



<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>February 2021</b>
<b>Authorised by:</b>	<b>Principal</b>
<b>Contacts:</b>	<b>Director of Communications and Admissions</b>
<b>Locations:</b>	<b>School Website Intranet – Staff &amp; Parents</b>

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

### **1. RATIONALE**

Somerville House (the School) is committed to providing a safe, supportive, Christian environment for all members of its school community. It expects all members to uphold the ethos of the School and to ensure the School's values underpin all interactions between them and also with the wider community.

It seeks to equip staff and students with the skills to be confident, creative and productive users of technology who understand the impact of those technologies on society, to enhance innovative learning and to cultivate digital citizenship.

The School recognises that the use of social media in all its forms provides a common vehicle for connecting with others and is increasingly used for personal, professional and educational communication. It recognises that effective use enables the School to promote its achievements and events, build stronger community and reach its members with last minute news and alerts. It also recognises the potential for harm (either directly or indirectly) to individual members of the School community and/or to the School or its reputation.

The School takes its duty of care responsibilities and obligations under legislation seriously.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure all members of the School community are made aware of legal requirements and safe and acceptable behaviours related to the use of social media
- outline the School's requirements with regard to the acceptable use of social media for all its members
- provide a set of general principles and guidelines for appropriate use; and
- outline consequences for breaches of the guidelines.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's *Anti-Bullying*, *Child Protection*, *Acceptable Use of Technology* and *Mobile Phone and Personal Electronic Devices Acceptable Use* policies.

### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all staff (including pre-service teachers, casual and temporary staff, contractors and volunteers), students and their parents (insofar as they should be aware of and be encouraged to support this policy at home).

It is applicable to the use of all social media platforms, regardless of whether the School's network, facilities or equipment have been used, if either:

- the activity in any respect makes reference to:
  - Somerville House
  - the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA)
  - any member of its Council, staff, students, or parents;
  - or information or matters relating to the PMSA or the School; or
- the content can reasonably be inferred to refer to the School, PMSA or a member of the School community.

### 3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 The School requires all members of the School community to engage responsibly and appropriately when utilising social media platforms, in accordance with the values of the School and the PMSA and the School's *Codes of Behaviour*.
- 3.2 The General Principles and School requirements for engaging with social media platforms outlined in Section 6 below, must be followed.
- 3.3 The School will ensure that:
- 3.3.1 opportunities will be offered to staff who seek professional development in relevant emerging technologies including social media usage to extend their professional, learning and leadership capacities and to assist them in identifying and addressing potential hazards for and inappropriate use by students
  - 3.3.2 staff, students and parents are informed of the School's requirements with regard to usage of social media; and
  - 3.3.3 appropriate action will be taken where incidents of bullying, harassment, defamation or other unacceptable behaviours, as outlined in this and other related policies, occur.
- 3.4 The School will ensure compliance with all legislative requirements applicable to social media usage.

### 4. REFERENCES

- 4.1 References to other Policy
- *Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy*
  - *Acceptable use of Technology Policy*
  - *Behaviour Management Policy*
  - *Child Protection Policy*
  - *Communications Policy*
  - *Complaints Resolution Policy*
  - *Mobile Phone and Personal Electronic Devices Acceptable Use Policy*
  - *Privacy Policy and Statement*
  - *School Community Code of Conduct*
  - *Student and Staff Codes of Conduct*
- 4.2 Legislative and other References
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)*
  - *Child Protection Act 1991 (Qld)*
  - *College of Teachers' Code of Ethics*
  - *Copyright Amendment Act 2006*
  - *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
  - *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) Act 1986 (Cth)*
  - *Laptop Handbook*
  - *National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) (revised 2011)*
  - *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*
  - *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*
  - *Racial Hatred Act 1995 (Cth)*
  - *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*
  - *Social Media Guidelines (Department of Education and Child Development, South Australia) publication*

- *Staff, Student and Family Handbooks*
- *What Staff Need to Know about Social Media and Technology (Department of New South Wales Education and Training) publication*

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

### Principal

- Implementation of this policy
- Ensuring all members of the School community are aware and comply with this policy.

### Director of Communication and Admissions

- Providing direction to staff re communication requirements to protect the brand of the School.
- Maintaining the digital footprint including the official school website and associated social media pages.
- Approving accounts and content for the School's official accounts on social media and other emerging technologies.

### Director of Philanthropy

- Approving content on official Somerville House Foundation social media accounts.

### Leadership Team

- Regularly reinforcing for staff and students the School's expectations with regard to social media use and consequences for breach of related school policies.
- Providing information, articles, useful websites to educate parents, staff and students on safe, responsible use of social media.

### Head of Technology Services/ Heads of Department

- Oversight of technology services and use in the School.
- Providing information and training to staff in new and emergent technologies and any related issues.
- Conducting random audits of social media sites and internet usage to ensure compliance with ICT policies.

### Staff

- Being personally liable for any content they publish in a personal capacity on any social media platform.
- Using social media in accordance with this policy.
- Ensuring their professional duty of care obligations are not compromised through any online interaction with students outside of educational activities.
- Ensuring students are made aware of:
  - what is required by the School when using social media
  - what is acceptable and what is unacceptable use of social media
  - what the potential dangers could be
  - what legal requirements need to be met (e.g. copyright, harassment, bullying, defamation, child safety)
  - what safeguards to use to help protect their privacy and themselves
  - to whom they should report if they are aware of inappropriate content or online behaviour; and
  - the consequences for breaching school requirements.
- Reporting any inappropriate conduct, action or content immediately to the appropriate member of the Leadership Team.
- Monitoring students diligently when they are using electronic devices in school activities.

### Students

- Acting in accordance with the School's values, *Code of Conduct* and complying with this and related policies.
- Reporting any inappropriate conduct, action or content immediately to a staff member.
- Taking care to protect themselves in online interaction by following advice given relating to their use of social media.

## 6. GENERAL PRINCIPLES, GUIDELINES and SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

### 6.1 General Principles

6.1.1 Online behaviour should at all times be ethical, reflecting integrity and respect for others as is expected in direct personal communication and interactions.

6.1.2 Confidentiality of private information must be maintained.

6.1.3 Behaviour and/or comments must ensure that the reputation of the School or of any of its members is in no way damaged or brought into disrepute and no statements should be made which are, or could be perceived to be, derogatory or disparaging towards the School or its community members.

Members of the School community with issues to be resolved should refrain from making negative comment via social media and utilise the School's *Complaints Resolution Policy* to resolve any concerns.

6.1.4 Staff and student online interaction must only occur for purposes of learning and communicating school-related matters.

6.1.5 The School's name, logos, emblems, branding or email addresses may not be used in association with personal accounts or comments on social media sites.

6.1.6 Social media accounts or pages may not be established in the School's name nor may any person make representations, comments or statements on the School's behalf without the express authorisation of the Principal or their nominee. Refer to the note 6.2.1 below re requirements related to official Somerville House social media accounts.

6.1.7 All members using social media must read, understand and adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant platform/website, as well as comply with all legal copyright, privacy, defamation, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws.

### 6.2 School Requirements and Guidelines

6.2.1 Staff – Refer to Attachment 1 – General Principles, Requirements and Guidelines for Staff when Using Social Media

6.2.2 Students – Refer to Attachment 2 – School Requirements and Guidelines for Students and Advice to Parents related to the Use of Social Media.

### 6.3 Consequences for Breach of Policy

Periodically, the School may conduct random audits of social media sites.

Any student or staff member found to have breached this policy, following an investigation by the Principal or their nominee, may be subject to disciplinary action which will be commensurate with the seriousness of the breach and will be at their sole discretion. It may include expulsion or dismissal from the School.

For any criminal breach of this policy, the Police will be informed.

Individual community members may pursue legal action.

## 7. DEFINITIONS

**Digital Citizenship** is the concept of educating all technology users about how to use technology appropriately and effectively and not misuse it to disadvantage others.

**Geo-spatial tagging** (Foursquare) – the process of adding geographical identification data to media, such as photos, messages that can be used to identify the location of the content of the message. This poses significant risks to those who allow friends of friends access to their online activity, if those contacts have malicious intentions

**Sexting** is sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically, primarily between mobile phones. It is illegal for anyone to take sexual photos of children and young people and an offence to pass them on – even if there were taken and sent by other underage children.

**Social Media** is any platform which can be used for social interaction via any network service. It enables people to communicate easily, share information, opinion, personal messages, photos, videos and other content and is available in the public domain. It is almost impossible to remove once it has appeared.

Social Media may include but not be limited to:

- social networking sites (SNS)
- video and photo sharing websites
- blogs, incorporating corporate and personal blogs
- blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. 'comments' or 'your say' feature on many websites)
- micro-blogging
- wikis and online collaborations - a group of documents/web pages which many users can add to or edit freely online
- forums, discussion boards and groups
- instant messaging (including SMS)
- online encyclopaedia

**Vod and Podcasting** – a pre-recorded video or audio style segment or program which is made available on the internet and can be downloaded, viewed or heard on a computer or mobile multimedia device.

## 8. ATTACHMENTS

1. *General Principles, Requirements and Guidelines for Staff when Using Social Media*
2. *School Requirements and Guidelines for Students and Advice for Parents related to the Use of Social Media*

Version Control Table			
Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	January 2020	Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update of position titles</li> <li>• General grammatical updates</li> </ul>
2	February 2021	Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General grammatical, terminology and formatting updates</li> <li>• Examples removed throughout</li> <li>• 4. Reference – Additional bullet points added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints Resolution Policy</li> <li>• School Community Code of Conduct</li> <li>• “Somerville House” removed from the start of “Privacy Policy and Statement”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reference to “Complaint/Grievance Resolution procedures” deleted and replaced with “Complaints Resolution Policy”</li> <li>• 5. Responsibilities – Director of Philanthropy included</li> <li>• 6.1.4 – extended to include “and communicating school-related matters”</li> <li>• 7. 2x bullet points extracted and changed to actual definitions</li> <li>• Attachment 1 clause 1.6 – reference to “6.2.1 (q)” deleted and replaced with “2.6.1”</li> <li>• Attachment 3 clause 3 – additional reference to the exception for SH Foundation social media accounts</li> <li>• Attachment 3 clause 3.3 – deletion of 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point</li> </ul>

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES, REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES FOR STAFF WHEN USING SOCIAL MEDIA**

***This document should be read in conjunction with the full School Social Media Policy which includes the School Requirements and Guidelines for Students when using Social Media document.***

### **1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 1.1 Online behaviour should at all times be ethical, and reflect the values of the School, integrity and respect for others as is expected in direct personal communication and interactions.
- 1.2 Confidentiality of private information must be maintained.
- 1.3 Behaviour and/or comments must ensure that the reputation of the School or any of its members is in no way damaged or brought into disrepute and no statements should be made which are, or could be perceived to be, derogatory or disparaging towards the School or its community members.

Members of the School community with issues to be resolved should refrain from making negative comment via social media and utilise the School's Complaints Resolution Policy to resolve any concerns.

- 1.4 Staff and student online interaction must only occur for purposes of learning.
- 1.5 The School's name, logos, emblems, branding or email addresses may not be used in association with personal accounts or comments on social media sites.
- 1.6 Social Media Accounts or pages may not be established in the School's name nor may any person make representations, comments or statements on the School's behalf without the express authorisation of the Principal or their nominee. Refer to the note 2.6.1 below re requirements related to official Somerville House social media accounts.
- 1.7 All members using social media must read, understand and adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant platform/website, as well as comply with all legal copyright, privacy, defamation, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws.

### **2. SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES**

- 2.1 Maintain a professional profile and only post appropriate content, consistent with the School's and PMSA values, the *Staff Code of Conduct* and the *College of Teachers' Code of Ethics*.
- 2.2 Do **not** divulge, post or publish any confidential, proprietary, or privileged information, pertaining to the School, its staff, its students, its policies, finance or procedures. This information may not appear in a blog, a personal web site or a social networking site.
- 2.3 Use discretion, consider your comments before posting to ensure you are respectful of the online community in which you are interacting.
- 2.4 Use the privacy settings – limit who can access your profile or join the groups you set up.

- 2.5 Do not connect any social media platforms to your School email address unless you are authorised to represent the School on that site.
- 2.6 Do not comment as a representative of the School on social media unless you are authorised to do so by the Principal or their nominee and then through the Director of Communications and Admissions.
- 2.6.1 If you are authorised to comment you **must**:
- disclose you are a staff member at the School and use only your own identity
  - disclose and comment only on information classified as public information
  - ensure all content published is accurate and not misleading
  - comment only on your area of expertise and authority
  - ensure you are NOT the FIRST to make an announcement (unless specifically given permission by the Principal to do so)
- 2.6.2 If you are **not** authorised to speak on the School's behalf and you identify yourself and disclose your affiliation with the School or your comments or profile can identify you as such, you **must** adhere to requirements set out in (i) and also:
- expressly state on all postings which identify you or your association with the School, that the stated views are your personal views and are not those of the School.
- 2.7 Take care that you only disclose and discuss publicly available information.
- 2.8 Do **not** post or respond to material that is, or could be construed to be, offensive, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of Court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful.
- 2.9 Do not accept school students as friends on Facebook or other social networking sites or set up private groups with students. Should students repeatedly try to "befriend" you through social media, ensure you report this to a member of the Leadership Team as a measure of disclosing contact. This is to protect you from possible allegations of grooming minors.
- 2.10 Use professional discretion and prudence before accepting ex-students or parents of current students as friends.
- 2.11 Do not post material that might harm or embarrass any member of the School community or the image/reputation of the School or might harm your own career at some later date.
- 2.12 Do not post school photos, videos or other visual content including images of students to your personal social media platforms.
- 2.13 Make sure that you do not infringe copyright agreements of online providers before distributing materials for educational purposes and ensure all materials are attributed to the original author/source if possible.
- 2.14 Do not discuss or share sensitive and/or confidential workplace documents online with non-Somerville staff.
- 2.15 Ensure that if you have a personal website, that it is suitable for general viewing by students and parents and does not contain any inappropriate content nor links to unsuitable sites.
- 2.16 Ensure that personal use of social media platforms is kept to a minimum during school hours.



**NOTE the following requirements with regard to official Somerville House social media accounts**

3. All social media accounts must be approved, set up and where relevant, have the content checked prior to posting, by the Director of Communications and Admissions or his/her nominee with the exception of the Twitter Account for Sport which is managed by the Director of Co-Curricular Programs and any content must be channelled through them.

An exception also applies to the Somerville House Foundation social media accounts managed by the Director of Philanthropy.

3.1 Facebook

- The official Somerville House Facebook page is a School fan page.
- Subsidiary pages such as sporting teams, support groups or organisations are considered entities or affinity groups and should have group pages which must be approved and passed through the Director of Communications and Admissions.
- There can be no pages set up as “personal or friend” pages which would be in violation of Facebook’s Terms of Use.

3.2 Twitter

- All Twitter accounts should be consistent in naming to ensure consistency of identity and ease of location.
- All accounts must begin with “**Somer**” and then specify department or subgroup.
- No underscores or numerals are permitted.

3.3 Other networking sites (e.g. LinkedIn)

- Check with the Director of Communication and Admissions for information and approval before setting up any school related accounts.

## **SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS AND ADVICE FOR PARENTS RELATED TO THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **1. SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS**

**Students may NOT use social media at school.**

**When using social media *outside* of school, you must ensure that you:**

- 1.1 abide by the School's values, *Code of Behaviour* and policies relating to bullying, harassment, copyright and any laws applicable to the use of social media
- 1.2 respect the rights, confidentiality and privacy of others with whom you engage
- 1.3 use the privacy settings – limit who can access your profile or join any of your groups
- 1.4 do not use the School's hardware, software, equipment or network to access any social media platform unless your teacher requires and approves this for classwork
- 1.5 do not use your school email address to connect to social media platforms
- 1.6 do not record personal details on public sites or share your school user name or passwords with anyone
- 1.7 do not engage in any activity, post any content, make any statements or send electronic messages which could harm the reputation and good standing of the School or harm or embarrass any individuals who are members of its community
- 1.8 do not impersonate or falsely represent another person or falsify your age to sign up for sites which have age limits
- 1.9 do not make defamatory or disparaging remarks about the School or members of the School community
- 1.10 do not use offensive, threatening or bullying language or resort to personal abuse towards other students or members of the School community
- 1.11 do not post content that is hateful, threatening, discriminatory, or incites violence against others
- 1.12 do not post, view or distribute pornography, including sexting
- 1.13 do not film, photograph or record members of the school community or use the resultant images without their permission
- 1.14 do not befriend, follow or connect with school staff on a private, personal level
- 1.15 do not include the School, its logos and uniforms on personal posts or uploads or use services which identifies that you are located at the School
- 1.16 report any content of any nature which you think which could possibly be harmful to the School's or a member of the School community's reputation to a staff member as soon as possible; and
- 1.17 report any member of the School community whose online behaviour or postings may be damaging to the School or some other person to your parents or a Senior Staff member as soon as possible.

## 2. ADVICE TO PARENTS

Parents are expected to be aware of, support and ensure their daughter/s understand and adhere to the School Policy related to the use of social media. It is expected that any communication between parents and other members of the School community utilising social media, will also be in accordance with the General Principles outlined therein.

### 2.1 Guidelines for Parents

- 2.1.1 Monitor the online activities of your daughter/s at home.
- 2.1.2 Reinforce the expectations of the School with regard to the use of social media by students when opportunities arise.
- 2.1.3 Reinforce the potential dangers inherent in engaging in online interaction with strangers particularly with regard to your daughter's safety.
- 2.1.4 Encourage your daughter to report to you or a teacher any inappropriate content or behaviour she encounters.
- 2.1.5 Report to the Head of Year, Dean of Student Wellbeing/Assistant to the Head of Junior School (Pastoral), any incidents of inappropriate online activity, breaches of this policy or any concerns with the content posted on sites your daughter has been accessing.
- 2.1.6 Do not yourself post material that might damage the reputation of the School or embarrass members of its community but bring any concerns or issues personally to the Principal or Deputy Principal in accordance with the *Complaints Resolution* policy.

## 3. USEFUL WEBSITES

<http://www.acma.gov.au>

<http://generationsafe.org.au/>

<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au>