



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY 2019 - 2021

Rationale:

Emerging technologies and online platforms have become tools frequented by employees both at work and in life beyond work.

Cranbourne East Secondary College recognises that the use of technology forms a useful part of contemporary teaching and learning practice. The use of these technologies by employees to engage, collaborate, learn and share information is considered by the College to be appropriate in the context of the College's work and communication with its community.

This policy has been developed to provide guidance to employees who participate in online social media activities.

The College aims to foster an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability, keeping in mind that the actions of and information provided by employees is a reflection on the entire College.

Objectives:

- To ensure that Cranbourne East Secondary College stays at the forefront of digital learning
- To create meaningful digital learning experiences that enhance student learning and create a responsible learning community
- To reinforce within the school community that online behaviour and communication is governed by the same high expectations that govern all interactions at the College
- To ensure that all interactions between staff and students happens in accordance with our legal responsibilities.

Definitions:

Social Networking is the use of Social Media applications such as:

- Social networking sites that allow users to build online profiles and share content with other profiles to which they choose to be linked (including but not limited to Facebook, Google+, Twitter and LinkedIn)
- Content sharing sites that host and distribute user-created or user-uploaded multimedia content (including but not limited to YouTube, Flickr, wikis and blogs)
- Instant messaging services that allow users to send images, voicemail, emoticons and text messages
- Any other Web 2.0 applications (dynamic or user generated content) as developed from time to time.

Guidelines for Staff:

In the context of employment at Cranbourne East Secondary College, all employees are expected to use social networking sites in a manner that does not negatively impact upon:

- Their employment
- Their professional reputation

- Their ability to fulfil inherent requirements of their role
- It is the policy of Cranbourne East Secondary College that employees refrain from the following whilst using social networking sites:
 - Making statements that adversely affect the school's reputation
 - Discussing, criticising, identifying or naming students, parents, other employees, community partners, and/or anyone associated with the school either directly or inferred
 - Using defamatory, harassing, or disparaging language or images about Cranbourne East Secondary College and the school community
 - Issuing or forwarding content that violates the law (e.g. Obscenity) or the rules, standards of conduct or requirements applicable to employees of the Department of Education
 - Writing or commenting on content that would violate the rules, standards of conduct or requirements applicable to employees of the Department of Education.

When interacting with students on social networking sites, all staff are reminded of their legal responsibilities:

The VIT Code of Conduct states that:

'Teachers are always in a professional relationship with the students in their school, whether at school or not. Teachers hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students.'

Principle 1.5

A professional relationship will be violated if a teacher... :

In part (d) - 'holds conversations of a personal nature or has contact with a student via written or electronic means including email, letters, telephone, text messages or chat lines, without a valid context';

Principle 2.1

The personal conduct of a teacher will have an impact on the professional standing of that teacher and on the profession as a whole. It is expected that teachers will:

- a) Be positive role models at school and in the community
- b) Ensure that their personal or financial interests do not interfere with the performance of their duties
- c) Act with discretion and maintain confidentiality when discussing workplace issues.

The DET Legal Division advises that staff should not post images or videos of students on personal social media pages. The Department's guidance states that an employee's online space should either be defined as "personal" or "professional":

"It is recommended that you define your online space as either personal OR professional and then apply the appropriate privacy and/or filtering controls. Combining your personal space with your professional space may result in the blurring of your professional relationship with students, parents and others in the school community; or may, in some circumstances, even amount to professional misconduct.

If you decide to use a social media tool for classroom/professional use then it is recommended that you create a completely separate online space for this purpose. This online space should be treated with the same professionalism as is displayed at school. All correspondence and content that is uploaded must have a clear educational

context/purpose.”

Where an employee creates a professional online space, for an educational purpose, and wishes to upload images or videos of students, the employee must first seek consent of parents/guardians, to avoid breaching privacy.

“Establishing a social media tool for an educational purpose may require the consent of your Principal. You should consult with the Department/school-based policies and your manager/principal for further information.

In addition, you should seek the consent of parents/guardians for students to participate and register to use social media tools.

You will be required to gain parent/guardian consent to upload information, images and videos of the students. This is very important as a failure to obtain this consent may amount to a breach of privacy.”

Guidelines for Students:

- Student behaviour on school-related social networking platforms, both during and after school hours, is governed by the same behavioural expectations as their interactions and behaviour at school. Consequences will be in line with those given for similar offline behaviours
- Students are expected to screenshot any anti-social or illegal behaviour that they witness on social media that is being used in an educational context and report to their Year Level Leader
- Students should not make statements that adversely affect the school’s reputation
- Students will not discuss, criticise, identify or name other students, parents, staff, community partners, and anyone associated with the school
- Students will not use defamatory, harassing, or disparaging language or images about Cranbourne East Secondary College and the school community
- Students will not issue or forwarding content that violates the law (e.g. Obscenity)
- Students will not write or comment on content that would violate the school rules, standards of conduct or requirements applicable to staff members.

References

Links which are connected with this policy are:

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