



St. John of God GNS
Kilmore Road, Artane, Dublin 5. D05E265
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Introduction

This Social Media Policy was initiated in October 2023 in response to the decision for the school to have a Social media account (Instagram).

Rationale

St John of God GNS recognises that teachers, students and parents engage with social media applications. These applications include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, Blogs, and other online tools through which people connect and share information.

The purpose of setting up a St John of God 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 community and amplify our school ethos and message.

All members of the St John of God community are expected to uphold the values of the school in all Social Media interactions.

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 the school. We aim to protect the safety and wellbeing of students, teachers and the school community. If there is a breach of this Social Media Policy it will be dealt with on a case by case basis and in line with other school policies including the Code of Behaviour and Antbullying Policy.

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+, TikTok, 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.



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Teachers 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 considering 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 the school or those within its community.
- Do not upload video, audio or photographs of any member of the school community (student, parents or staff).

Parent Guidelines

Classroom blogs (such as Seesaw) and other Social Media tools open up communication between students, parents and teachers. This kind of communication and collaboration can have a positive impact on learning. The school encourages parents to participate in such activities when appropriate but requests that parents act responsibly and respectfully at all times while doing so.

Any grievances should be taken up with the teacher or principal in line with agreed complaints procedures. Parents should refrain from posting negative comments on the school's social media.



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Parents should:

- Be aware that many Social Media sites have age restrictions that do have implications for their primary school aged children. Parents should 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.
- 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 should seek explicit permission from any individuals involved. This most particularly applies in relation to the privacy of the staff and other members of the school community.
- Not share confidential information, internal school discussions, or specific information about students, staff or other parents online.
- 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 assisting with classroom activities should not use social media sites while involved in such activities.

Staff & Teacher Guidelines

Social Media in relation to staff and teachers includes but is not limited to networking sites, blogs, 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 not to 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/social media account, they do not have permission to post details that would identify any child.
- If staff identify themselves online as affiliated with St John of God GNS then they are by definition representing the 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.
- When contributing online, staff should not post confidential student information.



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Additional points

- From time to time, 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** and an **Instagram** page.

- The school will endeavour to publish photographs, audio or video clips focusing on whole school and group activities only. Content focusing on individual students will be published on the school website and social media in exceptional circumstances only and with explicit parental permission.
- The school website and social media will avoid publishing the first and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- The Instagram page will have comments turned off.
- Comments to the website are pre-moderated and approved before publishing.
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.

Timeframe for Review

- This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on February 12th 2024. We acknowledge that technology changes rapidly. If any member of the school 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.
- This policy will be reviewed as the need arises or in three years, whichever comes first.