This social media communications strategy has been created to assist teachers at Manor Lakes College in both implementing and utilizing specific means of social media in their learning and teaching programs.

Why does MLC need a Social Media Communication Strategy?

Social media allows us to connect with a greater global audience via online communications. These communications come in many shapes and sizes and due to the large extent of online activity that we as teachers are involved in, and students alike, we need to ensure that when social media is being used at MLC, it is done so with professionalism and learning and teaching in mind.

As social media is mainstream and already being greatly utilised by younger people, who see its use as common practice, we as teachers need to be aware of its capabilities. Teachers and students alike can all benefit from its use and interacting online, from holding discussions via message boards to sharing key information via various social media tools.

As a college we want to promote our students becoming outstanding digital citizens, hence focusing on the benefits of social media use, and not the risks. This is done through explicitly modeling social media use via rich educational purposes.

What is Social Media?

To develop a social media strategy we first need a definition of terms. Social media is an umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and the construction of words, pictures, videos and audio. In our context, the term is used to describe online social media.

Social media is about people communicating. While some aspects of social media have existed for years (e.g., discussion forums and bulletin boards) recent trends indicate that for both DEECD staff and our online audiences, social media will increasingly become a vital part of our communications.

‘DEECD Social Media Strategy 2008’

Digital citizenship isn’t just about recognizing and dealing with online hazards. It’s about building safe spaces and communities, understanding how to manage personal information, and about being internet savvy – using your online presence to grow and shape your world in a safe, creative way, and inspiring others to do the same.
What is the process I need to follow if I want to use Social Media @ MLC?

At Manor Lakes we encourage the use of social media. Like our students, we want our staff to be connected to the digital world and responsible digital citizens through modeling appropriate and correct behaviour. If you want to utilize social media, we ask that you as the classroom teacher strictly follow these steps.

1. That you have read the MLC Social Media Policy as well as the contents of this document and are familiar their contents.

2. Have thought out and planned for the use of any social media usage. Do not go in to using social media blind. Have a thorough vision of what you want to achieve.

3. Notify the leadership team at MLC of your plans to utilize social media.

4. That you inform parents of what your plans are. I.e. Beginning a class Twitter Account to show parents and the global community what is occurring in your class. This is to be via a note home as well as listed on the college newsletter.

5. Ensure that all Blue Multiple Permission forms have been returned, and you are aware of which students in your class cannot have their images posted online.

6. That common sense is exercised when posting information online relating to Manor Lakes P-12 College. I.e. ensuring all information shared via social media is educationally focused.

7. That any indiscretions via social media are immediately reported to leadership. I.e. Parents using social media to harass staff/other students.

DEECD Social Media Resources for Staff

1. DEECD’s Learning Online: www.education.vic.gov.au/learningonline


4. ACMA Cybersmart Resources: http://www.cybersmart.gov.au

Whatever social media site you use, please ensure that it is restricted/locked down and that followers/friends need to be authorized by yourself before they can begin to follow your happenings.

The focus is NOT on the technology that’s being used, it’s on the behaviour.
A-Z of Technology

Do you know the difference between Facebook and Twitter? Here’s a brief rundown on some of the most common online technology terms.

**Flickr:** A photo and video hosting site that allows users to share content with friends and online groups. It is a popular source of images for bloggers looking for content to add to their webpages. Users can upload images and videos to the site to share under a ‘creative commons’ licence – a more flexible alternative to full copyright. Very similar to Google’s Picassa, which however is only a photo sharing site.

**Twitter:** A social networking site that allows you to send out short messages, or ‘tweets’, that are up to 140 characters long. Users ‘follow’ other people they are interested in and can read their tweets in a feed.

**Vodcast:** A vodcast combines audio and video and is delivered online. It can be viewed on your computer or mobile multimedia device. Like podcasts, vodcasts can be offered on some sites as a ‘feed’ – meaning you can subscribe and receive new clips as they are created and uploaded to the site.

**Wikis:** An online group of documents/web pages that many different users can add to and edit freely online. The most famous wiki is Wikipedia.

**Blog:** An abbreviation of weblog, blogs are personal websites that can be easily updated. Blogs usually look like online diaries, but can include pictures and videos.

**Digital Citizenship:** The concept of educating all technology users about how to use technology appropriately and effectively, and not to misuse it to disadvantage others.

**Podcast:** A pre-recorded radio-style segment or program that is made available on the internet. It can be downloaded as an audio file to your computer or portable media device. Some sites offer podcasts as a ‘feed’ – meaning you can subscribe and receive updates and new podcasts as they are created.

**Ultranet:** The Ultranet is an Online Learning space that has been developed by DEECD. Students and teachers can use the Ultranet for online learning activities. Students will be able to create a learning portfolio and use online communication tools such as wikis, blogs and discussion boards. They will be able to collaborate, communicate and create with students from within their school and across Victorian government schools.

**Facebook:** The world’s most popular online social media service with more than 845 million users. Facebook users can post their thoughts and information about their lives, including photos and video. They can play games, send messages, join groups and organise events. Users need to carefully choose their privacy settings to ensure their personal contact information isn’t widely available. For more information about how to set up a professional profile and keep your account safe, check out Facebook’s support pages.

**You Tube:** The world’s second largest search engine behind Google, You Tube allows users and subscribers to upload and share video footage that they have taken via a video recorder or mobile device. People can rate and share the videos posted as well as embed them in to wiki’s and blog’s. You Tube monitors the content posted however there can still be inappropriate footage located.

**Google+:** Google’s own social media site that was launched in mid-2011 was designed to integrate Google’s popular email client, gMail, with a Facebook like approach. Users add friends and content ad they would in Facebook, yet have the ability to create ‘circles’ consisting of certain friendship and family groups.
Social Media and Teaching @ MLC

Below you will various links to assist you with both implementing Social Media in to your classrooms as well as ideas on how to use its potential.

Social Media in Education - connect, share, learn, and communicate and more: http://goo.gl/3E621

Twitter in the Classroom and Twitter Posters: http://goo.gl/hEQy7

8 Real Ways Facebook Enriched A First Grade Class: http://goo.gl/N7wH7


Facebook in Education: http://goo.gl/zdLIJ

Facebook In The Classroom. Seriously.: http://goo.gl/UkuJW

100 Ways to Teach with Twitter: http://goo.gl/G BdTP

Using Facebook in Education: http://goo.gl/DHnLP

How to use Facebook and Twitter for Education: http://goo.gl/MYGRP

New Possibilities for Google+ in Education: http://goo.gl/bUFXY

Educational Blogging: http://goo.gl/ZVMjl

Setting Up Student Blogs: http://goo.gl/yX77l

Rubrics for Assessing Blogs, Wiki’s and Podcasts: http://goo.gl/oMnaL

Learning to Blog: http://goo.gl/uTsXN

20 Ways to get Ideas for Writing Blog Posts: http://goo.gl/YoqZx


We are Blogging. Now What? http://goo.gl/LcQ7x

Reasons why Facebook is Revolutionizing Education: http://goo.gl/RTnyy

The Power of Twitter: http://goo.gl/Bjjje

15 Blogging Tips for Students and Teachers: http://goo.gl/ANxiD

Google+, Facebook, Twitter and Blogs. How to use each one: http://goo.gl/zPxaH

Where do I start with a Wiki? http://goo.gl/NugOw
Types of Online Spaces

We, Me, See

Professor Stephen Heppell, a noted 21st century educationalist from the UK, has produced a schema entitled ‘Me, We, See.’ It recognises the different environments that exist when working within the digital world, particularly in terms of the audience and how we operate within them. In the following clip, Professor Heppell describes the importance of audience when working in online environments.

To access the clip by Professor Heppell, see: Me, We, See

Me

A ‘Me’ space is an environment that only the user will access. It provides security settings that support privacy and therefore it encourages the user to experiment with new tools and practise learning in unfamiliar ways. This is an ideal space to reflect on and store work samples.

Professor Heppell describes this as the space where I can put, “my stuff, I’m proud of it but some of it is private.”

Example of a ‘Me’ space

Every Victorian government school now has access to the Ultranet. The Ultranet provides students with a homepage that is a secure and private ‘Me’ space. For more information visit the Ultranet

We

A ‘We’ space has a defined purpose and provides collaborative tools. It has degrees of security and privacy that can be controlled by the owner and/or user. This allows the owner and/or user to determine the community that they wish to collaborate with. This is an ideal space to work as a small or large group on a collaborative project to share work, thoughts and ideas with a select group of people.

Professor Heppell describes this as similar to ‘working in the intimacy of your immediate community – family, friends and classmates.’

Example of a ‘We’ space

Facebook can to some degree establish a ‘WE’ environment. The owner of the space must adjust the space’s security settings to 'private' and control who has authorised access to participate within the space. Only the owner of the space should have the ability to control the security settings.

It is important to remember that anything you post online, even in a controlled space, can be copied and shared outside of this space by another authorised user.

See

A ‘See’ space is open and accessible to the entire world. There are no security settings within a ‘See’ space and therefore the user’s privacy needs to be protected by limiting the personal information that is presented within the content.

Professor Heppell describes this as the, 'my work is ready for the world to see' space.

School based ‘See’ sites

Blogs and/or wikis and videos posted on shared sites and the school website that are open and accessible to the worlds are ‘See’ spaces.

Examples of ‘See’ sites

Public facing websites such as a school website or a community site such as YouTube are ‘See’ spaces. In these spaces the world can ‘See’ the student’s work and often there is the opportunity for the audience to provide immediate feedback or commentary.

Most students will operate within ‘See’ spaces in their leisure time. Therefore schools must educate students about the potential risks and empower them to develop the skills and knowledge to behave safely and responsibly in the online world.

“DEECD, Dec, 2011”
FAQ’s

There seem to be so many problems that arise when social media tools are used. Why would I use them?

Yes, many potential problems can arise when using social media tools but it also offers many potential benefits.

Recent studies have found that young people engage with social media for two main reasons: one social and one educational. Young people report that social media can enhance and maintain friendships, build social networks/establish virtual relationships, diminish barriers to making friends, follow peer trends, share photos, for fun and leisure and to keep in touch with family.

In terms of learning, young people report that social media tools:

- Allow them to connect with the school and other young people to establish and maintain friendships/social relationships
- Provide comments to peers/share knowledge
- Share feelings with peers
- Join groups established for subjects
- Collaborate through notifications and discussions
- Access course schedules, project management calendars, and
- Use educational applications for organising learning activities.

While social media tools have many potential benefits, they also present risks. School leaders and their staff are not unfamiliar with alternative learning environments and risk management. When planning an excursion, school staff will consider its relevance to the current curriculum and identify any potential risks and strategies to mitigate these risks. As social media tools can take students outside of the physical school environment, school staff should plan their use similar to that of an excursion.

Yes, there are potential dangers or issues that surround the use of social media tools. There are also potential dangers when young people first ride a bike or get their drivers licence. This doesn’t mean that we stop them from riding a bike or driving a car. Instead we minimise the potential risk by teaching them road rules and safety precautions. Social media tools are a way of life for young people. We therefore need to apply these same concepts to teaching young people to use social media tools safely and responsibly.

For more information, see:

- Using Social Media: Guide for DEECD Employees in Schools
FAQ’s continued…

How do I report violations? For example, have inappropriate content (video, written comments, etc) removed from a social media site?

Most social media tools take the safety of users very seriously and request users interact on the site in a safe manner. Each website operates differently and has its own terms and conditions. However, most websites allow you to report/flag the issue or log a concern as unacceptable behaviour online usually amounts to a breach of these terms and conditions.

If the strategy to report the content is not clear you may need to investigate how to contact the administrators of the website. The benefit of this action is that it may lead to the content being removed and/or the user being banned from accessing the website. The fastest way to do this is for you to take immediate action.

For more information, see: Step-by-step Guide for Removing Inappropriate Content from a Website, Facebook or other Social Media Site (PDF - 157Kb)

Can I report content on Facebook if I do not have an account?

Yes, Facebook now provides a mechanism for non-Facebook members to report harassment, abuse or fake accounts. It should be recognised that it is still easier to report/flag a concern if you have an account or if you are able to request the content be removed by the person who posted it.

To report harassment, abuse or fake accounts without an account you will need to have a screen dump of the page/comment you are reporting, a colour copy of a government issued ID (driver’s licence or passport) and the URL that identifies the page/comment your are reporting.

My school has been contacted by the media regarding content on a social media site. What do I do?

The Department’s Media Unit can assist school principals if media outlets contact a school. The Media Unit can be contacted 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

For assistance from the Media Unit phone: 03 9637 2871.

Do I need consent forms for my students to use social media tools for educational purposes at school?

Yes, due to copyright, intellectual property and/or privacy laws teachers wishing to use social media tools for education purposes will require parental consent.

For more information, see:

- Consent Forms
- Using Social Media: Guide for DEECD Employees in Schools – Information Privacy

I am interested in using digital technologies and social media tools in my classroom but am concerned about student privacy. What must I know?

Firstly, it is important that teachers using digital technologies and/or social media tools have a clear educational purpose and that the tool be used strictly for this purpose, with the same rules of engagement that are in place in the physical school environment. A teacher would not invite a student into their house to peruse their photos, cupboards and participate in personal conversations, therefore they should not invite a student into their personal spaces online where much of this type of activity takes place.
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For this reason, it is imperative that teachers consider their own privacy as well as that of their students. Nearly all social media tools provide privacy controls that enable you to manage what anyone can see or cannot see. When establishing a classroom page it is recommended that teachers apply the maximum security settings. Whilst security settings may be in place, it is still critical that teachers recognise the importance of their students’ privacy. Most importantly, when in doubt it is better to err on the side of caution.

For more information, see:

- Using Social Media: Things to Consider when Setting up a Profile
- Using Social Media: Guide for DEECD Employees in Schools – Information Privacy

What is eSmart?

eSmart, developed by the Alannah and Madeline Foundation in collaboration with the RMIT School of Education, is an easy-to-use, evidence-based system that assists school communities to manage and deal with cyberbullying.

The eSmart system supports schools with a starter kit, face-to-face and online training and forums, a help desk and regular e-newsletters.

Funding for participation in the program will be provided to all government schools and nominated Catholic and independent schools.

For more information, see: The Alannah and Madeline Foundation - eSmart
Social Media, MLC, and Me…

- Know of and have read relevant DEECD policies including the Code of Conduct and the Manor Lakes P12 College Social Media Policy.

- Be aware when you mix your work and personal lives – the general public consider us ‘the voice’ of DEECD and MLC. Represent us well.

- Consider what you say before you say it – it’ll be on the web for a long time!

- Be original and respect copyright.

- Use discretion. Take care not to publish information that should not be made public. If you aren’t 100% sure, check. This means posting student images or information about students in general.

- Be polite and be considerate – don’t engage in conflict with the outside community. Remember, what you say will be public for a long time. Never put anything in writing.

- Stick to your area of expertise and talk about what you know. That is teaching and learning.

- It’s a conversation so be human - use your own voice and bring your personality into the conversation. It makes it more interesting!

- Admit your mistakes – we all make them so when you do, be quick to admit and correct them.

- Make sure your personal online activities don’t interfere with your job performance. I.e. posting personal information via a class Twitter Account.

- If it’s official department communication, be professional and be constant.