



# RESPONSIBLE ONLINE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

## PURPOSE

### Background

Melbourne Montessori School acknowledges that technology and social media is a significant aspect of many people's lives. When used in a positive manner, social media are effective and efficient vehicles through which to:

- Organise one's social life and keep in touch with friends
- Collaborate on school projects and co-curricular activities
- Broaden knowledge and pursue interests (academic, personal and civic)
- Keep up with changing technology and current entertainment (music, playing games etc.)

Members of the Melbourne Montessori School community are required to act ethically and responsibly in their use of technology and social media when such use relates to, or may impact on the School or other members of the Melbourne Montessori School community.

It is expected that the values of respect, fairness, responsibility and honesty are demonstrated in communications and actions at all times. Specific behaviours aligned with these values are outlined in the Staff Charter and Children's Charter. All community members should view these documents prior to enrolment or employment.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to set a standard of online behaviour that is consistent with the broader values of the Melbourne Montessori School community
- to ensure that all Melbourne Montessori School community members, as much as possible, have access to a safe online environment
- to outline the rights and responsibilities of the Melbourne Montessori School community
- to outline the possible consequences for breach of this policy.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the Melbourne Montessori School community.

1. Rights
2. Responsibilities
3. What to do in the event of being harassed or bullied
4. School Reputation
5. Parental Support
6. Teachers and Staff Obligations
7. Breach of the Policy

## DEFINITIONS

**Online** – using any digital device which connects someone to someone else. This might include, but is not exclusively, mobile phones, tablets, laptops, PCs, iPods etc. Social media – any means of communicating online with another person.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **1. Rights**

Members of the Melbourne Montessori School community will treat others fairly and with respect. This includes:

- using Social Media in a positive manner
- using inclusive when forming and maintaining online groups
- using respectful language at all times
- creating, downloading and sending appropriate written and visual content
- not intentionally impersonating or falsely representing another person or person's work
- not intentionally plagiarising online material
- being careful not to give out others' personal information or uploading images of others without their permission

### **2. Responsibilities**

Members of the Melbourne Montessori School community will not engage in online behaviour that is considered inappropriate or intended to be:

- offensive
- discriminatory
- intimidating
- defamatory
- bullying
- illegal
- of inappropriate adult nature

Members of the Melbourne Montessori School community will not intentionally forward posts, messages or images that may be:

- offensive
- sexually explicit
- aggressive

Members of the Melbourne Montessori School community must remember that the Melbourne Montessori School Behaviour Management Policy applies to online communication and that cyberbullying is unacceptable in all forms of electronic communication.

### **3. What to do in the event of being harassed or bullied**

#### **3.1 Yourself**

These are the steps to take you are being harassed or bullied:

- do not reply
- save the message(s) you have been sent as evidence
- keep calm and tell a person you trust (parent, teacher or friend) as soon as possible.

#### **3.2 Others**

Members of the Melbourne Montessori School community should take action if they think another person is being bullied or harassed online. It is important to note that:

- any action taken will be in consideration of the person(s) involved
- such actions may include indirect and direct communication where relevant and possible (e.g. supporting the person affected via private conversations or using assertive language when communication to the person responsible).

**4. Reputation of the School**

Members of the Melbourne Montessori School community need to be aware of how they are using social media to represent the school. The following guidelines must be followed;

- the Melbourne Montessori School logo and name must not be used unless permission has been granted
- images of Melbourne Montessori School staff, students or images relating to Melbourne Montessori School's facilities must not be used without permission
- no-one is authorised to speak on the School's behalf without permission
- no-one is to denigrate or publish anything disrespectful of Melbourne Montessori School or bring, or potentially bring, it into disrepute
- no-one is to denigrate or publish anything disrespectful of another member of the Melbourne Montessori School community.

Melbourne Montessori School reserves the right to request that certain subjects are avoided, defamatory posts are withdrawn and inappropriate or offensive comments removed.

**5. Parental Support**

Parents should be aware of their children's online usage. The following actions are recommended to ensure your child's safe and responsible use of the internet:

- Be open to the relevance, importance and benefits of technology for young people.
- Be open and trusting with your children so they will be comfortable to talk with you
- Attend where possible, parent education sessions held by Melbourne Montessori School or the wider community based on ICT and digital citizenship.

**NB:** You may NOT publish photographs of other people's children without the consent from their parents/guardians. Parents are asked to respect that others may not wish for their child's image to be used in any media, internet or other, therefore you must ask permission. MMS recommends cropping photographs or using images where other children are obscured.

**6. Teachers and Staff obligations**

Staff should ensure that they actively supervise student's internet usage in the classroom.

The following relate to the use of Staff members own social media use:

- staff should not accept current students as 'friends' on their own personal social network sites
- staff are advised to use discretion before accepting ex-students or parents of students as friends
- staff must not discuss students or co-workers or publicly criticise school policies or personnel.

**7. Breach of the policy**

Any breach of this policy will be considered by the Principal and will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

The Principal may take such action as considered appropriate in response to a breach of this policy including:

- if the breach is by a student – providing a warning, counselling, withdrawal of certain privileges or opportunities, suspension, or expulsion.
- if the breach is by a staff member – providing a warning, counselling, withdrawal of certain privileges, suspension from duties, or termination of employment.
- if the breach is by a parent – providing a warning, withdrawal of certain privileges or opportunities, exclusion from future school events or functions, exclusion from the school grounds and facilities, or revocation of their child's enrolment.

A breach of this policy may also involve a breach of other Melbourne Montessori School other policies – see overleaf.

**REVIEWED 2019**

**LINKED WITH:**

**Children's Charter**

**Critical Incident Policy**

**Family Media Agreement**

**Health and Wellbeing Policy**

**Privacy Policy**

**Responsible Use of Information Communication Technology Policy**

**Staff Charter**

**Behaviour Management Policy**

**Grievance Policy**

**Code of Conduct**