



# SANDRINGHAM EAST PRIMARY SCHOOL

## SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

### Rationale:

- Social networking refers to internet-based online social communications sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. These are a world-wide phenomenon, and one which the vast majority of our students and their families will access on a daily basis.
- Social networking sites provide powerful opportunities for individuals to connect with friends and strangers throughout the world, but at the same time, can expose the unwary to hazards and dangers that users must proactively avoid.
- Consequently, our school needs to teach students on how to engage in social networking effectively, responsibly and safely. It is also necessary that our school community, including parents and friends, engage in respectful interactions safely and responsibly.
- A right to privacy and respect are paramount when considering online and social networking. This includes the maintenance of confidentiality, with protection of information a core responsibility of the school.
- It is essential that members of the school community communicate information in line with established protocols so as to preserve the professionalism of the school, to protect the rights of individuals, to uphold our duty of care to students, and comply with departmental and legal requirements.

### Aims:

- For all students and parents to have knowledge of and abide by the legal age for the use of social networking sites.
- For all students to become familiar, competent and responsible users of mainstream social networking sites, whilst learning the skills to maintain the safety, security and privacy of themselves and others at all times.
- For all adults within our school community to respect the safety, privacy and security of others when engaging online in social networking, particularly where the school, its students or other members of the school community may be referenced.
- To ensure that confidential information is managed in a manner consistent with community expectations, professional standards and legal obligations.

### Implementation:

- Students will become skilled and informed about the advantages, disadvantages, opportunities and potential dangers associated with social networks through regular school Cyber Safety and ICT sessions.
- Through Student Information sessions with ACMA or Professional Experts and reinforced by teachers, Students will learn:
  - how to engage with mainstream social networking sites
  - how to create personal identities
  - how to communicate with selective others
  - how to protect their privacy and maintain security
  - how to use proper and appropriate internet protocols when communicating.

- how cyber-bullying impacts others
  - how to avoid and respond to cyber-bullying, and the legal implications and consequences of cyber-bullying (See Bullying Policy and SEPS Acceptable Use Agreement)
  - the importance of privacy and the protection of passwords, access codes and personal information of themselves and others on the school intranet, internet, ICT and digital storage devices
- Through Parent and Staff Information sessions with ACMA or Professional Experts, Parents and Teachers will be:
    - informed about the potential dangers of online social networking
    - gain experiences in identifying and eliminating potentially dangerous behaviour
    - promoted as role models for students and hence reflect on their own use in light of an example to students.
- All Students will abide by the SEPS Acceptable Use Agreement which all students sign at the beginning of the school year
    - The Agreement encompasses the use of ICT and Internet (including social networking sites)
    - The Agreement states consequences for the miss use of technology, inappropriate behaviour (including bullying and posting photos of other students) and unauthorised access to websites and social networking sites.
- Use of Facebook (and other social networking sites)
    - SEPS will use the Fundraising Facebook to communicate with our school community.
    - Privacy settings implemented on the SEPS Facebook pages will not allow others to post to our wall.
    - Staff members will not engage in social networks with students other than as part of the educational program.
    - Staff will not *'friend'* students on personal social networks.
    - Parents, Students and Staff are to consider the rights, privacy and confidentiality of all members of the school community.
    - Parents, Students and Staff will refrain from posting photos where there is no consent (eg: excursion and camp photos) on their personal social networks.
    - Photos published to the SEPS Facebook page will have permission from the photographer and the parents and students depicted.

**Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's annual review cycle.

Approved by School Council December 2014

**Resources:**

- ICT Policy
- Internet and Email Usage Policy
- Bullying Policy
- SEPS Acceptable Use Agreement