

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Wandong Primary School

November 2023 – November 2025

PURPOSE:

To ensure staff, students and parents set and maintain high ethical standards in their use of social networking.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all students and families at Wandong Primary School and should be read in conjunction with the WPS Community Code of Conduct Policy.

POLICY:

Wandong Primary School realises that contemporary life requires adapting to ever changing methods of communication. Social media provides a rare opportunity for WPS to celebrate success and communicate with the wider school community. Students, staff and parents of the school have a responsibility to engage appropriately with social media that is linked to the school. To this end, the school has developed the following guidelines to provide direction when participating in social media activities, e.g. classroom blogs, Facebook, Twitter, emails or any other social media platform/s used by staff, students and parents in connection with the school either directly, or indirectly in circumstances where the school, a parent, staff member and/or student of the school is identifiable. Posts and comments should help build and support the school community and be respectful of the opinions of others. Online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use in face-to-face interactions, and be in accordance with the schools' 'Community Code of Conduct' policy.

- You 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 school policies.
- You must ensure that you do not use or disclose any confidential information, post, share or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, homophobic, ageist, discriminatory against socioeconomic status, 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 school in general. All members of WPS should not comment upon nor forward unsupported information, e.g. rumours concerning the school or comment or post material that might otherwise cause damage to the school's, staff members', parents' or students' reputation or bring it into disrepute.
- Be mindful that, by posting your comments and having online conversations etc. on social media sites you are broadcasting/publishing to the world. Even with the strictest or maximum privacy settings be aware that comments expressed via social networking pages under the impression of a 'private conversation' may still end up being shared into a more public domain.
- Staff, students and parents should never discuss sensitive school matters with others using Facebook, blogs and other social media outlets. As noted above, when posting, even on the strictest privacy settings, staff, students and parents should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
- The school's Bullying Prevention Policy applies to activities which are both online and in the physical workplace.
- Keep in mind that school staff members are not recommended under the social media policy to accept invitations to or from parents or students to join social media sites.
- If you come across positive or negative remarks about the school and/ or its operations online that you believe are important, you may pass those posts to the schools leadership team who will consider such comments on a case by case basis.
- If there is a lack of judgement, be sure to correct any mistake you make immediately, and make clear what you have done to fix it. Apologise if the situation warrants it. If it's a major mistake, e.g. reporting confidential information, let someone know immediately so the school can take the proper steps to help minimise any impact it may have.



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Compliance/Breach of this Policy:

- Posts made to any of the official WPS accounts which contradict the social media policy will not be approved and deleted by the school's moderators.
- Staff and wider school community members who make posts to any social media sites which contradict the school policy will be followed up by school leadership in order to address the non-compliance. For period: November 2019 – November 2023
- Depending on the circumstances, non-compliance with this policy may constitute a breach of contractual/employment obligations, sexual harassment, child protection or criminal laws, discrimination or some other contravention of the law.
- It is important to note that reports of cyber bullying and other technology abuses may result in a notification to the police or other relevant authority/ies where the school is legally obliged to do so.
- In some cases disrespectful, harassing, or bullying behaviour may be considered a criminal offence under state and/or federal law. Under the:
 1. Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth) it is an offence to use a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence.
 2. Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) it is an offence to publish on the internet a statement or material relating to the victim or material claiming to originate from the victim or to give offensive material to the victim, including through electronic means (stalking).
 3. Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) (Enforcement) Act 1995 (Vic) it is an offence to use an on-line information service to publish, transmit objectionable material or make objectionable material available for transmission.
 4. Criminal behaviour can also be reported to the Australian Cybercrime Online Reporting Network (ACORN - <http://www.acorn.gov.au/>) ACORN is a national policing initiative of the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments. It provides advice to the public to help recognise and avoid common types of cybercrime. ACORN also provides a national online system that allows the public to securely report instances of cybercrime (including cyberbullying).

EVALUATION:

This policy was endorsed by the Principal of Wandong Primary School on the 2nd day of November, 2023 and is due for review on the 2nd day of November, 2025.

