



5. SOCIAL MEDIA AND NETWORKING POLICY

Last Review: October 2020	Constructed / Reviewed by: Clayton Utz
Next Review: October 2021	Approval Required: Board Motion
Policy Number: 5	Board Sign Off Date: 18 August 2021

1. Statement of Context and Purpose

Social media and social network has become an integral part of society, but is an area where a number of issues and risks arise. Mentone Grammar requires employees to take great care in order to act in the best interests of Mentone Grammar when participating in social media.

The purpose of this policy is to set out Mentone Grammar's expectations and requirements applying to the use of social media.

2. Application

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors and other authorised personnel required to perform functions on Mentone Grammar's premises.

3. Reference Points / Background Papers

- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth);*
- *Copyright Act 1968 (Cth);*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic);*
- Privacy Policy;
- Child Safety Policy and Procedure;
- Code of Conduct;
- Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy;
- Discrimination and Harassment Policy; and
- Performance Management, Misconduct and Disciplinary Action Policy.

4. Definitions

Social media includes social media networks (such as but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and MySpace), video/photo sharing sites (such as but not limited to YouTube, Instagram and TikTok), chat rooms, video chat (such as but not limited to Skype, Microsoft Teams and Zoom), online forums and discussion groups, wikis, blogs, micro-blogging tools (such as but not limited to Tumblr) and any other website that facilitates the:

- publishing of user generated content and opinion (such as traditional media news websites);
- opportunity to connect with others online;
- creation and sharing information and ideas; and
- development of relationships and networks.



Electronic communication and information resources includes, but is not limited to: internet, email, instant messaging, voicemail, fax, all Mentone Grammar-supplied computers and software, digital cameras, mobile phones, USB memory sticks and other storage devices.

Supervisor means an individual who has been delegated the authority to be responsible for another employee in respect of specified workplace matters and/or decisions.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Use of Mentone Grammar's electronic communication and information resources

Employees, contractors and other authorised personnel must not use Mentone Grammar's computer systems or any equipment owned by Mentone Grammar to access social media, **unless** they have prior permission from their supervisor and access is for:

- teaching;
- pastoral care within Mentone Grammar's pastoral care framework; or
- educational purposes.

Personal use of social media by an employee in their private capacity and using their own computer systems and equipment is not a matter covered by this policy.

5.2 Communications with current students and current parents

Employees, contractors and other authorised personnel must not use social media to connect or communicate with current students and current parents unless they have prior permission from their supervisor and communication is for:

- teaching;
- pastoral care within Mentone Grammar's pastoral care framework; or
- educational purposes.

5.3 Communications with former students and former parents

Employees, contractors and other authorised personnel are advised that there should be no unauthorised contact with former parents and students and should seek school guidance as appropriate before communicating on social media.

5.4 Disclosure of confidential and/or sensitive information

Employees, contractors and other authorised personnel must not, under any circumstances, disclose or refer to any information through social media that relates to Mentone Grammar, students or colleagues that is confidential, proprietary or privileged.

5.5 Abuse, disparagement, bullying and harassment over social media

Employees, contractors and other authorised personnel must not, on social media:

- abuse, disparage or speak adversely about Mentone Grammar, students or colleagues; or



- bully, harass or make discriminatory remarks about Mentone Grammar's students, staff or parents.

Employees, contractors and other authorised personnel should consult Mentone Grammar's Human Resources Manager and/or Child Safety Officer for further guidance.

5.6 Communicating on behalf of Mentone Grammar

Employees, contractors and other authorised personnel must not speak on behalf of Mentone Grammar, or imply that they are speaking on behalf of Mentone Grammar, on social media.

In some circumstances, a supervisor may give authorisation as a delegated authority or from time to time speak on behalf of Mentone Grammar. In such circumstances, prior **written** authorisation of the supervisor is required.

5.7 Privacy settings

Employees, contractors and other authorised personnel are reminded that they should not have any expectation of privacy on social media. Even if it is intended that content be private, it may unintentionally enter the public domain and be viewed by colleagues, the media, students and families of students.

Inappropriate content and information on social media, which is capable of being connected with Mentone Grammar, may adversely affect Mentone Grammar, a student or a colleague.

Against that background, Mentone Grammar strongly recommends employees, contractors and other authorised personnel consider all options and strategies to restrict social media activity being distributed to unintended audiences, by for example, adjusting privacy settings.

6. Consequences of a Breach of this Policy

Mentone Grammar emphasises the need to comply with the requirements of this policy. Any employees, contractors and other authorised personnel found to be in breach of the requirements of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees should refer to the Code of Conduct, Child Safety Policy and Procedure, and Performance Management, Misconduct and Disciplinary Action Policy for further information.

7. Implications for practice

7.1 At Board / Principal Level

To properly implement this policy, Mentone Grammar, the Board and/or the Principal must ensure:

- that this policy is endorsed on an annual basis;
- that copies of this policy are made available to employees, for example on the Mentone Grammar intranet, in physical form in the staff room and on employee bulletin notice boards;
- that this policy is incorporated into the Board's / Principal's record of current policies;



- that this policy is incorporated into Mentone Grammar's induction program, to ensure that all employees are aware of the policy, have read and understood the policy, and acknowledge their commitment to comply with the policy;
- that periodic training and refresher sessions are administered to all employees in relation to this policy.

7.2 At Other Levels

To properly implement this policy, all Mentone Grammar's employees must ensure:

- that they will abide by this policy and assist Mentone Grammar in the implementation of this policy;
- that they notify Mentone Grammar if an employee becomes aware of a breach of this policy.