



St Patrick's College
LAUNCESTON

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PARENTS PROTOCOL

AUGUST 2025 | V1.2



SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PARENTS PROTOCOL

VERSION NUMBER:	1.2	APPROVED BY:	Principal
DRAFTED BY:	Leadership Team	DATE APPROVED:	August 2025
RESPONSIBLE/ BREACHES REPORTABLE TO:	Deputy Principal – Administration & Community	SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE:	August 2028

PURPOSE

St Patrick's College understand that contemporary life requires adapting to ever changing methods of communication. The College has protocols in place for appropriate use of social media by staff and students.

As part of the St Patrick's College community, parents* also have a responsibility to engage appropriately with social media that is linked to the College. The following guidelines provide direction on the nature of their engagement in social media activities on any platform in connection with the College either directly, or indirectly, in circumstances where a parent, staff member, student and/or community member of the College is identifiable.

PROTOCOL STATEMENT

The College encourages parents to set and maintain high ethical standards in their use of social networking by being respectful of the opinions of others and ensuring posts and comments help build and support the College community. Parent online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration expected in face-to-face interactions and be in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the College.

The role of parents is to model good digital citizenship for their children.

PROCEDURE

Social Media

Social media comprises relatively inexpensive and accessible tools that enable anyone (even private individuals) to publish or access information. Social media may include (but is not limited to):

- Social networking sites
- Video and photo sharing websites
- Blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs
- Blogs hosted by media outlets
- Micro-blogging
- Wikis and online collaborations

*the definition of a parent in this Protocol also refers to legal guardians and carers of students.



- Vod and podcasting
- Forums discussion boards and groups
- Online multi-playing gaming platforms
- Electronic messaging
- Geo-spatial tagging

Guidelines

The following guidelines apply:

- Parents must adhere to the *Terms of Use* of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment, other applicable laws and College policies and protocols.
- Parents must ensure they do not use or disclose any confidential information, post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful.
- Child Protection protocols must always be observed.
- Under no circumstances should disrespectful or offensive comments be made about staff, students, parents or the College in general. Parents are requested not to comment upon nor forward unsupported information such as rumours concerning the College or comment or post material that might otherwise cause damage to the College's or a staff member's reputation or bring it into disrepute.
- The St Patrick's College *Anti-Bullying and Harassment Protocol* applies to activities which are both online and in the physical workplace.
- Parents are strongly advised against creating social media accounts for the purpose of sharing information regarding College matters (i.e. year group or co-curricular Facebook pages) or that are associated with the College, with the understanding that moderating the conduct of others can be problematic and is subject to the conditions of this Protocol.
- Parents should never discuss sensitive school matters, students, staff or College community members with others online, including using Facebook, blogs and other social media outlets.
- Parents should act on the assumption that all comments and engagement online is in the public domain. Even with the strictest privacy settings, comments expressed online under the impression of a 'private conversation' may end up being shared in a more public domain.
- Strictly no photographs and/or videos of students of the College (with the exception of a parent/s own children) are to be posted.
- Before posting photographs and/or videos that include parents of students and/or staff members of the College, permission must be sought from individuals.
- Staff members are not permitted to accept invitations from parents or send requests to parents to join social media sites.
- Individuals who become aware of positive or negative remarks online regarding the College, its staff or students and/or its operations that are believed to be important, should provide this information to the Principal who will consider such comments on a case by case basis.
- Parents are encouraged to correct any online conduct mistakes as immediate as this becomes apparent, making it clear what they have done to rectify the concern and apologise if the situation warrants it. In cases of major mistakes (i.e. reporting confidential information), parents should advise the Principal immediately so proper steps can be made to help minimise any impact.

Breach of Protocol

Depending on the circumstances, non-compliance with this Protocol may constitute a breach of the St Patrick's College Enrolment Agreement; sexual harassment, child protection or criminal laws; discrimination; privacy or some other contravention of the law.

Failure to comply with the Protocol by a parent may put at risk the continuation of their child's enrolment at the College. In serious cases, termination of the enrolment contractual agreement by the College may result.

Cyberbullying and other online abuses may result in a notification to the Police or other relevant authorities where the College is legally obliged to do so.