

Ascham Community Social Media Policy



1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this social media policy is to provide a framework and guidelines for students, staff, employees, School Council of Governors, parents/carers (Ascham community), and third-party contractors, for the appropriate use of social media at Ascham, to ensure duty of care.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- [Information and Communication Technology \(ICT\) Acceptable Use Policy \(AUP\)](#),
- [Ascham Anti-bullying Policy](#),
- [Social Media Guidelines](#) (students, parents and carers),
- [Social Media Guidelines](#) (staff),
- Any relevant staff or third-party contractual agreements.

Ascham believes that social media can be a powerful tool used to enhance communication and collaboration to connect communities. Members of the Ascham community who use social media in a personal capacity are required to maintain the appropriate protocols outlined in this policy.

Throughout this policy social media is defined as, and not limited to:

- Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn
- Video/photo sharing sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Kick, Reddit, Snapchat, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X, WeChat, WhatsApp and YouTube.
- Video conferencing including Live and recorded streaming of video to sites such as YouTube and using platforms such as Microsoft Teams; and
- Other sites, including games, where the internet is used to connect socially.

2.0 Australian Government – Social media age restrictions

As of December 10, 2025, Australia has implemented a ban prohibiting children under 16 from holding accounts on major social media platforms. The law mandates platforms to take "reasonable steps" to enforce age restrictions.

Included in the new law is:

1. All Under-16s are still allowed to see publicly available social media content that doesn't require logging into an account.
2. There are exclusions for a number of platforms, including educational tools such as learning management systems, most standalone gaming and messaging apps, as well as many services that support health and education, are not affected by the new law.
3. There are no penalties for under-16s who access an account on an age-restricted social media platform, or for their parents or carers. The new government social media age restrictions are about making the platforms take greater responsibility for the safety of children.

3.0 Ascham Community Social Media Protocols

The Ascham Community Social Media Protocols relate to all of the Ascham community (as previously defined) and Third-party contractors:

4. All members of the Ascham Community are expected to uphold the [values](#) of the School in all interactions on social media and to not bring the School into disrepute.
5. Content, comments or images posted should not be offensive, inappropriate or misrepresent Ascham or members of the Ascham community. Any content should be posted with the outlook that it could become publicly visible.
6. Blogs, tweets and any other forms of commentary on the internet should not be misleading, malicious or untrue.
7. Unkind and hurtful comments should never be made about any member of the Ascham Community.
8. All members of the Ascham community should abide by the Terms and Conditions of the platforms, including new age restriction laws.

Additional guidelines have been provided for students, staff, employees, School Council of Governors, and parents/carers, to be followed in conjunction with the above Protocols.

3.1 Students

Social media can be an important way for all students 16 and over, to connect with each other. It is vital that students understand the importance of making good choices when using social media, such as maintaining strong privacy settings and using appropriate language and behaviour, to ensure their own and others' safety. As representatives of the School it is a student's responsibility to maintain the reputation of Ascham, and abide by the 'Ascham Community Social Media Policy' in conjunction with the below:

1. Social media should not be used by students during school hours.
2. All members of the student body should work together to ensure the safety and well-being of each other and not participating in activity on social media that could lead to cyber-bullying, damage to reputation, harassment and unlawful behaviour.
3. Students should maintain the highest security in their privacy settings on all social media accounts to ensure that no private information is displayed publicly. Including not listing the School publicly on their social media profiles, such as in Instagram bios.
4. Students should respect the privacy of everyone and should not post any inappropriate comments or images of the Ascham community or third-party contractors.
5. Students must be 16 years or over to use Facebook, Instagram, Kick, Reddit, Snapchat, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X and YouTube. TikTok requires consent from a parent or guardian for students under the age of 18.
6. It is strongly recommended that on social media, students only accept friends and followers they know personally 'offline'.
7. Students should not request members of staff, employees, School Council of Governors or third-party contractors to be a friend on social media.
8. All media submitted to social media must not be geo-tagged to Ascham's location, or submitted to social media's public 'stories'.
9. Students are not to create accounts that represent the School, or its Houses, including the use of the School crest without prior approval. Approved student-run social media accounts which represent the School must comply with the above social media guidelines for students.

Once a student reaches the age of 16, Ascham can work with them, alongside their parent's or carers permission, to set up relevant social media accounts with secure privacy settings and provide guidance on appropriate social media behaviour.

Consequences for Students

If a student (16+) is identified to have breached this Policy, consequences could include:

- Parents will be informed of any social media misconduct by the student.
- A student who misuses social media will be put on detention and/or be asked to fulfil a required number of hours of school community service (such as cleaning chewing gum, litter collection, tidying up the gym etc.).
- Any form of deliberate cyber bullying, harassment or unlawful behaviour on social media will be reported immediately to the Head of School and may lead to more serious consequences.
- A student who does not follow the protocols due to lack of knowledge will be required to have a compulsory education session on privacy settings and appropriate social media behaviour.
- All reports of Cyber bullying and other technology misuses will be investigated fully and may result in a notification to police where the School is obligated to do so. Students and Parents must be aware that in certain circumstances where a crime may have been committed, they may be subject to a criminal investigation by Police over which the School have no control.

3.2 Staff, Employees and School Council of Governors

Staff, employees and School Council of Governors should comply with the professional boundaries of staff-student relationships and should not engage in social interaction with students through social media unless in an educationally valid context, and only after receiving permission from the School to do so. Staff, employees and School Council of Governors should not obtain multimedia of members of the Ascham community for personal use on social media.

Members of staff who are authorised to use Ascham's social media platforms in an official capacity should also refer to the [Social Media Guidelines for Staff](#).

3.3 Parents and Carers

The School recognises that social media is used by parents, and has many benefits. Parents should be aware, however, that there are a number of potential legal liabilities that may arise through the use of social media in relation to the School and the wider School community.

- Photographs containing students in Ascham uniform or on School grounds, including geo-location tagging, must not be posted in a public online forum or shared in any other public forum without the express consent of the School. To do so is a breach of privacy.
- Photographs containing other students should not be posted in an online closed forum without the express consent of the other child/children's parents.
- Parents should not make contact with other students via any form of social media without the express consent of the student's parents.

Parents and carers should be aware of, and informed about their children's online behaviour on social media, and be proactive in educating them about this policy to ensure their child is using social media in an acceptable manner.

Requirements of Parents

Parents have an important role in fostering a respectful and supportive School community. Hence (as per our Conditions of Enrolment) they are required at all times to not engage in any activity or conduct in relation to the School that will bring the School into disrepute or adversely affect the reputation of the School, including in electronic media such as social media.

4.0 Third-Party Contractors

Third-party contractors and their respective employees will abide by their contractual obligations when working for Ascham School. In addition, third-party contractors and their employees will abide by the 'Ascham Community Social Media Protocols', and follow specific protocol including and not limited to:

- Taking photographs or videos (or equivalent multimedia) of members of the Ascham community on Ascham School grounds and geo-location tagging this multimedia at Ascham School.
- Requesting permission from Ascham to leverage relevant multimedia for commercial use.

5.0 Breach

Ascham monitors members of the Ascham Community, and third-party contractor behaviour in relation to this social media policy and any breaches will be investigated and dealt with appropriately.

Ascham will enforce this social media policy and will monitor social media for breaches of the policy. Members of the Ascham Community, and third-party contractors who don't respect this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

If directed by Ascham, any member of the Ascham Community, and third-party contractors must remove, and cooperate with all attempts to remove, any comment, post or other online content that Ascham deems to be in breach of this policy.

If members of the Ascham Community, and third-party contractors notice inappropriate or unlawful content online relating to Ascham, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, it will be reported via email to the Head of School.

6.0 Policy Information

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