



APPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Miles State High School embraces the amazing opportunities that technology and the internet provide to students for learning, being creative and socialising online. Use of online communication and social media sites and apps can provide positive social development experiences through an opportunity to develop friendships and shape identities.

When used safely, social media sites and apps such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram can provide positive opportunities for social learning and development. However, inappropriate, or misguided use can lead to negative outcomes for the user and others.

Miles State High School is committed to promoting the responsible and positive use of social media sites and apps.

No student at Miles State High School will face disciplinary action for simply having an account on Facebook or other social media site.

Any form of Bullying (including Cyberbullying), Racism, Harassment or Victimisation, is unacceptable on the Miles State High School grounds or while online. Inappropriate online behaviours can have a negative impact on student learning and the good order and management of Miles State High School – whether those behaviours occur during or outside of school hours. It is important for students at Miles State High School to engage in appropriate online behaviour.

ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The majority of young people use social media and apps on a daily basis for school work, entertainment and to keep in contact with friends. Unfortunately, some young people misuse social media technologies and engage in cyberbullying.

Social media, by its nature, will result in the disclosure and sharing of personal information. By signing up for a social media account, users are providing their personal information.

Students need to remember that the internet is a free space and many social media sites and apps, like Twitter, have limited restrictions placed upon allowable content and regulated procedures for the removal of concerning posts.

Social media site and apps are designed to share online content widely and rapidly. Once students place information and/or pictures online, they have little to no control over how that content is used.

The internet reaches a global audience. Even if students think that the comments or photos have been deleted, there can be archived records of the material that will continue to be searchable into the future.

Inappropriate online behaviour has the potential to embarrass and affect students, others and the school for years to come.

APPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Students at Miles State High School are expected to engage in the appropriate use of social media. Specific examples of appropriate use of social media sites and apps include:

- Ensuring that all **personal information**, such as full name, address, phone number, school name and location and anyone else's personal information, is not shared.
- Thinking about what they say or post, and how it could be interpreted by others, before putting it online. Remember, **once content is posted online you lose control over it**. Students should not post content online that they would be uncomfortable saying or showing to their parent/carers faces or shouting in a crowded room.



APPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA *continued*

- Remember that it can be difficult to work out whether a message typed on social media sites and apps are meant to be **funny or sarcastic**. Tone of voice and context is often lost which can lead to unintended consequences. If students think a message may be misinterpreted, they should be cautious and make the decision not to post it.
- Never provoking, or engaging with, another user who is displaying inappropriate or abusive behaviour. There is no need to respond to a cyberbully. Students should report cyberbullying concerns to a teacher and allow the teacher to record and deal with online concern.

If inappropriate online behaviour impacts on the good order and management of Miles State High School, the school may impose disciplinary consequences for that behaviour regardless of whether the behaviour occurs during or outside of school hours.

Disciplinary consequences may include loss of internet privileges, suspension and/or exclusion. In serious cases of inappropriate online behaviour, the school may also make a report to the police for further investigation.

Miles State High School will not become involved in concerns of cyberbullying or inappropriate online behaviour where the incident in question does not impact upon the good order and management of the school. For example, where cyberbullying occurs between a student of this school and a student of another school outside school hours. Such an incident will be a matter for parents/carers and/or police to resolve.

LAW AND CONSEQUENCE OF INAPPROPRIATE ONLINE BEHAVIOUR AND CYBERBULLYING

Inappropriate online behaviour may in certain circumstances constitute a criminal offence. Both the **Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)** and the *Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)* contain relevant provisions applicable to cyberbullying.

The Commonwealth Criminal Code outlines a number of criminal offences concerning telecommunications services. The most relevant offence for cyberbullying is “using a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence to another person”.

The Queensland Criminal Code contains several applicable sections for cyberbullying. Potential relevant criminal offences are:

- Unlawful stalking
- Computer hacking and misuse
- Possession of child exploitation material
- Involving a child in making child exploitation material
- Making child exploitation material
- Distribution of child exploitation material
- Criminal Defamation

There are significant penalties for these offences.

Miles State High School strives to create positive environments for all students at all times of the day, including while online. To help in achieving this goal, Miles State High School expects its students to engage in positive online behaviours.