	Policy: SOCIAL NETWORKING ACCEPTABLE USE
	Released: 2016
	Next Review: 2018

ST BERNARD'S SOCIAL NETWORKING ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

St. Bernard's Catholic Primary School believes that social media can help support positive relationships and communication within the school community. School community members already communicate online – families, students, staff and the wider community. By creating an official presence on Social Network platforms, the school is able to take control of its image online. It provides the school with an additional opportunity to engage and communicate with the community. As parents experience greater time pressures, online engagement is a powerful way to make parents feel part of the school community. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for the community – including staff, students, families and past students to view activities and keep up-to-date with events taking place at St. Bernard's.

This policy is applicable to: families, school staff and community members.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:
- Bullying Policy
- Acceptable Use of ICT Policy
- Harassment, discrimination and bullying of staff in schools policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- CEWA Code of Conduct
- School Values
- Staff Handbook / Parent Handbook
- Privacy Policy

All users must comply with the St. Bernard's Social Networking Acceptable Use Policy.

The school's newsletter, website and own social networking site (Facebook) will always remain the focus of school communications, in conjunction with school text messages, emails, face-to-face communication and school assemblies.

RATIONALE
St. Bernard's School is committed to providing staff and students with the best possible information and communication technologies so they can access a wide range of educational resources and learning tools. The school values open and collaborative communication with parents and the wider community and strives to provide a variety of means for effective communication including the use of social media. The school aims to monitor staff and students' acceptable usage of social networking sites and therefore uphold the school vision and values when these tools are being used.

The Social Networking Acceptable Use policy at St. Bernard's outlines appropriate use of the school's social networking sites such as the school Facebook page. St. Bernard's will not tolerate the misuse of their social networking site, such as using it as a tool for cyberbullying, inappropriate or defamatory posts, or any other comments not in keeping with the school's vision and values.

OBJECTIVES
1. The use of social networking provides an opportunity to engage and interact with families and the wider community.

2. The school Facebook page seeks to communicate, inform, remind and celebrate.

DEFINITIONS

Defamation is a written or verbal statement that tends to lower another person's reputation in the eyes of ordinary members of the community, or leads people to ridicule, avoid or despise the person, or injures the person's reputation in business, trade or profession. There are a number of defences available against a claim of defamation including that the statement is true, or an honest opinion on a matter of public interest.

It is important that members of our school community share common understandings about digital citizenship pro-social behaviours on social networks.

1.   Definition of Social Networking:

This policy directly relates to the St. Bernard's Facebook page, but includes acceptable use conditions for any possible future use of social media, including but not limited to platforms such as Edmodo, Twitter, Google+, Yammer and Linkedin, for example. This policy also relates to personal use by staff, students and community members.

2.   Types of behaviour expected when social networking:

All behaviour when social networking should reflect the school values, and be in keeping with the Code of Conduct as published by CEWA. Respect for self and others, and reflection of Gospel Values, which underpin our motto and philosophy at St. Bernard's School should be upheld at all times.

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the whole school community to encourage positive online behaviours when using social networks. St. Bernard's School believes in the personal rights and responsibilities of all members who use social networking sites.

1.   **Rights**
   - All individuals in St. Bernard's School community are to be free from all forms of bullying including cyberbullying.
   - All students, staff, families and the wider school community are entitled to be respected including in the online environment.
   - Parents have the right for images of their child/ren not to be posted on social media without their permission.

2.   **Responsibilities**
      Students, staff and families have a shared responsibility to:
   - Promote positive online relationships that respect individual differences.
   - Acknowledge their responsibility as role models of positive and respectful online behaviours.
   - Be familiar with the school's Acceptable Use of Social Networking policy and procedures.
   - Respect the privacy of individuals.
   - Refrain from posting images of other children on social media.

REPORTING SOCIAL NETWORKING MISUSE

Process for complaints:
   - Members of the school community may report misuses of social networking by completing an incident report in writing and giving it to the Principal for follow up.
   - Misuse will be documented and investigated to determine the severity of the behaviour.
   - Inappropriate posts will be removed from social networks and offenders may be blocked from school social media platforms.
   - Disciplinary action following the school's behaviour management policy will take place if the complaint clearly breaches school policies.
   - Police action may be required based on the level of severity of the behaviour.

Contact Points for staff, students and parents:
   - The Principal and school administration staff, as managers of the school Facebook page, are the contact point for reporting misuse.

STAYING SAFE ONLINE – CODE OF CONDUCT – GENERAL INFORMATION

   - The use of social media in the classroom must always have an educationally valid context.

- Staff communicating with current students using personal email accounts and being "friends" with current students on social networking sites is unacceptable behaviour.
- Personal social networks must not be viewed by the teacher when the students are in the classroom.
- Teachers must not have access to students personal social networks.
- Staff accessing personal social networks must be done in their own time and in areas away from student viewing.
- The online presence of all individuals on school social media platforms reflects on the school.
- Professional contact between staff/parents/students should not be made through social networking platforms.
- For queries directly related to school work or classroom-related topics, correspondence with an individual teacher should be through their school email address.
- Complaints or grievances raised regarding social media platforms should always be addressed through the school Principal, as outlined in the Dispute and Complaint Resolution Policy.
- General complaints or grievances should not be raised on social media. This constitutes misuse and may also constitute defamation. Complaints or grievances should be addressed with the other person/s directly involved.
- Staff members have the same rights in terms of harassment that students and parents have, and staff members can access the same processes outlined in the Dispute and Complaint Resolution Policy.
- Staff and parents must not post images of other people's children on social media.
- Social networking platforms using the school name can be deemed by the wider community to be an official communication by the school. As such, staff and parents must not create social media groups such as Facebook pages using the school name.

PUBLICATIONS GUIDELINES

Any social networking platforms used by St. Bernard's School will only act as supplementary communications mediums. The primary communication tools will remain direct parent communication, school newsletters and the school website.

Items that may be published through the school's social networking presence include, but are not limited to:
- School events and activities
- Community events and activities
- Significant school achievements and milestones
- School or system news of general interest
- Educational news of general interest
- Information from related organisations

As set out in the school's Privacy Policy, the school respects the confidentiality of students' and parents' personal information and the privacy of individuals. Similar privacy principles that apply to newsletters and the website will apply to social networking platforms managed by the school, however, the school operates at a higher standard with use of social network platforms in terms of the publication of student names and images. Student names and images will not be posted on social media.

The school's social networking platforms will be closely monitored and moderated to ensure the Acceptable Use and Privacy Policy are adhered to at all times.

Review History

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Next Review

Year	Person / Group Responsible
2018	Principal