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## Internet Use/Social Media

### Rationale

- The internet provides children with unprecedented opportunities to obtain information, engage in discussion, and liaise with individuals, organisation and groups world-wide so as to increase skills, knowledge and abilities.
- The school actively supports age-appropriate access by children to the widest variety of information resources available, accompanied by the development of the skills necessary to filter, analyse, interpret and evaluate information encountered.
- Cybersafety is a major concern facing schools. This does not only affect children. DET employees in schools are also at risk of misusing social media or being targeted by a disgruntled child or member of the school community. This is not a new concept. As with all forms of **inappropriate behaviours** the digital world has simply opened up a new platform for it to occur.
- There are legal consequences for misuse of social media.
- Teachers and other staff in schools have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to protect children from risks of injury, including those that may be encountered within the online learning environment.

### Purpose

- To improve children's learning outcomes by increasing access to worldwide information.
- To develop skills in discriminate and appropriate internet usage.
- To provide a practical guide to support staff and meet the obligations and recommended standards of behaviours set out within existing instruments, policies and guidelines when using social media tools for personal or professional purposes.
- To ensure Essendon Keilor College complies with DET policy and legislation in regard to social media.
- To help redress cyberbullying.
- To ensure the school has in place strategies to enhance compliance with the Child Safe Standards 2 and 6.
- To ensure the school discharges its duty of care towards children.

### Definition

In the context of DET's Using Social Media *Guide*, social media is the term used for internet based tools for sharing and discussing information among people. Additional social media tools may include (although are not limited to):

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Myspace)
- Video and photo sharing web sites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube)
- Blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs
- Micro-blogs (e.g. Twitter)
- Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool)
- Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia)
- Vod and podcasts
- Video conferences and web conferences
- e-mail and instant messaging

Social media also includes all other emerging electronic/digital communication applications.

### Implementation

- Essendon Keilor College has zero tolerance of bullying in any form.
- The wellbeing of every young person at the school is our highest priority.
- Student behaviour when using school computers and networks, when using the internet and e-mail, and when engaging in any activity with school computers must be consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct.

- This policy applies to all children at Essendon Keilor College.
- It applies to staff, teaching and non-teaching, all volunteers, visitors and contractors engaged by the school and the School Council.
- The school uses Using Social Media: Guide for DET Employees in Schools as the reference for internet use at the school.
- The school also will use DET's Step by Step Guide: Online Incidents of Inappropriate Behaviour Affecting Students in dealing with inappropriate incidents.
- All children and staff will have their own password protected internet account and log on. Such access is a privilege that infers responsibility, and not simply a right to be expected.
- In consultation with staff, parents and children, the school will determine what is appropriate and what is not appropriate use of social media.
- All students will be responsible for notifying their teacher of any inappropriate material so that access can be blocked.
- All staff will be responsible for notifying the coordinator of any inappropriate material so that access can be blocked.
- If the College is considering setting up a social media profile, considerations include privacy options, site terms and conditions, sharing images and digital content and subscribing to groups.
- The school will assist parents to support their children in the digital world by providing them with useful information about existing and emerging technologies, engaging them in the development and review of policies and inviting them to information sessions or distributing handouts on school expectations of acceptable use.
- Parents, teachers, children and the community will be made aware of types of cyber bullying and its legal and hurtful ramifications. Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of children from all forms of bullying.
- The school will work towards becoming eSmart, the initiative of the Alannah and Madeline Foundation.
- The school will develop an Acceptable Use Agreement for children (attached).
- The school will seek student/parent permission when publishing student images and/or their work.
- Signed parent and student consent (see below) is required to be completed in order to gain access to the internet, or to publish work, photos or videos on the internet.
- Please refer also to the school's *Child Safe Policy*, the *Student Engagement Policy*, *Duty of Care Policy*, the *Personal Devices Policy* and the *Bullying & Harassment Policy*.

### **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change (latest DET update early July 2017).

Reference:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/socialmedia.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/socialmedia.aspx)