

# Social Media

# Guidelines



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## 1 Context

The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) acknowledges the increasing use of social media to enhance learning and for business purposes. SACCS celebrates the use of social media to foster and support positive relationships and various forms of harmony through the promotion of a culture where there is respect for all and where all are invited to search for truth in dialogue. SACCS encourages school communities to develop reflective and responsible practices around their use of social media.

## 2 Scope

This document is designed to assist Schools and Offices in developing their own social media policies and strategies that reflect Catholic Education South Australia's (CESA) values and suit each community's local context. It provides guidance for staff, students, parents and other workplace participants in their use of social media and it complements the CESA ICT Acceptable Use Baseline Standard document. (Appendix 1).

The document covers:

### **Social Media Principles and Context**

- Definitions of social media
- Principles that underpin the social media guidelines
- Discernment and design in developing social media platforms

### **Social Media and Learning & Teaching**

- Social media enhancing learning
- Purpose and fit for purpose
- Effective learning

### **Social Media and Communicating**

- Discernment and Design in Communication
- Designing Social Media Communications

### **Social Media, Governance and Responsibilities**

- Responsibilities and Roles in line with CESA ICT Acceptable Use Baseline Standard document.
- Processes and procedures for implementing social media
- Governance structures

### **Resources and Further Information**

- CESA ICT Acceptable Use Baseline Standard document.
- CESA Privacy and Consent form

### 3 Policy Supported

These social media guidelines are supported by the SACCS Social Media Policy.

They should also be considered in conjunction with the Information and Communications Security Policy (March 2015) and the CESA Information and Communications Acceptable Use Baseline Standard Document (Sept 2014), CESA ICT Security Framework (Sept 2014).and CESA Privacy and Consent Form (Nov 2013).

### 4 Social Media, Principles and Context

#### What is social media?

Social media is an interactive digital platform for learning and communicating within and between communities and individuals. An online community enables a group of digital users with a shared interest to create, share or consume online content. Social media allows for local and global connections that are immediate, generally open to all and easy to use.

Building a learning community includes being open to new learning, new ways of working and communicating and creating positive learning experiences.

Catholic school communities model, teach and learn together in the digital space informed by their commitment to the dignity and worth of each person while building respectful relationships in real time and online.

The goal for school communities in using social media is to enhance learning and communications connections, leave a positive digital footprint, represent their schools well, communicate responsibly and safely and show respect for others.

#### Principles that underpin the social media guidelines include:

**Subsidiarity** - the discernment and governance of social media resides at the individual school or office

**Ethical use** of digital communication - in building respectful relationships that uphold the dignity and worth of each person

**Interdependence** - in building a learning community and together learning about the possibilities and responsibilities of digital communication.

These principles lead school communities to demonstrate:

- contemporary learning practices that support the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians<sup>2</sup>
- alignment with policies that direct the professional conduct of teachers when working with children
- local governance and discernment regarding the use of social media for learning and communication
- a positive digital footprint that enhances respectful relationships
- behaviours consistent with the responsibilities named in the CESA ICT Acceptable Use Baseline Standard document
- interactive content that represents the tradition and values of Catholic schools

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<sup>2</sup> Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians (December 2008).

- responsible and safe use of social media by all staff, students and community members.

## **Discernment and Design**

### **What are the benefits to schools to use social media in learning and for communication?**

Catholic schools have opportunities to create and share learning and communicate information through social media platforms. The responsibilities for and governance of the processes reside with the school community (principal, staff, parents and students).

A well prepared school will place greater emphasis on discernment and designing systems and protocols to ensure the maximum benefit in the safest learning environment.

### **Discernment**

In beginning to ask some questions in relation to the purposes and uses for social media in a learning community, a school community will learn together about the interactive, dialogic and interpersonal networks and information flow capabilities of social media. To understand the technical complexities, the governance issues and the resource and time investment necessary for effective learning and communication, it is necessary for the school community to develop and document processes and protocols for use.

### **School communities will ask questions that include:**

- which tools will give the best connections?
- what kind of communities will be safe for students to use and will enhance learning opportunities? Will they be closed networks or open-authorized sites?
- an understanding of networks, information flow and shared knowledge and how these connections operate
- who owns the content? Can this be controlled?
- how will branding and identification enhance the image of the school?
- what policies and guidelines will assist to connect in a safe and respectful online space?
- what kind of content can be posted?
- what about subscribing - who can and who can't and who makes the decisions?
- do community members understand duty of care, ethical and legal obligations?

### **Design**

In designing both communication and learning processes the following areas need consideration:

- training to skill staff - and explicit expectations for use of social media
- ensuring a positive footprint - modelling respectful online relationships and professional standards
- documenting processes - administrator and participant roles and access rights.
- a planned content schedule, and monitoring and moderating processes
- school community members will know how to get help and have access to technical, legal and communications assistance.

## 5 Social Media, Learning and Teaching

### How can Social Media Enhance Learning?

Social media offers some potential for highly interpersonal and interactive approaches to learning. In addition to Learning Management Systems and school based Collaboration Spaces, social media has the potential to provide expanded and enhanced learning opportunities beyond the scope of the school and classroom. In particular, they offer learners and their teachers opportunities to:

access a vast array of digital learning content, which can support students' learning and teachers' professional learning

create digital content themselves and publish it online

connect with other learners and teachers and to experts; allowing them to tap into the knowledge and experiences of their peers and have access to highly specific and targeted knowledge in a given field of interest

collaborate, pooling resources and gathering the expertise and potential of a group of people committed to a common objective

- increase achievement with the help of motivating, personalised and engaging learning tools and environments.

In order to take advantage of the possibilities for learning and teaching offered by social media, schools, leaders and teachers will need to ensure that:

- there is a clear educative purpose for the use of social media in learning
- learning occurs in safe, secure and respectful environments – physical and digital
- teachers have the pedagogical strategies and other capacities necessary to stimulate, facilitate and enhance learning processes
- students develop capacities to use social media for learning.

### Planning: Purpose and Fit for Purpose

Embedding social media tools in education demands a reorientation in schools to the organisation and provision of learning programs and enhanced practices that enable and facilitate self-regulated learning processes and a dialogical approach to learning.

School leaders will need to ensure that the school has the educational vision, policies, procedures, structures and teaching capacities to provide effective learning opportunities through social media.

When planning to introduce the use of social media in educational programs, principals are advised to consider the following:

- is there a clear educational purpose for the use of social media in learning and teaching?
- has media been carefully scrutinized and selected to support the school's educational purpose?
- do school policies reflect the purpose of social media and the arrangements for child protection and school security?
- how will intellectual property rights be respected?
- is there clear, consistent and regular communication with families regarding the purpose and use of social media in the school?

- are teachers provided with the necessary professional learning and training to use social media effectively for learning and teaching?
- are students taught and supported to use social media for learning?
- how will the desired benefits of social media be embedded in the school's culture, structures, routines and habits?
- how will the benefits gained be monitored and measured?

### **Effective Learning**

Research indicates that the majority of young people engage with social media as an extension of their existing social networks, such as family and friends. While they are avid users of social media it cannot be assumed that they use social media for learning. Nor can it be assumed that they have the capacities to learn through social media.

If planning to use social media for learning and teaching, teachers are advised to consider the following:

- for what learning processes are social media suitable?
- how will students learn to use social media for learning rather than socialising?
- how will the values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect responsible use and respectful relationships that characterise a Catholic school be taught and reinforced?
- how will students develop informed and critical attitudes towards interactive media that enable them to judge the worth, authority and value of digital information?
- how will digital citizenship be developed and encouraged?
- have clear expectations and protocols for use of digital tools been communicated and agreed?

## **6 Social Media and Communicating**

Social media offers opportunities for schools/learning communities to connect with their audiences/stakeholders both locally and globally. Social media provides the opportunities for communications and business staff to:

- share and communicate stories, current events, news and achievements of the community
- access useful information and resources
- listen to community members and respond to their enquiries related to the school community
- enhance communications with community members and others, building relationships
- create digital content and to publish it online
- build online communities which enhance the level of collaboration and sharing of resources.

In order to take advantage of the possibilities for business, communications and promotions offered by social media, school leaders, staff and the school community will need to ensure that:

- there is a clear purpose and benefit for communications for the school community

- online interaction is both respectful and safe and that it represents the school and its values
- staff have the resources and capacities necessary to manage social media.

The use of social media by a school/office needs to be authentic and should be integrated with the strategic plan. The plan can include goals and measurable targets, and any social media strategy developed should be consistent with the community's resources, needs and objectives.

This will require the development of a school/office social media policy. Developing a positive presence for a school/office is important as social media is about making connections and the level of openness varies from platform to platform, and generally this is not controlled by the user.

### **Discernment and Design in Communication**

In discerning the kind of communication platform a school/ office will ask questions about the purpose of the communication.

Is the purpose:

- advertising an event?
- wanting a comment or response?
- to get across a key message?
- about building greater connection?
- about generating an audience?
- a call to community action?
- focusing on increased awareness and building a community rather than the content?
- to reflect the school values, mission or a key message from the school/ office?

### **Designing**

In designing the kind of communication platform, the school will consider:

- how to analyse and use any social media responses
  - how to get the best resource for the type of communication
  - what training and skilling is required
  - what policies and practices are needed for successful communications on social media
  - contingency plans for social media problems and for when things go wrong.
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- record management and documentation processes
  - which alternative communication channel will be used to reach those who do not use social media?
  - how the school brand is being represented when postings reach an unintended audience?

Communications will model the principles of a Catholic school/office community and the design of communication will leave a positive footprint that:

- is acceptable to the community and represents the school/office community



- promotes the professional role of a teacher/staff or Catholic school/office community member
- is in accord with professional standards for working with children.

## 7 Designing Social Media Communication

The design of a social media communication strategy and processes will include consideration of:

- which platforms to use and what content will be produced?
- a clear purpose for each communication
- knowledge of the target group
- who will manage the social media content and platforms?
- When and how often to update the content?
- the resources necessary to develop the strategy.

## 8 Social Media, Governance and Responsibilities

CESA ICT Acceptable Use Baseline Standard document describes the responsibilities and roles within a school community to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the community in relation to the use of digital communication. (Appendix 1)

It is essential that each school/ office develops a local social media policy that is disseminated to the school community and is reviewed regularly. (Appendix 2)

Schools may wish to use frameworks that cover the essential elements of governance, training, education programs and how to get assistance. Frameworks include:

- The National Safe School Framework <http://www.safeschoolshub.edu.au/home>
- The E-Smart Schools Framework <https://www.esmartschools.org.au>
- ACMA Cybersmart website <http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/>

### **A school/ office community will develop their local policy that:**

- makes clear the expectation for the use of any digital communication
- details the responsibilities for school leaders, staff, students and community members

### **Processes and procedures for implementation:**

- where to get help and assistance when needed
- a whole of school/ office response to digital use is considered and signed agreements are implemented each year
- the E Smart Schools framework (or similar) is used to consider all elements of a proposed school plan
- the school/office makes decisions together and understands the purpose, benefits and expectations of social media
- the school/office makes clear the professional standards and duty of care in working with students
- privacy and confidentiality issues are addressed

- sensitive content is considered and the names of children and sensitive images are not used
- ownership of the content and the consequences are understood
- leadership of the school/ office makes clear what platforms, communications and connections are cleared for use each year
- CESA Privacy and Consent Forms are signed, collected and stored each year
- processes for reporting inappropriate or threatening usage
- permissions and consent forms for uploading content and particular activities and events.

#### **Governance structures include:**

- an understanding that governance is the responsibility of each school/ office community and a formal school/ office committee may lead the community to develop policies, processes and professional learning
- structures and processes for discernment of social media uses and tools.
- user agreements including age restrictions of users, copyright, legal requirements, location (there is considerable difficulty with offshore sites and redress following incidents)
- clarity regarding who can manage the content, moderation and monitoring.
- advice and training for staff, parents and students
- accountability processes for the school/ office in relation to interventions and misuse of digital tools and communication. (This may include the installation of the cybersafety help button on school intranet, cybersafety resources e.g. e-smart schools)
- policies that make clear the out of school accountability for staff, community members and students including the impact on the wellbeing of others, the impact on the school/ office reputation and the school/office environment
- clarity in relation to consequences for misuse of the school's/office's digital tools and any communication, either professional or personal by school community members. Any communication that could be considered bullying, harassment, threatening or defamation may have a legal implication, professional standards and/or school/office discipline response
- restrictions on use
- ongoing review timelines.

## **9 Resources and Further Information**

- SACCS Social Media Policy
- CESA Information and Communications Acceptable Use Baseline Standard Document (Sept 2014)
- CESA ICT Security Framework (Sept 2014)
- SACCS Information and Communications Security Policy (March 2015)
- CESA Privacy and Consent Form – (Nov 2013)

**Further information may be found at:**

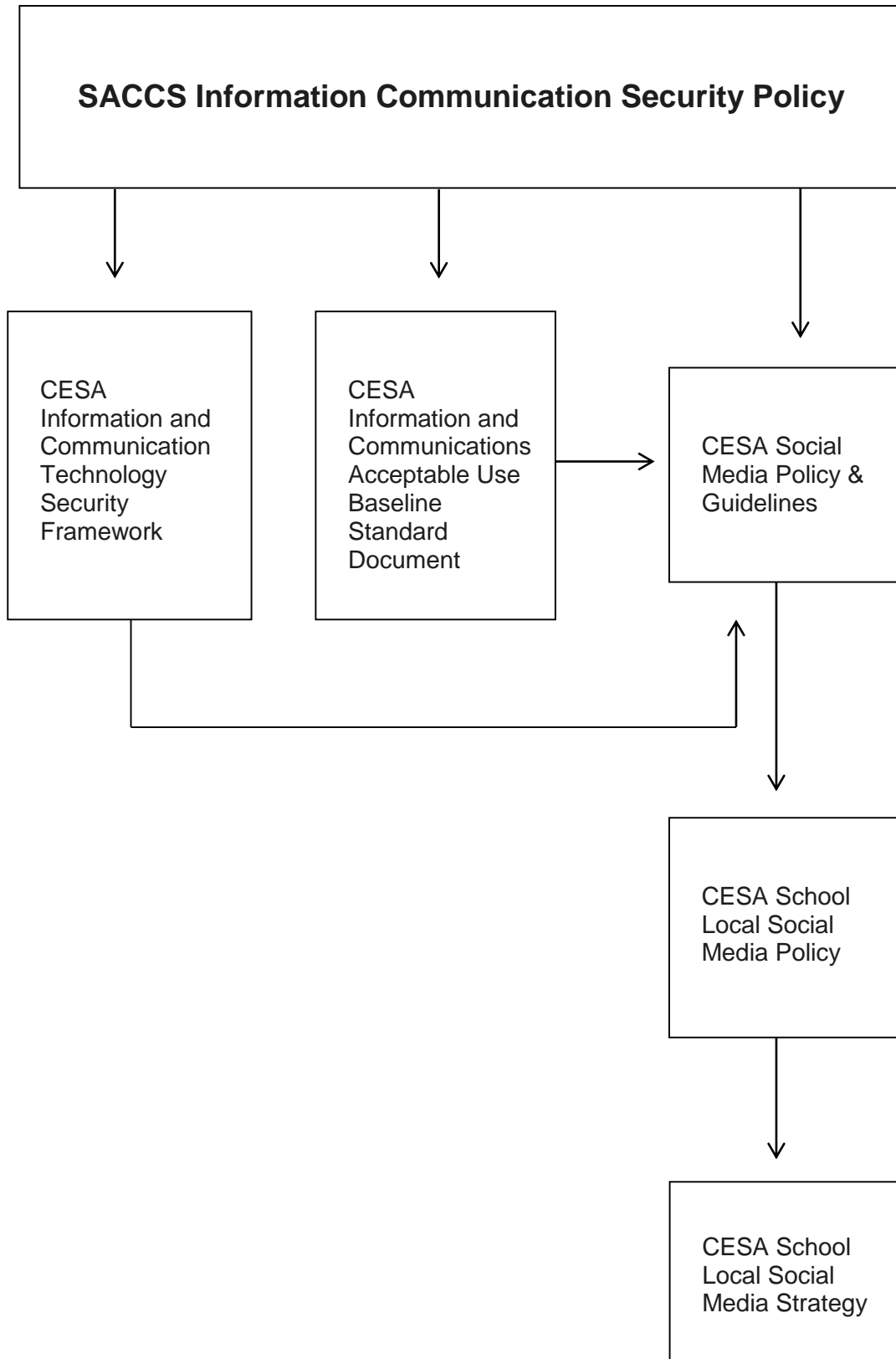
- DECD: Cyber Safety: Keeping Children Safe in a Connected World  
<http://online.cesnet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-18631/CyberSafetyKeepingChildre%5B1%5D.pdf>
- The National Safe School Framework  
<http://www.safeschoolshub.edu.au/home>
- The E-Smart Schools Framework <https://www.esmartschools.org.au>  
Australian Communication and Media Authority: Cybersmart website  
<https://esafety.gov.au/?from=cybersmart>

## 10 Revision Record

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## Appendix 1

### CESA Information, Communications and Technology Documents and connection to the Social Media Documents



## Appendix 2

### Possible Structure for School Social Media Policy

#### Contents

1	Purpose
2	Scope
3	Policy
4	Definitions
5	Responsibility for implementation, monitoring, and continual improvement
6	Supporting procedures or policy support documents
7	Revision Record

#### 1 Purpose

Policies will typically have a brief statement such as:

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the position of (name of school, suburb) in relation to social media.

#### 2 Scope

Policies will have a brief statement to identify who the policy applies to:

This policy applies to all staff and persons at (name of school, suburb). It also applies to contractors, people on work experience, trainees and volunteers to the school.

#### 3 Policy

Key elements of the position of the school will be clearly articulated in this section. Dot points may be used where there are a number of key points to the school's policy position. These points will be explicated and operationalised in a Procedure, Strategy or other supporting document.

This policy applies to (school name). In the social media arena this school is committed to:

- the ethical usage of digital communications in building respectful relationships that uphold the dignity of each person.
- building the school's learning community.
- the development of a positive school/ Catholic Education SA brand and digital footprint.

- the development of the strong positioning of (name of school) in the wider community and in the field of education.

## 4 Definitions

Key terms will be defined where necessary to convey how they are being used by the school. Perhaps use dot points and bold the terms to be defined then use regular text to complete the sentence.

- **Staff** means staff employed in (name school).
- **Social media** is an interactive digital platform for learning and communicating within and between communities and individuals.
- **Digital communications** and e.communications refers to all forms of online postings and interactions.
- **Ethical usage of digital communications** relates to moral principles in accordance with the standards and practices and appropriate conduct for those working in any capacity representing (school name). This current policy is informed by the SACCS Responsible Usage of Information Communications Technology Policy ethical perspectives.

## 5 Responsibility for implementing, monitoring and to continual improvement

Those who are involved with the implementation of the procedure are identified in this section.

Responsibility for implementation, monitoring and review of the policy is vested at the level appropriate to the following roles:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- ICT coordinator

Responsibilities for tasks associated with social media implementation include:

- Submitting content (specify role eg staff members)
- Authoring content (specify eg teachers)
- Editing content (specify eg principal's PA or Key Literacy Teacher)
- Approving content (eg a member of the leadership team)
- Posting content (eg members of the leadership team and web support staff)
- Responding to comments / remove content (members of the leadership team)

## 6 Supporting procedures or policy support documents

Key documents from SACCS or other sources that support the policy will be identified

The following documents are to be read in conjunction with, and are additional to, any other relevant South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS), school or CEO policy, procedure or support document.

- SACCS Social Media Policy
- SACCS Social Media Guidelines
- SACCS Information Communication Security Policy
- SACCS Information and Communications Acceptable Use Baseline Standard Document
- SACCS Information and Communications Technology Security Framework

See Appendix 1

## 7 Revision Record

<b>Document Title</b>	(School Name) Social Media Policy
<b>Document Type</b>	School Policy
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<b>Process Owner</b>	Principal or Leadership Team
<b>Contact</b>	Person's name/ email address/ phone number
<b>Approval Authority</b>	(School name) School Board
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