POLICY: Social Media Policy

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set standards of behaviour for the use of Social Media that are consistent with the broader values and expectations of the St Michael's College community. It is about creating an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability.

St Michael's College aims to protect the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and the College community.

2. SCOPE

The policy is applicable to all employees, contractors, students, parents and community members of St Michael's College, Merrimac.

3. RATIONALE

This policy is aligned with Brisbane Catholic Education's (BCE's) and St Michael's College's Mission, Vision and Values and establishes an expected standard of conduct for St Michael's College employees, contractors, students, parents and community members while using Social Media that is supportive of the ethos of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane. It also responds to BCE's statutory obligations in relation to diversity, equity and health and safety of all employees.

4. INTRODUCTION

St Michael's College realises that part of 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of teachers, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in these digital environments is a part of 21st century learning.

The College accepts that the use of Social Media can be an effective business and social tool and that such social media is commonly used by members of the St Michael's College community to express their views, comments, and ideas on a whole range of issues.

All members of the St Michael's College community are expected to uphold the values of the College in all Social Media interactions such that they will not act in such a way that the image of St Michael's College is brought into disrepute nor in a way that harms members of the College community.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

St Michael's College is a Catholic College that commits to Gospel values that include respect, care and love. As a consequence, the College only countenances use of Social Media in contexts of respectful, positive and professional life as lived by all members of the St Michael's College community.

Consequently:

5.1   When using Social Media all members (employees, contractors, students, parents and community members) of the St Michael's College community are required to show courtesy and respect to others.

5.2   Social Media will not be used to abuse others, expose them to offensive or inappropriate content or to denigrate or show disrespect for the College or members of its community.

5.3   When using Social Media it is expected that all members of the College community be required to behave in such a manner that the welfare of members of the College community is not adversely impacted upon or reputation of the College is not negatively affected or brought into disrepute.

6. DEFINITIONS

Social Media – refers to all social networking sites such as, but not limited to:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram

- LinkedIn
- WhatsApp
- SnapChat
- Yammer
- YouTube
- Online gaming platforms

7. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A community can only function effectively when all members afford and treat each other with respect. Members of the College community are expected to give respect to others and the reputation and good name of the College.

This policy is not intended to discourage nor unduly limit a person's personal expression or online activities; however, potential for direct or indirect damage to be caused to others in our community or the College through inappropriate use of social media is very real. As such a person's online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that a person uses face-to-face, and be in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the College.

When using Social Media, members of our community will:

- Demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries and behaviours
- Demonstrate good digital citizenship
- Ensure their online behaviour reflects the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that a person uses when communicating face-to-face
- Respect the rights, privacy and confidentiality of others
- Ensure all content published is accurate and not misleading
- Consider whether how and what is posted reflects our Gospel values faithfully, upholds the highest professional standards, and conveys great personal integrity
- Think before they post
- Not post or respond to material that is a gratuitous personal attack or inflammatory remark
- Not post or respond to material that is critical of a Brisbane Catholic Education employee or any other member of the St Michael's College community
- Not use St Michael's College logos, emblems, mottos etc unless prior authorisation has been granted by the College Principal
- Not create any social media presence (e.g. page or profile or chat etc) that involves the College name (in full or abbreviation), logo, or information that could reasonably be inferred to be associated with the College, without the prior approval of the College Principal
- Not post or respond to material that is defamatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, violent, racist, sexist, invasive of a person's privacy, pornographic, infringes copyright or is otherwise unlawful or might cause damage to the College's reputation or bring it into disrepute.

It is important to note that even with the strictest privacy settings what a person 'says' online should be in keeping with the expectations outlined above. A 'private conversation' may still end up being shared into a more public domain, even with privacy settings on maximum. As such a person is always responsible for what they post regardless of circumstances or intention.

8. BREACH OF THIS POLICY

A breach of this policy may also involve a breach of other St Michael's policies, such as, but not limited to:

- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Parent and Community Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- QCT Professional Standards
- Privacy Policy

If an employee, parent/carer or student becomes aware of negative remarks about the College and/or its operations online, they are required to pass these onto the College. Any breach of this policy will be considered by the College Leadership Team as serious, and will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Student sanctions may include, but are not limited to, the loss of computer privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion from the College.

Parents who breach this policy may be asked to withdraw their child from the College in cases which adversely reflect on St Michael's College.

It is important that staff, students and parents should be aware that in certain circumstances where a crime has or may have been committed, they may be subjected to a criminal investigation by Police over which the College will have no control.

All reports of cyber bullying and other technology misuses will be investigated and may result in a notification to Police.

Defamatory online content may give rise to litigation.

9. REFERENCES

- St Michael's College Parent and Community Code of Conduct

10. DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Version	V1 07/2019
Audience	St Michael's Community (Staff/Students/Parents)
Policy Owner	St Michael's College Board
Policy Manager	St Michael's College CLT
Effective date	01/08/2019
Last review date	31/07/2019
Next review date	31/07/2020