

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY - STUDENTS

1. Introduction

The College recognises that social media provides opportunities for students to take part in interactive discussions and share information using Social Networking such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Instagram, Flickr, Tumblr, Tiktok and Snapchat as well as other online platforms. These have become a significant part of life for many people, as a way of keeping in touch with friends and associates and can be used to exchange ideas and thoughts.

However, the use of social media by students can lead to e-Safety issues for themselves and other students and potential damage to the College's reputation.

2. Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for using the College IT systems and mobile devices in accordance with the College Acceptable Use Policy and this Social Networking Policy. You must act safely and responsibly at all times when using the internet or mobile devices.

You are expected to seek help and guidance when you are worried or concerned about Social Networking or believe that an eSafety incident has taken place. Be SMART:

Safe:

- Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information – such as your name, email, phone number, home address, or College details to people who you don't trust online.

Meeting:

- Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' knowledge.

Accepting:

- Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or offensive material.

Reliable:

- Someone online may be lying about who they are, and information you find on the internet may not be reliable.

Tell:

- If someone makes you feel uncomfortable or worried report it to your Tutor or Student Services immediately

3. Online Bullying

Students should not reply to messages that are meant to harass or upset you. This is likely to encourage the bully. You should:

- Keep the message. You don't have to read it, but keep it as proof of harassment for when you look for help or want to report it.
- Report problems to people who can do something about it. You can take control by not putting up with offensive content or by reporting it to the website owners when you come across it.
- Block the sender. You don't have to put up with someone harassing you.
- Tell someone you trust. Talking to your parents, friends, a tutor is usually the first step in dealing with any issue.
- Respect yourself and respect others. Being online is very public and very real, although it doesn't always feel that way.

4. Using Social Media

Students should remember that what they post online may be readily available to the public for a long time (including the College, possible future employers, the media and others). Students should keep this in mind when posting content. Inappropriate content can damage future prospects, potential employers often look at social media sites when considering applications.

Social media should not be used to verbally abuse or intimidate staff, students or others. Respect should be had at all times for other people's privacy and feelings. Care should be taken to avoid language which may be deemed as offensive to others. You should not

- say insulting things about people or organisations;
- say anything that is or could be seen as discriminatory;
- engage in any criminal activity;
- tell lies or mislead people;
- post inappropriate pictures or videos.

If you identify yourself as a student of the College you should not post any comments that could damage its reputation. You should not post negative comments about the College.

When using Social Networks:

- Set your social networking profile to private, so that only your chosen friends can see any photos you publish on it.
- Do not accept friend requests from people you do not know.
- Think before you post any photos of yourself (or comments) on the Internet ask yourself if you would be comfortable with others seeing them.
- Make sure that you use a strong password with a combination of numbers and letters and that you keep this password safe. If you use a public or shared computer cancel any auto-login or 'remember me' functions and always make sure you log out at the end of the session.
- Ensure you set a passcode on your smart phone or devices (do not share this with your friends).

- Install the latest OS updates available to your phone or tablet.
- Only join wireless networks that are known to you.

5. **Data protection and monitoring**

Computers that are the property of the College are primarily designed to assist Students in their study programmes. All Internet use by students will be monitored and websites visited will be logged. Therefore, students should have no expectation of privacy when it comes to the sites they access from College computers and devices.

6. **Inappropriate conduct and excessive use**

Any breach of this policy and any excessive personal use of social media websites will be dealt with in accordance with the College disciplinary procedure.

7. **Informed consent**

All students are required to sign to confirm that they have read and understood this policy and agree to comply with its requirements. Students will confirm this via the Induction passport process.

8. **Method of Monitoring**

8.1. N/A

8.2. **Authorship:** Director of Marketing

8.3. **Date:** July 2022

8.4. **Reviewing Officers:** Director of Marketing

This document is available in a variety of formats. Student Services or main reception will supply guidance on the range

Policy Approval

Name of reviewing Executive Committee: Strategic Leadership Group (SLG)	Chair: B Meredith
Date: 27 th July 2022	Signature: 