



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



The Board of Management of St. Patrick's Loreto Primary School acknowledges the increasing use of social media sites for purposes that are connected to the school. The Board of Management recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. Staff, parents/carers and pupils/students are actively encouraged to find creative ways to use social media. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation.

This policy aims to encourage the safe use of social media by the school, its staff, parents, carers and children. The school respects privacy and understands that staff and pupils/students may use social media forums in their private lives. However, personal communications likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or the school's reputation and/or a teacher's reputation are to be discouraged as they may expose the user and/or the school to legal action.

Scope of the Policy

The policy covers the use of all social media platforms used by students, teachers, staff, parents, guardians and carers which said platforms may be connected in any way to the running of and/or activities within the school.

All those connected to the school should bear in mind that the information they share through the use of social media platforms, even in a private setting, are subject to copyright, data protection, freedom of information and defamation laws and policy.

General Terms of Use

The terms of use apply to the use of all social media platforms by all those who have a connection to the school. This includes but is not limited to, public facing applications such as open discussion forums and internally facing uses such as project blogs regardless of whether they are hosted on the school network or not. Where applications allow for the posting of messages on line, users must be mindful of the laws that may be applicable to such postings.

Users must not use platforms related to the school in any way:

- to publish any content which may result in criminal action and/or civil actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claims for damages.
- for promotion of financial interests, commercial ventures or for personal campaigns.
- to air grievances.
- to publish content that could amount to bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation.
- to discuss or give advice on any school related matters, teaching methods, school policies, staff, pupils or parents.



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- No staff member of the school should 'connect' with or 'friend' a student and/or former student who is under the age of 18.
- Staff should not identify themselves as a representative of the school.
- to publish any content that may have a negative impact on the school's and/or the staff's reputation.
- to publish the school logo without the express written permission of the Board of Management.
- to circulate, publish, promote or advertise any information whatsoever to do with school matters such as fundraising events or activities without the permission of the Principal and, where applicable, without the ratification of the Board of Management of St. Patrick's Loreto Primary School

Specific terms of use for staff on the use of social media

- No member of staff should interact with any pupil in the school on social networking sites
- No member of staff should interact with any ex-pupil in the school on social networking sites who is under the age of 18. This means that no member of the school staff should request access to a pupil's area on the social networking site. Neither should they permit the pupil access to the staff members' area e.g. by accepting them as a friend.
- It is illegal for an adult to network, giving their age and status as a child

Specific Terms of use for Pupils on using social networking

- No pupil may access social networking sites during the school working day
- The use of smart mobile phones or any mobile phone is prohibited in the school unless there are exceptional circumstances and only then with the written permission of the Principal and Board of Management.
- No pupil should attempt to join a staff member's areas on networking sites. If pupils attempt to do this, the member of staff is to inform the Principal. The child's parents will be informed.
- No school computers are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of day.
- Any attempts to breach firewalls will result in a ban from using school ICT equipment other than with close supervision
- Any improper contact or cyber bullying of any kind should be reported to the class teacher / principal as soon as it happens
- The Board of Management have a zero tolerance to cyber bullying.
- No pupil may upload content to YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter WhatsApp, TikTok or alternative sites, of themselves and /or other pupils while on the school grounds, on school trips, and/or whilst in school uniform

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of 5th May 22

Signed

Chairperson of the Board of Management