Social Media Policy for Murray Bridge High School

Purpose:
The purpose of the Murray Bridge High School social media pages is to:
Provide up to date information that is useful for parents and caregivers in the current and upcoming events of Murray Bridge High School

Scope:
This policy applies to all Murray Bridge High School staff who use a social media platform in their professional capacity.
This policy has been developed to assist all staff members to use social media to –
• Engage with the wider community as a communication tool
• Showcase student work
• Integrate with, and facilitate teaching and learning
• Administer social media platforms in an authorised capacity or make contributions in a professional capacity on education related issues

Policy Statement:
The use of social media websites and applications by organisations as a means of communication has grown rapidly over the last few years. Social media is a legitimate tool for aiding communication and enhancing teaching and development.

The South Australian Department for Education and Child Development (the department) endorses and encourages the use of social media.

This policy aims to raise the opportunities that social media presents for communication and learning, and balance these with the risks that come with the use of any new technology and consideration of the needs of children, particularly vulnerable children.

Policy Details:

Site information and communication technology (ICT) coordinators and principals have the ability to set and control the ICT environment necessary to allow the use of social media while ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place, to the best of their abilities. When setting and maintaining the establishment of social media the following departmental policies must be adhered to: ICT Standard – Acceptable use policies for schools, preschools and children’s services sites and ICT security. The Acceptable use policy reinforces to users the type of behaviours that are appropriate whilst using departmental ICT facilities and services. Adherence to these policies must be in the form of a written agreement and signed by staff, students and/or parents/guardians (as appropriate). This agreement must outline the terms and conditions of using departmental ICT facilities and of online behaviours and access privileges, and consequences for non-compliance. In the case of students, involving parents/guardians in these agreements reinforces the fact that the agreement is taken seriously and is part of the partnership between school and home. A significant element of an acceptable use agreement is to emphasise strategies for personal safety.

The Online Communications Services Unit is responsible for approving all social media activity within Central Office and regional offices, or delegating authorisation as appropriate.
When posting online all Murray Bridge High School Staff must:

- be aware of the specific social media channels and etiquette and understand the views and feelings of the target community
- ensure all material published is respectful of all individuals and the department and/or specific social media site and not publish any material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, breaches a Court Suppression Order, or is otherwise unlawful
- ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading
- ensure all information posted or comment made on government policy is appropriate to the individual’s area of expertise and authority, remains politically neutral and does not breach any confidentiality guidelines and that a person is not the first to make a significant announcement (unless specifically given permission to do so)
- respect copyright laws and attributing work to the original source wherever possible
- protect personal details
- use government branding in accordance with the Government of South Australia branding guidelines
- ensure any young people involved understand the rules of operation of each social media site, and measures are in place to protect them from any potential risks.

Departmental staff may use the Government’s name to endorse companies, products, opinions or causes only where official endorsement already exists. For guidance on this issue, please refer to the DPC Circular 023: Private Sector Endorsements on Government Public Communications.

If staff notice inappropriate or unlawful online content relating to the department, or content published in breach of this policy, this should be reported to the Online Communication Services Unit via email (DECDintraweb@sa.gov.au) or by phone 8226 2068.

Incorporating new and emerging media into development and learning is important to enable our young people to learn how to navigate their global community. Staff members have an obligation when introducing young people to any new media to ensure, to the best of their abilities, that their safety is protected. When introducing social media site leaders need to set up processes which enable discussions and strategies to help young people use social networking tools effectively and safely. Processes need to ensure that the needs of vulnerable children, including those children in State care are appropriately addressed.

Staff members are responsible for maintaining a professional role with students. This means establishing clear professional boundaries with students that serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings or a violation of professional relationships. Protective practices for staff and their interactions with children and young people (2011) contains examples which will assist departmental staff in establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries. Most importantly, teachers must not have children or young people in their education community as ‘friends’ on their personal/private sites. However, wherever possible, it is appropriate to build a social media presence (eg, Facebook) for the site, or the classroom, or the subject within the class, and then set rules and guidelines about its use and monitor its content. It is advisable to set up class groups as closed groups, so that permission needs to be given by the page administrator to gain access.

Cyber-safety: Keeping children safe in a connected world provides guidelines to assist leaders, educators and parents to promote learning, protection and safety.
Roles and Responsibilities:

**Principals/Line Managers/ICT Coordinators:**

- Ensure approval for social media activity from principal/director (site staff) or the Online Communication Services Unit (Central Office and regional office staff)
- Ensure the IT requirements for establishing social media activities and profiles are in place
- Ensure cyber-safety use agreements are in place for all staff, children and students
- Ensure that staff understand and comply with this policy
- Provide relevant training to teachers and young people who will be using social media
- Ensure protective practices are in place to safeguard teachers and students
- Provide opportunities for staff and students to identify and report offensive online material or behaviour
- Ensure cyber-safety use agreements are in place for all staff, children and students
- Act to quickly remedy issues when they arise and support staff and young people through these processes
- Model best practice social media usage
- Ensure that IT access has appropriate safeguards in place to protect students

**Teaching/children's services staff**

- Ensure approval has been granted for social media activity from the relevant principal/director
- Teach strategies to maintain a positive online presence and protect identity
- Teach children and students how to identify and avoid inappropriate materials
- Ensure that the site conforms with State Office branding standards and clearly identifies your site

**Children and young people**

- Follow the cyber-safety use agreement of the school
- Avoid any involvement with material or activities that could put at risk personal safety, or the privacy, safety or security of the school or other members of the school community
- Apply cyber-safety strategies and instructions when using social media
DEFINITIONS

Social Media

Social media (sometimes referred to as ‘social networking’) are online services and tools used for publishing, sharing and discussing information. The list of social media types is extensive with new and innovative social media sites being developed almost every day. Staff can determine what social media platform adds value to their particular need. This list is provided as a guide to the types of social media currently available:

- **Social networking sites**: are websites that allow you to create a personal profile about yourself and then chat and share information with others such as family and friends eg, Facebook, Edmodo, Myspace, LinkedIn, Yammer

- **Video, audio and photo sharing websites**: are sites that allow you to upload and share videos, sounds and photos which can be viewed/heard by web users the world over eg, Flickr, YouTube, iTunes U, Vimeo, SoundCloud

- **Blog**: A blog (short for web log) is a kind of online diary, where you regularly post about your life, your passions, business, news or other interests. It is a way of having your own space in the virtual world eg, WordPress, Blogger

- **Microblogging apps**: are websites that post micro-blog like posts to announce what you are currently doing eg, Twitter, Yammer, Tumblr

- **Location-based apps**: (also known as Geolocation) are applications with the capability to detect and record where you and other people are located

- **Wikis**: are websites where users create, edit and share information about a particular subject or topic eg, Wikipedia, Wikispaces

- **Online gaming**: are games played over some form of computer network and are often based around a community of users eg, Steam

- **News aggregation**: news aggregators provide a list of the latest news stories published by users from a range of different web sites eg, Digg

- **Ning**: an online platform for people and organisations to create custom social networks around specific interests. Ning offers the ability to create an invited closed community website with a customised appearance and feel, feature sets such as forums, blogs, photos, and videos

- **Forums or message boards**: are online discussion sites where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages

- **Online multiplayer gaming platforms**: are multiplayer video games which are capable of supporting hundreds or thousands of players simultaneously and usually feature at least one persistent world (eg, World of Warcraft).

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children, in the context of this social media policy, refer to those children whose circumstances and/or personal characteristics place them at increased risk of harm when using social media. This may include children under Court Orders where contact between a child and another person, including a family member may be unlawful eg, children under the Guardianship of the Minister, children subject to a Witness Protection Order, or children subject to a Family Court Order.