



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy provides guidance for student use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include emails, blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, social networking apps, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in an interactive manner.

RATIONALE

The following policy will clarify how best to protect Sacred Heart College students and their personal reputations when participating in social media activities.

RULES

1. Sacred Heart College recognises the evolution of social media as a mechanism of communication and its importance in being used responsibly and appropriately in relation to the School's business and the larger School community. Students are expected to behave in a manner which is representative of the School's policies and ethos.
2. It is vital for students to understand both the advantages and the potential risks of social media, so that they may enhance their use thereof and avoid or mitigate the risks inherent in social media.
3. Students should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their image, as well as the Schools image. The information that students post or publish may be in the public domain for a long time.
4. Social media platforms may not be used by students to communicate unsolicited communications of any kind. Students may not engage in online communication activities which could bring Sacred Heart College into disrepute.
5. Students may not impersonate third parties or act in any manner that may mislead, confuse or deceive others.
6. Students should regularly review the content of social media postings and remove any information that could reflect negatively on Sacred Heart College, its staff, students, parents or stakeholders (for example inappropriate comments made in response to postings);
7. Sacred Heart College reserves the right to investigate any allegations which contravene the School's policies and /or involve student safety.
8. Confidentiality Waiver: Students utilising devices that belong to Sacred Heart College or their personal devices need to know that, the School has the right to search the device without consent if there are suspicions that it may contain illicit information or reference something to which places a student or others at risk.

9. Social media networks, blogs, and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Students should refer these enquiries to the management of Sacred Heart College.
10. If students encounter a situation while using social media that threatens to become antagonistic, students should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and report the incident to management.
11. Computer software, network and electronic equipment is made available to students for the express purpose of the School's instructional and educational purposes. Any abuse of this property or private use thereof to the extent that it impacts negatively upon Sacred Heart College and/or could be potentially harmful, shall be treated as an offence.
12. Social media platforms must not be used by students for personal (as in not directed by a member of staff) use during the School day.
13. Students must ensure that the contents of their postings are accurate, ethical and legal.
14. Students should read and adhere to any website's terms and conditions of use, including those around age restrictions.
15. Students may not post:
 - information, comments or images which may be detrimental to Sacred Heart College or pertaining to current or former staff, students, suppliers, parents and stakeholders;
 - any person's/student's private information (including photographs or images of the person) of whatever nature, without the authority of the person /parent/guardian;
 - any inappropriate, obscene or pornographic images;
 - any communication or image which may be defamatory or violate the rights of any party;
 - any communication which is offensive, threatening, abusive, harmful, hateful, malicious, discriminatory, demeaning, derogatory or which amounts to unlawful harassment or discrimination;
 - illicit photos, profanity or other derogatory content;
 - a communication which violates the intellectual property rights of third parties.
16. Students should be aware that any conduct, even in their private capacity, which impacts on the interests of the School, must be in accordance with the School's rules and policies. In circumstances where a student member, for example, defames or discloses confidential information on a social network and this causes damage to the School's or any individual's reputation and/or results in the loss of business, this shall be treated as an offence.
17. Any violation of the above rules may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student concerned.