

# **Meán Scoil Nua an Leith-Triúigh**

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## **Social Media Policy**

This Social Media Policy was devised to ensure that an effective system is in place and to ensure that it meets demands of current legislation i.e: The Department of Education and Skills Acceptable Use Policy(APU); European Council Guidelines (2003); The Data Protection Act (1998,2003) . This policy is directly linked to: The Code of Behaviour; The Acceptable Use Policy & The Anti Bullying Policy of our school.

This policy applies to the behaviour and attitudes of Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh students whilst wearing the school uniform and while representing the school and taking part in events within and outside the school. It relates to all school activities while representing the school.

### **Relationship to the school's mission and ethos**

This policy has been developed in line with the ethos of Méan Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh as stated in our mission statement. Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh seeks to provide a safe and caring learning environment that promotes a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community. Emphasis is placed on the development of the “whole person” as good citizens, active and just, proud of their inherited values and beliefs. This means the development of all aspects of life – social, spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic, physical, creative and moral. It is our aim to prepare our students to take their place in society as responsible citizens by helping them to:

- Develop themselves fully: physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally, according to their own gifts and talents
- Respect themselves and others
- Respect our Irish heritage – our country, our language and our traditions

- Have proper values to guide them for life

## **Rationale**

A high level of courtesy and consideration for others is necessary among the school community. Interventions and sanctions will be put in place regarding behaviour, which is ill mannered, disruptive or dangerous.

## **Aims**

The main aims of the policy are to support the following:

- To provide a safe learning environment for our students by promoting a sense of mutual respect amongst all members of the school community.
- To have effective procedures in place which will ensure the day to day running of the school and which meet the demands of current legislation.
- To promote good behaviour, self-awareness and self-reflection.
- To emphasize the promotion and recognition of good behaviour and the acknowledgements that follow.
- To give clear guidelines to students, teachers and parents about what is and is not allowed in relation to social media in our school.
- To outline the interventions to be used when a student does not co-operate with our Social Media policy.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Board of Management is responsible for ratifying the policy and all staff of the school community are responsible for implementing the policy

## **Guidelines**

All students are expected to observe and apply the policy outlined below.

- Each individual student is fully responsible for his/her own actions on any social network medium
- All personal passwords must remain private
- Ensure that all passwords are extremely strong ( the use of a mixture of capital and small letters/ symbols and numbers) and one should never share passwords
- Never accept friend follower requests except from friends or people you know.
- Never share any personal/ school information or any photo with personal/school information in it, on any social media platforms.
- *The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act 1998* clearly states that any student under the age of 13 is not allowed a Facebook page or any other social media platform account and all parents should monitor such social media platform accounts until a student is 18 years of age (*The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act 1998*)
- Students must not share their full names
- Never share your telephone number or home address or password or usernames
- Never create a false social media account in relation to oneself or another student, teacher or staff member.
- Never do or say anything on any social media platform that you would not do/say ordinarily
- Avoid posting any details that would assist strangers in locating you and ensure that location settings on all applications are disabled
- Students should not be active on a social network site during the school day or to use school computers to access any social network sites
- If any issue regarding cyber bullying arises or any inappropriate behaviour is evident on any social media platform, please report it to a member of staff immediately
- Do not associate yourself with any site or platform that promotes hatred or abuse
- **Remember:** Once any information is shared on any electronic/ social medium you no longer have any control over that information- this information may be copied and copied again and copied again and copied again and again.....

## **Cyber bullying**

Cyber bullying is any bullying conducted on a electronic/ social medium, for example:

- Via a social network medium
- Via text or picture messages on a mobile phone
- Via email
- Via instant messaging
- In a chat room
- Via any website e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google, Snapchat, Flicker etc

In the instance of receiving a message that is abusive or threatening or sexually offensive Parents and students are advised to take the following action:

1. Take a screen shot instantly
2. Discuss it with a parent, guardian or teacher
3. Do not reply to the message
4. Keep an account of the time and dates of the messages
5. In serious instances contact the Gardaí

## **Parents**

As per The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act 1998 it is not permitted that students under the age of 13 be allowed a Facebook page or any other social media platform account. All parents should monitor the social media accounts of children until the age 18 years. Be vigilant to false accounts.

Our school acknowledges the important role of parents/guardians in the development and operation of the policy and expects them to support the policy and encourage their son(s)/daughter(s) to uphold it. **We strongly recommend that there is no technology in the bedrooms at night. Teacher observations as well as research shows increased level of anxiety, tiredness and lack of focus and motivation in students who engage in online activity late at night.**

We would expect the parents to support the above Guidelines for students and implement them always, in the best interest of our student's safety and best practice

- Parents should monitor all social media accounts (including potential fake accounts) of all students between the age of 13-16
- Where a complaint has been made regarding inappropriate behaviour on any social networking medium, an investigation may be conducted in which case we would expect full cooperation of all parents. Gathering information and evidence is vital to any investigation so please do not delete information that may be key to an investigation.

### **The School Staff**

Our school acknowledges the important role of teachers in the development and operation of the policy. The school recognizes that the teacher's/staff main focus is on teaching and learning, but that they have a pivotal role in the positive reinforcement of the benefits of good behaviour

- In the interests of personal safety no member of staff is allowed be 'friends'/ connected with any current student on any social network medium or with any past pupil under the age of 18
- Where a member of staff is related to any students this information must be given in writing to the principal.
- Where any member of staff has any information regarding the misuse of school information on any social network medium the principal must be informed immediately
- Where a bullying incident is being investigated by any member of staff, the Anti Bullying policy must be adhered to and an accurate account of all details must be recorded.

### **Board of Management**

- The Board of Management is the decision - making body of the school. The school acknowledges the role of the Board of Management in the development and operation of the code of behaviour.
- All policies are developed with the authority of the Board of Management and must be approved by its members before becoming official school policy.
- While members of the Board of Management are not involved in the day to day procedures, they are the body to whom parents and students over 18 may appeal in cases of suspension or expulsion.
- The final decision will be made by the Board

## **Implementation of the policy**

Students are encouraged in their endeavours to uphold the code of behaviour by the use of the following measures:

- A) The policy will be circulated to parents of all new entrants into the school. They are asked to read it and sign their agreement with the content. By doing so they acknowledge their support and cooperation with its implementation. This is to ensure that parents and students understand what the rules and guidelines are, why they must be adhered to, and the procedures, which will be followed if the rules are not upheld.
- B) At the start of the school year, as part of our induction process, the code is explained to each class and they are informed of any amendments.
- C) School rules and guidelines, and the reasons for them, are discussed as part of the school's pastoral care programme, in Religion class or as part of SPHE.

*The Code of Behaviour/ Anti Bullying policy will be adhered to in the case of any investigation regarding the misuse of this policy.*

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**Please sign below:**

I agree to adhere to the social media policy of Meán Scoil Nua an Leith Triúigh for the entire duration of my time in the school

Signed (Student) : \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (Parent) : \_\_\_\_\_