



Antonio Park  
Primary School

## ***INTERNET USE/SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY***

**Latest DET Update: August 2017**

**First Developed in This Format: June 2017**

### **Rationale**

- The school uses the Internet as a learning tool to improve children's learning outcomes by increasing access to worldwide information. The school embraces the benefits of technology and is committed to reducing children's exposure to cyber-risks when using the Internet, mobile phones and other electronic devices.
- The school uses the Internet as a way to promote itself, through websites, emails and social media platforms such as Facebook. It does this with a clear acknowledgement that certain processes must be followed to ensure the safety of our staff and students.
- Cybersafety is a major concern facing schools. This does not only affect children and young people. DET employees in schools are also at risk of misusing social media or being targeted by a disgruntled young person 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 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 Antonio Park Primary School 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.

### **Definitions**

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.

**Bullying** is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upsets or hurts another person or damages their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

**Cyberbullying** is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

### Implementation

- This school **has zero tolerance of bullying** in any form.
- The wellbeing of every child at the school is our highest priority.
- This policy applies to all staff, teaching and non-teaching at Antonio Park Primary School. It includes all volunteers, visitors and contractors engaged by the school and the School Council.
- Our school is an eSmart School (an initiative of the Alannah and Madeline Foundation) and will continue the processes and procedures necessary to maintain this accreditation.
- The school will use Using Social Media: Guide for DET Employees in Schools as the reference for internet use at the school.
- In consultation with staff, parents/carers and children, the school will determine what is appropriate and what is not appropriate use of social media.
- The school will assist parents/carers 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/carers, 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 use DET's Step by Step Guide: Online Incidents of Inappropriate Behaviour Affecting Students in dealing with inappropriate incidents.
- The school has developed an Acceptable Use Agreement for children applying to their use of digital tools and online environments, which students and their parents sign before students are given access to digital tools or the internet.
- The school will seek children's and parent/guardian permission when publishing children's images and/or their work.
- The school will advise parent/guardians when creating any online account for a student that involves that student sharing any personal details (for example; full name, school, email address) with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Parents/guardians will be given the option of opting out of this process for their child.
- The school will not publish a child's image in any online environment without the signed permission from that child's parent/guardian, either from the school-wide 'Media Permissions' form, or from a form generated for a specific occasion or use.
- The school will not engage in the use of any online platform without having a staff member directly responsible for the monitoring of that platform and the material that may be put onto it.

- Comments left on an online platform (i.e. blog, website, Facebook post) that could be reasonably be interpreted to be threatening, offensive or abusive in any way towards a specific individual will not be tolerated and removed as soon as they are seen by the staff member responsible for overseeing that platform.
- Please refer also to the school's *Student Engagement Policy, Duty of Care Policy, Complaints, Parents Policy, Mobile Phones, Use by Children Policy, Photographing & Filming Children Policy*, the *Bullying & Harassment Policy* and the Child Safe Standards.

#### **Evaluation**

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

This policy was ratified by School Council in 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)