission sought from the school principal before use.
- Material that is confidential in nature such as student names, grades etc. should never be posted.
- Pay strict attention to intellectual property and copyright laws.
- All pupils participating in the online collaboration should be advised of their responsibility to use the site appropriately.
- Staff are expected to exercise sound judgement and maintain the highest professional standards while using social media in the school.

Monitoring and Review

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the Social Media Policy in the school. This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the three-year school development plan.

Modification Clause

The Board of Management reserves the right to modify details of the Social Media Policy at short notice. Such modification may be needed in an ever-changing environment and social context.

Policy Ratified on: _____

Signed by: _____
Chairperson

Dated: _____

St Paul's N.S. Rules for Responsible Internet Use

The school has installed computers with Internet access to help our learning. These rules will help keep us safe and help us be fair to others.

Using the computers:

1. I will not access other people's files.
2. I will not use floppy disks, CD-ROMs, memory sticks, cameras, ipads, ipods, laptops, mobile phones or MP3 players without the permission of the teacher.
3. I will treat all of the computer equipment with respect.

Using the Internet:

1. The use of the Internet is for educational purposes only.
2. I will not use the Internet, unless given permission by a teacher.
3. I will report any unpleasant material to my teacher immediately because this will help protect other pupils and myself.
4. I understand that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the Internet sites I visit.
5. I will not complete and send forms without permission from my teacher.
6. I will not give my full name, my home address or telephone number when completing forms or while visiting websites.
7. I will not upload or download non-approved material.

I understand that failure to comply with the rules will mean withdrawal of Internet privileges

Signed: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

