Ballan Primary School Social Media Policy

Policy Implementation Date: 30/5/2022	Review Date: 30/5/2024	Responsible for Review: Policy Subcommittee

Purpose

Ballan Primary School values open and timely communication within our school community. We recognise the short and long-term benefits that engaging with our stakeholders via social media will bring to our school and events. Social media has become an important part of communication strategies.

The purpose of this policy is to:
- Inform and guide the way Ballan Primary School (BPS), its staff and the school community interact with social media.
- Protect the school's students, staff, assets and reputation through clear protocols for use of social media in a professional capacity.

Scope

This policy applies to use of social media by Ballan Primary School Community for school purposes. This includes staff, parents, students and community members.

Definitions

Authorised Account User: a person who has been authorised by the Principal to use BPS social media.

Authorised Social Media Accounts: BPS social media accounts whose creation has been authorised by the Principal

Social Media: are communication tools used to store, share, or discuss information online. Social media include but are not limited to:
- Social networking sites (eg Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+)
- Video and photo sharing websites (eg Flickr, Youtube, Instagram)
- Blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs
- Micro-blogs (eg Twitter, Tumblr)
- Podcasting and audio casting
- Video conferences and web conferences

The social media platforms identified as part of Ballan Primary School's communication strategy will include Facebook, Instagram and email newsletters.

Compliance requirements

Ballan Primary School will comply with:
- The *Public Administration Act 2004* (Vic) and the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Service Employees made under that Act
- Part 2.4 of the *Education Training and Reform Act 2006* and any relevant Ministerial Order made under that Act which applies to the teaching service
- *Information Privacy Act 2000* (Vic)
- The Department of Education and Training's Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Systems.

Policy Points

This policy provides guidelines for:
- Preventing unauthorised creation and usage of social media accounts
- Authorised creation of social media accounts
- Ensuring the security of authorised social media accounts
- Appropriate conduct when using social media accounts where reference is made to BPS
- Ensuring all communication through social media with stakeholders and the media is consistent, well-informed, timely and accurate
- Ensuring comments to stakeholders, the media and other external sources are made through authorised representatives of the school
- Ensuring that consent to use of children's images on social media is obtained from parents/guardians
- Standards of conduct using personal social media to the extent it affects BPS

Creation of social media accounts

Creation of a social media account for an educational or communication purpose requires the written consent of the Principal or delegate.

Authorised use of social media

Authorised Account Users of BPS Social Media must adhere to the content of this policy and its intent.

Security of Authorised Accounts

Authorised Account Users acknowledge that:
- All Authorised Social Media Accounts, user names, passwords, connections, and posts made whilst engaged in social media on behalf of BPS both during and after office hours belong to BPS
- They will provide the username and passwords to any Authorised Social Media Accounts to the Business Manager
- They will not change the Username and Passwords of any Authorised Accounts without permission from the Business Manager

- They will not disclose or cause to be disclosed the Username and Password for any Authorised Account to anyone other than the Principal and the Business Manager

In the event of unauthorised use of BPS social media, passwords will be reset.

Standards of conduct – appropriate and inappropriate use

Authorised Account Users **must:**
- Use BPS Social Media for the sole purpose of benefiting Ballan Primary School
- Ensure that posts reflect the values and support the vision and purpose of the school
- Behave respectfully online
- Protect the privacy of students by maintaining the confidentiality of personal information and health records. For example, photographs of students used in BPS Social Media will have appropriate parent permission as per enrolment procedure.
- Comply with the terms and conditions of use of the relevant social media platform

Authorised Account Users **must not**
- Publish any personal images or use language that could damage the reputation of the school
- Publish material that is threatening, obscene, sexually explicit, derogatory, defamatory, harassing, discriminatory, or hateful to another person or entity, including BPS, its employees, stakeholders and/or other business related individuals or organisations
- Publish any content that could be deemed to be illegal
- Publish any unauthorised images of students in line with the school's *Parent/Guardian Recording Authorisation* record
- Make any disparaging or negative comments about BPS or any of its employees, officers or stakeholders
- Use social media platforms to sell or promote any product not directly benefiting the school
- Make any announcements on behalf of BPS unless specifically authorised to do so
- Comment on topics that are not within the user's area of responsibility

Authorised employees using social media in an official capacity are given autonomy to represent the school's views in an ongoing conversation with the public, parents and students. However, there are occasions when content must be reviewed by the Principal. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Content that is politically sensitive
- Content that directly relates to teaching and learning
- Content that is associated with a project or activity deemed to be high-risk
- A response to an individual or group that is deemed to be high-risk
- Content that directly quotes another staff member (eg a response attributed to the Principal).

When interacting with BPS Social Media, members of the school community are expected to behave respectfully in accordance with the school's values. One important aspect of this is that complaints are to be directed through appropriate channels (refer Parent Communication Policy), **not** via social media.

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Standards of communication via social media

Authorised Account Users **must:**
- Use correct grammar and spelling as far as practical
- Ensure that posts are accurate and not misleading.

Intellectual property

Authorised Account Users must ensure that they do not breach any laws by:
- Using Ballan Primary School's name, logos and trademarks, or other such intellectual property without permission
- Using materials that are subject to Copyright or passing them off as the user's own original work.

Consent to use of social media

Parent/ guardian consent is required to upload information, images and videos of students. This consent is sought upon student enrolment. This is very important as a failure to obtain this consent may amount to a breach of privacy.

Standards of conduct using personal social media

Employees using social media in a personal capacity must take due care to ensure that any comments, opinions, photographs or contributions made online are their own, as private citizens, and cannot be interpreted as an official statement or position of Ballan Primary School. *(refer to Education and Training Reform Act 2006 Ministerial Order 2009 Order 199)*

Communication and reporting

Information published via social media is a public record and a corporate record for record-keeping purposes.

Breaches

Any breach of this Policy may result in disciplinary or legal action. In addition, Victorian and Commonwealth legislation creates criminal offences for the misuse of social media (refer http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/socialmedi alegal.aspx)

Related School Policies
- Privacy

Complaints

Refer Parent Communication Policy.

References:

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/Pages/social media.aspx

"Using Social Media: Guide for DET Employees"
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/socialmedi a.aspx