Policy (Code of Conduct for Students Updated 9/02/2023)

Appropriate use of social media

The school acknowledges the growing popularity of social media both as a communication and educational tool and supports its appropriate use.

It also acknowledges the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to students, families and staff through the inappropriate use of social media.

Students must understand they are responsible for the content they publish on social media platforms so it is important they understand what is expected of them while using social media.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is when someone uses the internet to be mean to a child or young person so they feel bad or upset. It can happen on a social media site, game, app, or any other online or electronic service or platform. It can include: posts, comments, texts, messages, chats, livestreams, memes, images, videos and emails.

These are some examples of ways the internet can be used to make someone feel bad or upset:
- Sending hurtful messages about them.
- Sharing embarrassing photos or videos of them.
- Spreading nasty online gossip about them.
- Leaving them out online.
- Creating fake accounts in their name.
- Tricking them into believing you are someone else.

Sadly, cyberbullying happens a lot in Australia and around the world. 44% of Australian young people report having a negative online experience in the last 6 months, this includes 15% who received threats or abuse online.

Response to cyberbullying
(Ref: https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/cyberbullying)
Be informed about bullying using school programs and opportunities to get information – and also check the e-safety website for support and information.

Should a student be a target of abuse, harassment or vilification, the recommended action is to:

1. **Collect evidence**
   - Take screenshots or photos of the messages, photos or videos.
   - Write down how long the bullying has been going on, and whether you know the person responsible.
   - Note the service or platform used to send or share the content and the web page address (URL) where it appeared.

2. **Report it**
   - Start by disclosing it to parents/carers
   - **Report it to the social media site, gaming site or app** that was used to share the material. This is often the fastest way to have it removed and you can find common reporting links in The eSafety Guide.
   - If the material has not been taken down within 48 hours and the type of cyberbullying you are experiencing is against the law, report it to eSafety and they can help to remove it. Even if they can't get it taken down, they will check you are safe and give you tips to protect yourself. They will also help you to find support if you need it.

- You can also report the abuse to the police. This is very important if someone is seriously threatening you, your family or friends. Find out more about getting police and legal help.
  If you are in Australia and in immediate danger or at risk of harm call Triple Zero (000).
  Contact your local police on 131 444 if there are threats to your safety or threats to your friends or family members.

3. **Prevent further contact**
   - Do not to respond or hit back. People who say hurtful things often do it just to get a reaction, so if you show it worked they may do it again.
   - You can use the in-app functions to ignore, mute or block the other person or account. If they bully you from a new online account, mute or block them again. The eSafety Guide explains how.
   - You can also change your privacy settings to stop someone contacting you or seeing what you are doing and where you are going. The eSafety Guide tells you how.
   - Shut down your social media account

4. **Get more help**
   - Cyberbullying can make you feel bad. Lots of people say the harmful content makes them angry, sad, embarrassed, hurt, worried, scared or stressed. The harm may be felt for a short time or last a long time.
   - It can be hard to ask for help, but talking about the cyberbullying with a trusted adult like a parent, carer or teacher can make you feel better. If that does not feel right, you can talk to someone at Kids Helpline by phone or chat – they help 5 to 25 year olds and it's free. Or you can contact another counselling or support service.

School response to cyberbullying

Members of the school executive team will intervene and apply the Code of Conduct for Students if they determine that the conduct seriously adversely affects, or is likely to adversely affect:

- Other students enrolled at the school;
- The good order and management of the school; and/or
- Poses an unacceptable risk to the safety and wellbeing of other students or staff of the school.

School executive team members will manage inappropriate behaviours in line with the Code of Conduct for students considering individual circumstances, which may include but not be limited to the following actions:

- A direction to remove offensive content;
- Restorative meetings between parties;
- Review of the Code of Conduct for students highlighting potential consequences should behaviours continue;
- School Disciplinary Absence
- A total ban on an individual bringing a phone to school