

## Community use of Social Media

Schools are increasingly embracing social media to communicate with parents about school events and to share experiences of students' learning. It is a powerful tool to build relationships between parents and the school and among the parent community and to enable parents to have a window into their child's school day.

However social media also has the potential to be a destructive influence within a school community. Irritations and grumbles that might once have been the subject of a brief exchange among two or three parents face to face or on the phone now have the capacity to reach people through the school community and beyond it. Not only can this escalate a minor grumble into a major issue it can harm the reputation of a school, a staff member or a student, polarise a community and in the most serious cases where false allegations are made about an individual, open the person making the post to a defamation action.

In order to maximise the benefits of social media, both official school sites and private sites, it is recommended that members of the community follow these guidelines:

- Respect each person's human dignity
- Do not say something on social media you would not say to someone in person
- If you have a complaint, raise it with the school in accordance with the Complaints Handling Policy
- Be respectful of other people's privacy, particularly that of students
- If you are uncomfortable about someone else's social media comment, express your concerns and if the person does not desist, unsubscribe from the site.

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