



# ALBANY RISE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Social Media Policy

RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2017

REVIEW DATE: 2020

### PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide a practical online guide to support Department employees in schools understand and meet the obligations and recommended standards of behaviours set out within existing instruments, policies and guidelines when using social media tools for personal or professional purposes
- 1.2 To support teachers, students and parents using digital technologies for professional purposes (i.e. teaching and learning) and personal purposes (i.e. communicating, creating and social networking) in a school setting.
- 1.3 Department employees in schools who are interested in using social media tools to engage children and and the broader school community must have a clear educational context to support processes for doing so.
- 1.4 To ensure staff and parent delegates managing social media sites on behalf of the school, have a clear understanding of the school and community expectations in relation to the role they undertake.

### RATIONALE:

Cybersafety is a major concern facing schools, affecting not only children and young people. Parents and Department employees in schools are also at risk of misusing social media or being targeted by a disgruntled young person or member of the school community. This is not a new concept. As with all forms of **inappropriate behaviours** the digital world has simply opened up a new platform for it to occur. Through the provision of clear guidelines, ARPS aims to support clear and appropriate social media communication.

### DEFINITION:

#### Social media may include (although is not limited to):

- social networking (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Snapchat)
- video and photo sharing apps (e.g. Instagram, YouTube, Vine, Pinterest)
- blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs, Tumblr
- blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. comments or your say feature)
- micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter)
- wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)
- forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool)
- vod and podcasting
- online multiplayer gaming platforms
- instant messaging (including SMS, WhatsApp, Viber)
- geo-spatial tagging (Foursquare, Yelp)

### GUIDELINES:

#### Professional use of Social Media

#### 2.1 Becoming authorised to comment:

You can be authorised to use social media in 3 ways:

- a. 'Personal' use describes a social media profile that is 'personal' but where the account owner may make reference to work activities, such as listing, selling or leasing a property, work social events or other day to day events.
- b. 'Professional' use describes a social media profile that is completely work related. The content is industry related, use of the Department of Education and Training (DET) logo

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or school logo and other marketing images may be authorised, clients may be engaged with the profile. This is usually a 'business page'.

- c. 'Administrator' is somebody who comments as the 'Department of Education and Training' (DET) staff member (or nominee) and manages the content of the social media pages. They are responsible for the password(s), building content, responding to customers, monitoring reviews, running competitions and reporting all feedback to the school/ DET.

### 2.2 When DET (employee) has given permission for you to comment as a DET representative in your personal or professional social media profile(s):

- a. You must password protect any/all devices that have access to any/all of the social media sites
- b. Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with DET guidelines
- c. Ensure all content is presented professionally and complies with DET guidelines.
- d. Ensure you are not the first to make an announcement (unless specifically given permission to do so)
- e. Make sure you only disclose and comment on information classified as public information
- f. Comment only on your area of expertise and authority
- g. Ensure comments are respectful of the community in which you are interacting online
- h. 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 and other applicable laws.

### 2.3 If you are authorised to comment as a DET representative, you must not:

- a. 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.
- b. Use or disclose any confidential or secure information
- c. Make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the DET's or school's reputation or bring it into disrepute

### 2.4 If you are authorised to act as an administrator on a DET social media platform:

- a. Maximum of 2 administrators per account, at least one being an DET employee.
- b. Both administrators to have the password and must not reveal to any other party
- c. Change the password regularly and update the other administrator
- d. Must not change the password without consulting the other administrator or the school principal.
- e. If there a security concern, all social media passwords changed immediately.
- f. Create and maintain content that is relevant and appropriate
- g. Ensure content is presented professionally and complies with corporate guidelines
- h. Manage and maintain the contact information and profile information
- i. Respond to all enquiries and reviews from any of the social media sites within 12 hours
- j. Report negative reviews or posts to the Principal immediately

### 2.5 Any new social media account for the office/school must be approved by DET or the school principal.

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### Personal use of Social Media

DET recognises that a staff member, administrator or parent may wish to use social media in their personal life. This policy does not intend to discourage nor unduly limit personal expression or online activities.

However, we recognise the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to DET in certain circumstances via personal use of social media when persons can be identified as a DET employee. Accordingly, staff must comply with this policy to ensure that the risk of such damage is minimised. DET expectations in relation to staff use of social media can be found here:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/socialmedia.aspx>

Staff, students and parents are personally responsible for the content published in a personal capacity on any form of social media platform. When in doubt, seek guidance from the principal or DET on how to comply with the following obligations.

### 2.6 Where your comments or profile can identify you as a DET employee, you must:

- a. Only disclose and discuss publicly available information
- b. Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant DET policies
- c. Expressly state on all postings (identifying you as an employee) the stated views are your own and are not those of DET.
- d. Be polite and respectful to all people you interact with
- e. Adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws, and the department's *Personal Information Policy*.

### 2.7 You must not:

- a. post 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
- b. imply that you are authorised to speak as a representative of DET, nor give the impression that the views you express are those of DET.
- c. use your work email address or any DET/school logos or insignia without authorization from your principal or DET.
- d. use the identity or likeness of another employee, contractor or other member of DET.
- e. use or disclose any confidential information obtained in your capacity as an employee/contractor of DET.
- f. imply you are authorised to speak on behalf of DET, or give the impression that any views you express are those of DET.
- g. use your office email address or any school/DET logos or insignia that may give the impression of official support or endorsement of your personal comment
- h. use or disclose any confidential information or personal information obtained in your capacity as an employee/contractor of the DET.
- i. post material that is, or might be construed as, threatening, make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the reputation of DET or bring it into disrepute.

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### 2.8 Reasonable and unreasonable personal use

When accessing social media via the school's internet, you must do so in accordance with our *Internet and Email Usage Policy*, which requires you to use these resources 'reasonably', in a manner that does not interfere with your work, and is not inappropriate or excessively accessed.

Examples of reasonable use include:

- a. re-tweeting content from the school blog on your own Twitter account
- b. accessing and posting comments on our Facebook and Instagram pages
- c. participating in real estate groups/other school communities on Facebook and LinkedIn
- d. updating Facebook status and posting messages during a lunch break. DET staff should not be engaged in social media during times of direct instruction with students.
- e. departmental resources should not be used to access or post any material that is fraudulent, harassing, threatening, bullying, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, racist, sexist, intimidating, defamatory or otherwise inappropriate or unlawful
- f. you should not use the school's internet and computer resources to provide comments to journalists, politicians and lobby groups other than in the course of their official duties. DET staff must first consult the Media unit before communicating with media. School staff should contact the principal if unsure.
- g. it is not acceptable to spend time using social media that is not related to your work whilst at school.

### 2.9 Cyber Safety

DET staff should refer to the ARPS Cyber Safety policy for information about Cyber safety processes and expectations.

### 2.10 Things to consider when setting up a profile

As a professional working in education, DET staff are expected to act in a manner that reflects their standing in the community; that of a respectful and responsible citizen. Therefore, it is imperative that staff always reflect on their conduct whilst online.

### 2.11 Tips for using social media safely:

- a. It is recommended that staff define any online space as either *personal* or *professional* and then apply the appropriate privacy and/or filtering controls.
- b. When combining personal space with professional space, DET staff must ensure that only appropriate content is posted. Be mindful of the content posted by contacts from your social media profiles as this can be visible to your connections. DET recommends keeping personal and professional social media completely separate.
- c. It is important to consider whether staff require the consent of others ( i.e. colleagues, parents/guardians, community members) before posting photos or 'tagging'.
- d. Ensure you have the appropriate privacy settings activated and check/update these regularly
- e. Read and be familiar with the Terms and Conditions for each platform!
- f. Staff and parents are required to gain parent / guardian consent to upload information, images and videos of children. This is very important as a failure to obtain this consent may amount to a breach of privacy and potential legal action.



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- g. Staff must seek the consent of colleagues, parents/guardians, community members to participate and be included in others' social media activities (tagged/named in posts, uploading photos etc)

### 2.12 Privacy:

Most social media tools have privacy and filtering controls. This allows content to be public or restricted. These controls allow you to restrict who can and cannot view personal information, images and comments that are posted by you or others on to your online space. Be familiar with the site's privacy options and consider how you can use these controls to protect your online identity. Most social media tools provide varying levels of privacy; the following are general examples:

- a. Maximum privacy restrictions can hide your profile within a search function. This means that you will need to invite people to join your profile. If other social media users attempt to search for your profile it will not be listed in the search results. All personal information, images and comments will only be seen by people that you have granted access.
- b. Custom privacy restrictions can enable you to restrict individual elements of your profile's content. For example, you may choose to restrict a selected person's access to some of your profile's content, such as images.
- c. Public/no privacy restrictions will enable all users of the social media tool to access all of your profile's content.

\*Some social media sites allow search engines such as Google access to unrestricted profiles; even if the viewer is not a member of the social media site.

\*\*Remember privacy options and settings are extremely useful to protect your online identity and professional reputation but they are not fool proof. These settings can be changed by the owners of the tool who do not always have an obligation to inform their users. The best way to maintain your professional image is to manage your profile professionally and regularly check for updates to Terms and Conditions that may occur. When using social media tools it is prudent to err on the side of caution.

### 2.13 Other considerations when online

- a. Consider the content you upload or view and whether it reflects your professional image and how you wish to be perceived by others.
- b. Consider whether the content is detrimental to your standing in the community.
- c. Consider whether your friends or others can upload content that may adversely affect your reputation
- d. Consider whether your personal information could potentially be copied and shared with a wider audience.
- e. Consider whether you need specific permission to upload the content. Content may have copyright protection or may require specific permission before it can be uploaded. For example, before uploading images and videos of any person in an online space, specific permission should be sought from that individual
- f. There are plenty of apps and websites that offer free and paid images for you to access and use across your social media channels.
- g. Make sure you have permission to upload photos, video and content from the owners of the content.
- h. Share, repost and tag - Always acknowledge where your content comes from. That is correct social media etiquette.

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- i. When subscribing to 'groups', keep in mind your professional status and consider how these groups may or may not uphold your professional image

### Policies, Instruments and Guidelines:

- *Public Administrations Act 2004 (Vic)* and the VPS Code of Conduct made under that Act, which applies to the public sector
- Part 2.4 of the *Education Training and Reform Act 2006* and any relevant Ministerial Order made under that Act which applies to the teaching service
- *Information Privacy Act 2000*
- Acceptable Use Policy for the Department's ICT Resources

### Professional Codes of Conduct.

Schools should use the *Using Social Media: Guide for DEECD Employees in Schools* as a component of their professional learning programs, see: [Using Social Media: Guide for DEECD Employees in Schools](#)

### Online references:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/socialmedia.aspx>

[http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/socialmedia.a  
spx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/socialmedia.aspx)

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

School Council President: \_\_\_\_\_

Date ratified by School Council: \_\_\_20<sup>th</sup> September 2017 \_\_\_

To be reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_2020\_\_\_\_\_

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