

## SOCIAL MEDIA – PARENT GUIDELINES

### SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy is applicable to the following entities:

- Tyndale Christian School Inc
- Tyndale Christian School – Strathalbyn Inc
- Tyndale Christian School – Murray Bridge Inc

### INTERPRETATION

Within this policy, unless specifically defined otherwise, the following terms shall have these meanings:

Moderation	adding, editing or deleting content and posts; editing general site settings; adding, editing or removing site users/members; establishing and enforcing site rules, expectations and functions
Post	an item uploaded to a social media website, including but not limited to email, message or text, photo, image, audio, video, link to a website, or a combination of these.
School(s)	shall mean all or any one of the Tyndale group of schools
Social media	is defined as any form of online publication or presence that allows groups of people to engage in multidirectional communication, share information and develop social contacts in or around the content on the website. Social media includes but is not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, Pinterest, Tumblr, Messenger, blogs and blog platforms e.g. Wordpress, wikis, multimedia messaging and email.

### INTRODUCTION

The use of social media has become common practice for almost all Australian society, including staff, students and parents of our schools. Advances in technology have meant that access to social media sites has become almost instantaneous, much simpler and can be done anywhere. This is especially true with the advent of smartphones, iPads and other tablets, and light-weight, streamlined laptops that enable users constant and immediate access to the Internet.

The School recognises that many parents will use social media as a way of communicating with their friends, family and colleagues. The School has also decided to use social media to keep in contact with old scholars and advise our school communities of up-coming events and news about the Schools.

The law treats taking photos or videos in private places and public places differently. In public places you have the right to take a photo unless you do so in a way that is offensive or makes a nuisance to those around you. When an event is taking place at a private place (such as a school) the private organisation can enforce rules about photography, so you should consider gaining consent before taking photos and videos.

Parents need to carefully consider how social media is used and what is communicated when using this medium to protect privacy; to avoid conflict; to protect the reputation and standing of the School; and, most importantly, to protect the students.

## **POLICY**

### **Staff, volunteers and contractors**

The School has a social media policies for staff, volunteers and contractors (H4.49 and L1.52) which govern the use of social media by staff, volunteers and contractors.

The School also has a policy (S1.53 Image and recording) which outlines how images and recordings arising from school activities will be captured, stored and published by staff, volunteers and contractors. The policy also provides that staff, volunteers and contractors may not take photos or videos of students for personal use.

### **Parents, students and other members of the school community**

Social media posts (including messages, photos, audio and video) arising from school activities – whether at school or away from school - are not acceptable to be posted on social media if the post contains images, recordings, views, opinions or other information regarding another person where no consent has been given. For students under the age of 18, this consent must be given by both the student and the parent/caregiver.

The School does not accept cyberbullying or harassment and the School will take steps to remove the offending post. The School also moderates its social media accounts and will seek to remove any posts:

- which impact on a person's privacy;
- are slanderous;
- which negatively impact on the School's reputation;
- or otherwise are inconsistent with the values and beliefs of the School.

### **Use of the School logo, trademarks, and other marketing resources and intellectual property**

All use of the School logo, branding and intellectual property is to be authorised by the Head of Schools, the Director of Marketing and Community relations, or other delegate.

### **Moderation of School social media sites**

School social media sites will be moderated by the following staff in the table on the following page:

School	Moderator
Salisbury East	Director of Marketing and Community Relations Digital Marketing Assistant
Murray Bridge	Director of Marketing and Community Relations Digital Marketing Assistant Administration Officer - Marketing
Strathalbyn	Director of Marketing and Community Relations Digital Marketing Assistant Office Manager

Moderators will manage School social media sites and services in accordance with the definition of 'moderation' described in this policy, or in accordance with direction given by the Head of Schools or a delegate, or those responsible for enforcing the law.

### **Implementation**

This policy will be available from the School web site and all social media sites. It will be made freely available to a member of the School community that requests it.

Notices of School events shall include a brief notice that communicates that the event will be covered by this policy. Relevant notices at events will reinforce the aims and guidelines of this policy.

## **BREACH OF POLICY**

### **Social media posts arising from school activities**

In the first instance, any post to a school-controlled social media site which contravenes this, or other policies, will be removed or edited.

If the post is to a social media site that is not school-controlled, the administrator or corporate owner of the site will be officially requested to remove or edit the post.

Depending on the seriousness and continuation of the breach, the School reserves the right to terminate the enrolment of a student or take other such measures to protect and restore the privacy or reputation of the School or others in the School community.

### **Social media posts arising from private activities**

The School is not responsible for social media posts arising from private activities. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to approach the administrator or corporate owner of the site and request removal or editing of the offending post.

However, if the social media post arising from private activity:

- is slanderous, libellous or untrue;
- is, or can be, perceived to be harassment or bullying;
- impacts a person's privacy;
- negatively impacts the School's reputation; or

- is otherwise inconsistent with the values and beliefs of the School,

the School may approach the person who authored the post, or the administrator or corporate owner of the site, and request removal or editing of the offending post. Depending on the nature of the post, the School may take other such measures to protect and restore the privacy or reputation of the School or others in the School community.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS**

Parents are reminded that the first point of contact regarding an area of classroom concern or activity must be with the Junior School classroom teacher or pastoral or subject teacher in the Middle or Senior School.

These guidelines exist to ensure we maintain a positive, respectful and safe school community.

### **Is it safe to post pictures of my child online?**

Sharing pictures of our children with friends and family is one of the most popular uses of social media and has become an everyday way to stay in touch. However, it is worth knowing the facts before posting pictures or letting other people post pictures of your children.

Firstly, posting photos of your children creates a digital footprint -- a kind of electronic paper trail - that forms and documents their identities in a world they haven't chosen to enter. It's important to remember that some people may have a different interest in your child than you do. There have been cases where innocent images posted on social media or other websites have been 'harvested' and used for other purposes. Sometimes predators can narrow down their search of children because of identifying details in photos.

Secondly, once you post a photo online, you lose control over it. Someone could easily copy the photo, tag it, save it, or otherwise use it - and you might never know. On some social media sites, the terms and conditions of the site give the site owner the rights to the images.

Finally, everything you post has information that is valuable to advertisers and data collectors; posting a photo of a child identifies you as someone who might be interested in baby products, for example.

### **Alternate ways to share photos and videos**

It is understandable that we wish to share and celebrate the achievements and activities of students and others. Rather than posting on social media, there are other ways that may give you more control when sharing photos and videos which include:

- sharing photos by email or Messenger that go directly to the intended recipients
- using a secure online portal (secure online facility enabling organisations to authorise access through secure passwords)
- multimedia messaging service (MMS - a standard way to send messages that include photos and videos over a mobile phone network)

### **Think before you post**

Once posted online, any photo or video can be shared, copied and/or manipulated. You may not be able to control how a photo or video is used by others.

Think about:

- Who might be able to see these photos?
- Is there anyone else in this photo? (Be mindful that some people may not want their image to be published) Do I need to crop the photo or seek consent?
- Will this photo offend anyone? Does it fit with the values and ethos of the School?
- Are there any identifying details in the photo? (including personal information such as your child's name, landmarks and street signs)

### **Privacy settings on social media**

When uploading photos and videos check your privacy settings on the social media services you use as well as on the device. You can change privacy settings to control who sees your photos.

### **Avoid sharing your location**

Sharing photos and videos online can sometimes identify your location, either through information in the photo/video such as sign posts, familiar landmarks or place names, clothing or uniforms that identify location, or through data stored with the photo/video that provides the GPS coordinates of where the photo/video was taken.

If you do not want to share your location through your photos:

- check the location settings on your device to know what apps are using geo-location and turn them off or limit the function
- ensure that GPS locations and schedules of children's activities are not shared online
- do not mention locations in text accompanying the photo/video
- avoid signs or landmarks which may make the location easier to identify

### **Does your child want their photo shared?**

Consider asking your son/daughter if they want their photo or video shared on social media. While some children can be shy, an unexpected request not to share should be explored by the parent/caregiver to see if there are concerns that the student has not yet shared with you.

If you have concerns about your son/daughter, please consider discussing this with the teacher or with one of the School's counselling team.

### **Maintaining respect and privacy**

- Treat all social media postings, blogs, status updates, snapchats and tweets as public 'comment'. No personal information about School families should be disclosed (including closed groups such as on Facebook)
- Be responsible for lawfully and respectfully using online communications with other members of the School community
- Do not take photos, video or audio that are indecent, offensive or demeaning to any person, or expose them to public ridicule and embarrassment
- Images and posts should not contain personal details (e.g. full names, personal contact information)
- Do not show a child who is clearly upset or distressed
- Do not make statements that could be viewed as misleading, false or likely to injure a person's reputation
- Do not post material that would cause disrepute or embarrassment for staff, students, parents or their families
- Understand that publishing defamatory comments is illegal

### **Maintaining a positive environment**

- Aim to pursue positive communication and comments with each other via social media sites
- Post messages, photos or videos that are family-friendly and feature positive school news and events
- If you have a dispute or a grievance, do not air it on social media, but always seek to repair relationships by keeping the circle small and resolving the issue directly (face-to-face) with the person(s) concerned

### **Always seek consent**

- Seek informed consent from a parent/guardian before taking and posting photos of and videos featuring students
- As a courtesy, seek verbal consent from any adult (teacher, parent, volunteer, other staff member) whose photo, video footage and/or work you wish to post on social media

### **What should I do when other people post pictures of my child online without asking me first?**

Sharing photos online has become such common practice that most people don't think twice before posting pictures of their children -- and yours -- on social media sites. If this makes you uncomfortable, let the person know. You can ask the person to take down the photo or crop it so your child isn't in the picture.

Remember, you're not alone - lots of parents don't want to see their children's photo online.

At the very least, you can minimise the consequences with these precautions:

- use privacy settings; limit the audience of a post (only to family, for example)
- consider using a nickname for your children or posting a photo of your children without naming them or identifying them
- avoid sharing other personal information, such as age, location, address, frequently visited activities
- think about using photo-sharing sites such as, but not limited to, Flickr that require users to log in to see pictures (unlike on social media, where all your followers can see them).

### **What can I do if I have questions about current photography practices or consent at school?**

Contact the School Student Services Office directly to raise your concerns. The School will be able to provide you with the social media policy. This should provide details about the type of photos that can be posted, the way they will be used and how they obtain consent from parents or carers.

General consent is usually provided on the enrolment forms. Specific consent is sought by the School for a specific purpose, event or activity, and is usually covered by a consent form or specific privacy collection notice.

If you wish to change the general or specific consent you have previously given, or wish to discuss your options, please contact the School Enrolment Officer.

## REFERENCES

- A4.02 Privacy
- H4.49 Social media for staff
- L1.52 Social media for ELC staff
- S1.53 Image and recording
- Protective practices for staff in their interactions with young people  
[https://www.decd.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/protective\\_practices\\_for\\_staff\\_in\\_their\\_interactions\\_with\\_children\\_and\\_young\\_people.pdf?v=1455240007](https://www.decd.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/protective_practices_for_staff_in_their_interactions_with_children_and_young_people.pdf?v=1455240007) (accessed 09/03/2017)
- <https://www.esafety.gov.au/education-resources/iparent/staying-safe/photos-videos-and-social-media> accessed 27/05/2018

## REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed every two years. Review will be conducted by the responsible officer, drawing upon input and feedback from:

- Employees
- Parents/caregivers
- Students
- Interested parties
- External changes, such as changes to legislation, good practice

## POLICY INFORMATION

Document title and number	Form S1.54 Social media parent guidelines
Classification	S – Student management
Sub-classification	S1 – Student safety and welfare
Approver	Head of Schools
Date approved	04/06/2018
Date issued	04/06/2018
Officer responsible for this policy	Director of Corporate Services