



## **GUIDELINE: Social Media Use**

---

### **1. PURPOSE**

Quality Relationships are at the core of our School Values and the importance of good communication cannot be underestimated. At Our Lady of Lourdes School we seek to educate all students and staff regarding appropriate Social Media Use. We will work in partnership with parents, to ensure safe, appropriate use of Social Media is used for all community members. The school will commit to responsible and achievable management practices in reducing any foreseeable risks associated with the use of Social Media within the school environment.

### **2. GUIDELINE**

#### **2.1 Communication**

Our Lady of Lourdes is committed to effective dissemination of information and communication within the School and with students, parents, carers, stakeholders and the media. All communication must support the overall values and aims of Our Lady of Lourdes.

As part of the Our Lady of Lourdes school community, parents of the school also have a responsibility to engage appropriately with Social Media that is linked to or associated with the School. Our Lady of Lourdes has therefore adopted these guidelines to provide direction for parents and care-givers when participating in Social Media activities used by parents and care-givers in connection with the School either directly or indirectly in circumstances where the School, a parent or care-giver, a staff member and/or student of the School is identifiable.

The School encourages parents and care-givers to set and maintain high ethical standards in their use of social networking. Parents and care-givers are expected to:

- be respectful of others' opinions;
- use Social Media to help build and support the school community;
- reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that parents are expected to use in face-to-face interactions; and
- act in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the School.

#### **2.2 Expectations of the School when using Social Media**

The purpose of these guidelines are to ensure that parents and care-givers of the School understand the expectations of the School when using Social Media (such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram) and are informed of the importance of managing the risks associated with such use that may impact on the reputation of the School and/or the safety of its students, staff, parents, care-givers and other stakeholders.

Our Lady of Lourdes acknowledges that the use of Social Media can be an effective educational, business and social tool and that such media is commonly used by members of the School community to express their views, comments, ideas and criticism on a whole range of issues.

These guidelines are in place for the mutual protection of the School and its stakeholders and is not intended to prevent, discourage or unduly limit the expression of personal opinion or online activities.

These guidelines operate in conjunction with BCE policies various guidelines of the School.



## **GUIDELINE: Social Media Use**

---

It is intended that these guidelines will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain current and relevant to the fast-moving nature of Social Media programs.

The purpose of these guidelines is to:

- encourage social networking and digital media to be used in a beneficial and positive way for the School;
- safeguard the brand and reputation of the School;
- safeguard staff, students, parents, care-givers and stakeholders in the School community;
- clarify what the School considers to be appropriate and inappropriate use of social networking and digital media by School community members; and
- set out the procedures that will be followed where it is considered that School community members have inappropriately or unlawfully used social networking and digital media.

### **2.3 Authorisation of Our Lady of Lourdes Presence**

- Any presence of Our Lady of Lourdes on any Social Media platform, including without limitation school related accounts or informal pages which identify a link to or association with Our Lady of Lourdes, must be authorised by the Principal.
- The School may, in its sole discretion, review, edit, remove or otherwise shut down any sites, accounts or pages existing without prior authorisation from the Principal.
- Any Our Lady of Lourdes promotional images or imagery that depicts the Our Lady of Lourdes uniform, logo or which can identify Our Lady of Lourdes is considered by the School to be a reflection of the School brand and accordingly is required to be authorised in accordance with this clause.

### **2.4 Requirement for Authorisation**

Authorisation for Social Media platforms is required for the following without limitation:

- co-curricular activities;
- year levels;
- teams/age groups;
- excursions;
- P&F Association and any activities undertaken by the P&F Association;
- support Groups;
- affiliated Groups; and
- other sites associated with Our Lady of Lourdes.

Only Our Lady of Lourdes community members authorised by the Principal (preferably a Our Lady of Lourdes staff member) may create Social Media identities, profiles or accounts that use the School's name or brand or are designed to represent the School in any way, including those identifiable through images, uniform or name.

Once authorised, the Social Media Content owners are entirely responsible for regular monitoring of the site, appropriate online conduct and adhering to the School's Social Media Guidelines.

Before posting photographs or videos, permission should be sought from the subject. This is especially the case where photographs or videos include parents or care-givers of students or staff members of



## **GUIDELINE: Social Media Use**

---

the School. No photographs of students of the School (other than of a parent's own children and where approved by the relevant parent/s from time to time) are to be posted.

### **2.5 Appropriate use of Social Media**

Parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders are expected to:

- maintain the same high standards of conduct and behaviour online as is expected in the physical environment;
- behave with respect and courtesy and without harassment;
- deal appropriately with information, recognising that some information needs to remain confidential; be sensitive to the diversity of all School stakeholders and the community;
- uphold the values of the School;
- protect the integrity, reputation, privacy and security of the School, its students, staff, parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders; and
- comply with applicable laws and legislation, including copyright, intellectual property, privacy, financial disclosure, defamation and other laws.
- Parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders using Social Media in a personal capacity must take due care to ensure that any comments, opinions, photographs or contributions made online are their own, as private citizens and cannot be interpreted as an official statement or position of the School.
- Criminal behaviour online will be reported to the Police.
- School staff may contact their union or obtain legal advice if they feel that online content seriously impacts their reputation. Defamatory online content may give rise to litigation under the Defamation Act 2005 (QLD)

### **2.6 Bullying and Harassment**

- Just as bullying and harassment will not be tolerated in the School, nor will it be tolerated where it occurs on a Social Media site.
- In this regard, parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders are not to post any adverse or critical content about any other individual on Social Media sites such as offensive, obscene, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, abusive, harassing, threatening or defamatory content.
- In such circumstances, the School will take any appropriate action against the perpetrator and such content may also amount to civil proceedings giving rise to the perpetrator being sued for damages or charged with a criminal offence.
- The School reserves the right to request that certain posts and inappropriate comments be removed from a Social Media site.

### **2.7 Offensive statements**

- The School realises that parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders may feel strongly about certain issues being debated, however any comments that can be reasonably considered defamatory, offensive, threatening or obscene will not be allowed.
- Parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders are expected not to post material that may incite violence or hatred. The School will not tolerate comments that humiliate others based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, age, mental or physical disability, or sexual orientation.



## GUIDELINE: Social Media Use

---

### 2.8 No impersonation

- Parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders are expected not to impersonate others on Social Media or pretend to be authorised to make statements on another's behalf.

### 2.9 Security risks

- Parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders should be mindful that, by posting your comments and having online conversations etc on Social Media sites, they are broadcasting to the world. Even with the strictest privacy settings parents should be aware that comments expressed via Social Media pages under the impression of a 'private conversation' may still end up being shared into a more public domain.
- Parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders should never discuss sensitive school matters with other parents using Social Media.
- Parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders need to be aware of the concept of leaving a "digital footprint" (that is that communication via Social Media is virtually indelible).

### 2.10 School Facebook Page

- The school has been asked by Brisbane Catholic Education that any Facebook sites (including private groups e.g. year level parent groups) that mention the school's name in any way need to be administered by the school. If Parents want to have closed groups for their own use, they cannot be identified with the school in any way, by using the school's name, or nickname or initials. For example OLOL cannot be the name of the group.
- The Our Lady of Lourdes Facebook page has been established to share news and events with the school community.
- Any abusive or offensive comments or language, as well as any material which in the opinion of the School does not comply with this policy, will not be tolerated and will be removed. People who are detrimental to others' enjoyment of the Facebook page will be removed from the page.
- Parents, care-givers and other School stakeholders must abide by Facebook's terms and conditions.

### 2.11 Breach of Guidelines

Depending on the circumstances, a breach of these guidelines may constitute a breach of enrolment contractual obligations, sexual harassment, child protection or similar laws, discrimination or some other contravention of the law.

If you encounter a problem the following steps may help resolve the issue in a constructive way:

- Refrain from responding
- Take a screenshot or print a copy of the concerning online content
- If you consider problem content to be explicit, pornographic or exploitative of minors, you should keep a record of the URL of the page containing that content but NOT print it or share it. The URL can be provided to the school principal, or police, as needed for escalation of serious concerns
- Report the content to the moderator and/or Principal