St David's BNS Social Media Policy

Introduction

This Social Media Policy was a collaborative school process, involving teachers, staff, parent representatives, the Principal and the Board of Management in May 2020.

Rationale

St David's BNS recognises that teachers, students and parents engage with social media applications. These applications include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Blogs, and other online tools through which people connect and share information.

The purpose of setting up a St David's social media account is to have a way of communicating important messages to parents and to promote positive aspects of school. It should extend our reach throughout the Artane community and amplify our school ethos and message. It should not be used as a platform to air grievances or complaints.

All members of the St David's community are expected to uphold the values of the school in all Social Media interactions. Staff, students and parents will not act in such a way that the image of St David's is brought into disrepute nor in a way that harms members of the school community.

Therefore, it is expected that St David's staff, students and parents use Social Media in a respectful and responsible manner. Social Media should not be used to insult, present offensive or inappropriate content or to misrepresent St David's or any member of the school community.

Aims

The aim of the Social Media Policy is to set standards of behaviour for the use of Social Media that are consistent with the values and expectations of St David's BNS. We aim to protect the safety and wellbeing of students, teachers and the school community. If there is a breach of the St David's Social Media Policy the school will undertake disciplinary action and will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

All reports of cyber bullying and other technology misuses will be investigated fully and may result in a notification to Gardaí where the school is required to do so.

Definitions

Social media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

Social Media: refers to all social networking sites. These sites include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, KIK, Instagram, SMS, YouTube and includes emails and mobile devices.

Rights and Responsibilities

Staff, students and parents are expected to show respect to all members of the school community.

Staff will: Plan for the inclusion of cyber safety awareness within the curriculum with guidance from relevant education authorities.

Parents will: Be responsible for being aware of and informed about their children's online activity and be proactive in the supervision and guidance of their children taking into account this policy and in particular the school's core values.

Student Guidelines

When using Social Media, students are expected to ensure that they:

- Read and agree to the terms and conditions of various Social media sites as many of them have age restrictions for their use. E.g. Facebook, Instagram and Gmail are all restricted to those 13 years of age and above.
- Are aware of what they are posting online and that Social Media sites and applications are public forums.
- Are not permitted to join a staff member's area on networking sites. If students attempt to do this, the member of staff is to refuse the student access and inform the Principal. The student's parents will be informed if this happens.
- Will not access social networking sites during the school working day.
- Respect the rights and confidentiality of others.
- Do not impersonate or falsely represent another member of the school community.
- Do not bully, intimidate, abuse, harass or threaten other members of the school community.
- Do not make defamatory comments towards other members of the school community.
- Do not use offensive or threatening language or resort to personal abuse towards each other or members of the school community.
- Do not harm the reputation of St David's BNS or those within its community.
- Do not upload video, audio or photographs of any member of the St David's BNS community (student, parents or staff).

- Do not upload any video or photographs of any student where they can be identified as a St David's BNS student by their uniform or any other means.

Parent Guidelines

Classroom blogs and other Social Media tools open up communication between students, parents and teachers. This kind of communication and collaboration can have a large impact on learning at St David's BNS. The school encourages parents to participate in such activities when appropriate but requests that parents act responsibly and respectfully at all times, understanding that their conduct not only reflects on the school community, but will be a model for our students as well. If parents have any grievances, they should take the matter up with the principal and refrain from posting negative comments on the school's social media.

Parents should:
- Be aware that many Social Media sites have age restrictions that **DO HAVE** implications for their primary school aged children. Parents need to monitor their children's online social media activity and read the terms and conditions of various Social Media sites and applications their children are interested in using. Parents need to be aware that many of them have age restrictions for their use. E.g. Facebook, Instagram and Gmail are all restricted to those **13 years of age and above**.
- Be aware that they are in breach of terms and conditions if they set up a personal account for their children to use if they knowingly understand that age restrictions apply.
- Before uploading photos, audio or video, parents need to seek appropriate permission from any individuals involved. This most particularly applies in relation to the privacy of the staff of St David's BNS.
- Online postings and conversations are not private. Do not share confidential information, internal school discussions, or specific information about students, staff or other parents.
- Be conscious of the fact that expert advice given is that all users of Social Media sites should do whatever they can to not identify any child by name or associate them with a particular school.
- Parents should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information in regards to the St David's community and its members.
- Parents assisting with classroom activities should not make use of social media sites while involved in such activities.

Staff & Teacher Guidelines

Social Media in relation to staff and teacher relates to blogs, wikis, podcasts, digital images and video, instant messaging and mobile devices.

- Staff should not accept students as 'friends' on their own social network sites or interact with students on social networking sites.
- Staff and student online interaction must occur only in an educational context.
- Staff are advised to NOT accept ex-students or parents of current students as friends on personal Social Media sites.

- Staff must not discuss students or colleagues or publicly criticise school policies or personnel on social networking sites.
- While staff have permission to post photographs of students to the school website, they do not have permission to post details that would identify any child.
- Staff are personally responsible for content they publish online. Staff need to be mindful that what they publish will be public for a long time.
- The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the online world. If staff identify themselves online as affiliated with St David's BNS then they need to be aware that they are by definition representing the entire school community. Staff should ensure that content associated with them is consistent with their work at the school and the school's values and ethos.
- Staff should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information regarding the St David's community and its members.
- When contributing online, staff should not post confidential student information.
- Staff should visit their profile's security and privacy settings on social networking sites. At a minimum, staff should have all privacy settings set to 'only friends'.

Additional points
- Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website and social media.
- The school hosts a website www.stdavidsbns.scoilnet.ie , a twitter page @StDavidsBNS, an Instagram page and a Facebook page.
- The school uses educational social media in the classroom. This includes, but is not limited to, ClassDojo and Seesaw.
- School communications, photos and other news items will regularly be added to the website and social media pages.
- Websites and social media using facilities such as comments and user-generated content will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain personal details.
- Websites and social media allowing comments or user-generated content will be pre-moderated and checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain any inappropriate or offensive content.
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website and social media with parental permission.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages and social media.
- The school website and social media will avoid publishing the first and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- The website and social media accounts will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.

Managing Change
- We acknowledge that technology changes rapidly. If any member of the St David's community has a concern or question pertaining to Social Media or Social Networking sites, this should be directed to the Principal.

- Parents, students or staff who have a complaint or issue arise from Social Media should contact the principal.