THE LAKES SOUTH MORANG P-9 SCHOOL
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Rationale:
- Social media is becoming increasingly commonplace in our society and it can be a powerful tool in modern schools owing to its capacity to promote communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking (collectively recognised as key learning skills of the 21st century). Consequently, the Lakes South Morang P-9 School community aspires to use social media tools and strategies to empower and enrich the learning culture of our community. The underlying philosophy is that by adopting social media to promote public and respectful conversation, sharing diverse perspectives and experiences, the collective wisdom of our learning community can develop beyond the limits of traditional policies.

Aim:
- The purpose of this document is to outline a Social Media Policy to support the safe and responsible implementation of social media at The Lakes South Morang P-9 School and it is applicable to all members of our school community (i.e. including teaching and support staff, students and families, and other community affiliates). This policy is consistent with guidelines endorsed by the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET).

Definition:
- DET provides a working definition of social media (reproduced below with permission from DET under educational use copyright policy).
  "Social media is the term used for internet based tools for sharing and discussing information among people. Additional social media tools may include (although are not limited to):
  - Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn)
  - Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube)
  - Blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs and micro-blogs (e.g. Twitter)
  - Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool)
  - Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia)
  - Vod and podcasts
  - Video conferences and web conferences
  - Email and instant messaging
  - All other emerging electronic/digital communication applications."\(^1\)
- For public schools across the state, DET specifies:
  a) that social media tools in education are to be used appropriately and with a clear educational context, and
  b) misuse of social media tools may involve potential legal consequences.\(^2\) DET acknowledges that inappropriate behaviours may occur through social media (mis)use in the digital environment, and identifies that cybersafety and privacy rights and responsibilities extend to students, employees and other members of the school community.

Implementation
- The School will maintain official social media accounts across nominated third-party (i.e. non-Department) platforms, selected to cater to the needs and interests of diverse stakeholders within

---

the community. This may include use of RSS, blogs, microblogs, wikis, media-sharing and social networks – for example: Facebook, Twitter, WordPress/Blogger, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Vimeo.

- Social media administrators, which must be appointed from current staff members of the School, will be responsible for monitoring user-generated content (i.e. text, images, video, audio) appearing on the School’s official social media platforms for appropriateness as described in supporting policy documentation and relevant legal acts, including:
  - Acceptable Use Policy DEECD ICT Resources Policy\(^3\) (for employees);
  - The Lakes South Morang P-9 School ICT Acceptable Use Agreements\(^4\) (for students);
  - National and State Laws which cover copyright, cyberbullying and related offences and criminal acts\(^5\) (concerning the broader community).

- The School’s Social Media Administrators will be responsible for promptly removing inappropriate content appearing on the School’s official social media platforms and reporting the incident to the Principal (e.g. providing evidence such as screenshots). This may include:
  - Minor infractions, such as false, inaccurate or misleading information, or unauthorised advertising that is commercial and/or non-educational in nature;
  - Unlawful breaches of copyright, confidentiality or information privacy, personal attacks or use of profanity;
  - Serious legal infringements such as defamation, discrimination, harassment, abuse, threats and other acts likely to cause harm.

- All school employees have a professional responsibility (i.e. Duty of Care) to take reasonable steps to protect students from danger, which extends to the online environment. DET does not regard it reasonable to expect school staff to supervise a virtual space 24/7 but does require a response to an online incident as soon as knowledge of its occurrence is acquired.\(^6\) Consequently, all school staff will be responsible for promptly informing the School’s Social Media Administrators of any emerging issues which they become aware of.

- School staff and students may participate in the School’s official social media platforms, in accordance with the aforementioned DET and School Policies, but they are not to be directly contacted through these media or engaged outside of the intended educational context described in this document for these online environments.

- All user-generated content, regardless of source, is expected to add value to the School’s educational conversation and must:
  a) be appropriate for an educational environment catering to participants of all ages and social/cultural backgrounds, and
  b) respect the Terms and Conditions of Use established by each third-party for their social media platform.

- Any breach of these guidelines, policies or laws may result in the removal of specific content and/or the removal of access for a particular user where the issue is of a serious or ongoing nature.

- The School’s Social Media Administrators will be proactive in maintaining a safe and interactive online experience for the School’s social media community, but will not be expected to respond to every instance of user-generated content that is published.

- All social media adopted by the School is required to display the "The Lakes South Morang P-9 School Social Media Shared Agreements" (attached at the end of this document), which summarises key aspects of this Social Media Policy.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed annually in line with the Social Media: Shared Agreements and the Facebook Editorial Guidelines.

This policy was endorsed by School Council on 20/06/2017
The purpose of this Agreement is to make explicit the expected standards of behaviour for the use of social media used by The Lakes South Morang P-9 School. The Agreement applies to all Staff, Students, Parents/Carers and any Guests invited to participate. The phrase “Social Media” applies to any social networking site that is accessed using the Internet via web-enabled and mobile devices, including (but not limited to) Facebook, Twitter, WordPress/Blogger, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Vimeo.

When utilising the School’s Social Media, users must ensure that they respect the rights, privacy, and confidentiality of others and fully comply with the following standards:
- Do not disclose personal, private or confidential information;
- Do not use obscene, offensive, abusive or threatening language or imagery;
- Do not slander, defame, vilify, bully, harass, abuse, intimidate, or threaten others;
- Do not publish content that is dishonest or misleading;
- Do not impersonate or falsely represent another person;
- Do not plagiarise or distribute copyrighted material without appropriate permission or credit;
- Do not create, endorse or share content that is malicious, discriminatory or provocative;
- Do not harm the reputation of The Lakes South Morang P-9 School.

Users adhering to ethical, legal and duty of care obligations will enable a safe and respectful social media environment for engaging with the school community. Please be aware that social media sites used by The Lakes South Morang P-9 School will be moderated so that action can be taken if inappropriate content has been posted. If you notice content that is unethical, unlawful or illegal, please notify the school promptly via lakes.south.morang.P9@edumail.vic.gov.au.