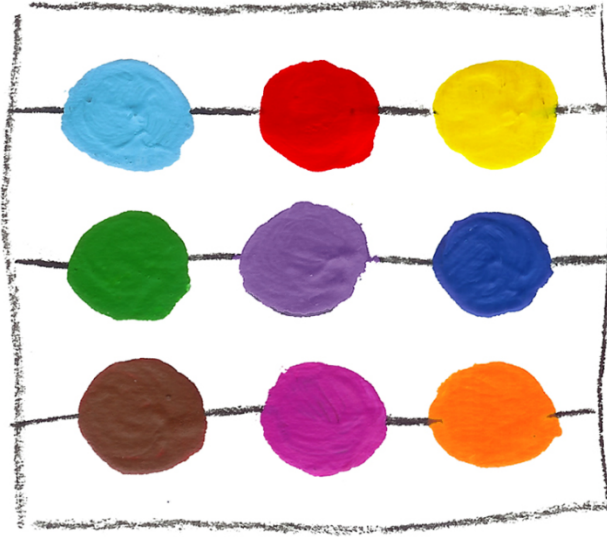


Social Media Policy



Carrigaline Educate Together N.S.

This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of Carrigaline Educate Together National School (CETNS). It is intended to help parents and guardians understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

Version	Description	Authors
March 2020	First version of policy	Board of Management

School Contact Details

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Social Media Policy

Introduction

This policy is the result of the collaboration of the Policy Committee, together with the Board of Management

Rationale

Carrigaline Educate Together National School (CETNS) recognises that teachers, students and parents engage with social media applications. These applications include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok, blogs, See Saw and other online tools through which people connect and share information.

All members of the CETNS community are expected to uphold the values of the school in all social media interactions. Staff, students and parents will not act in such a way that the image of CETNS is brought into disrepute nor in a way that harms members of the school community.

Therefore, it is expected that CETNS staff, students and parents use social media in a respectful and responsible manner. Social media should not be used to insult, present offensive or inappropriate content or to misrepresent CETNS or any member of the school community.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

The Social Media Policy reflects the overall ethos of the school which states: Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. is one of a number of multi-denominational schools throughout the country. The representative organisation for these schools is 'Educate Together'.

Educate Together aims to meet a growing need in Irish society for schools that recognise the developing diversity of Irish life and the modern need for democratic management structures. In particular, Educate Together guarantees children and parents of all faiths and none equal respect in the operation and governing of education.

The schools operated by the member associations of Educate Together are fully recognised by the Irish Department of Education and Science and work under the same regulations and funding structures as other national schools. However, they have a distinct ethos or governing spirit. This has been defined in the following terms:

- **Equality based** i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected
- **Co-educational** and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities,
- **Child centred** in their approach to education
- **Democratically run** with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers (*Source: Educate Together Charter*)

Whilst the concepts of child-centeredness and co-educationalism are now widely accepted in Irish primary education, what distinguishes the Educate Together schools is their hard work in

developing a culturally inclusive and democratic ethos. This has pioneered unique approaches to inclusion of minority opinions and faiths in the Irish context.

The schools have developed education programmes which open the eyes of children to the naturally positive contribution that social, religious and cultural diversity and difference of viewpoint and opinion make to society.

The other characteristic feature of these schools is that they are democratically organised and governed. This maximises the potential for building a genuine partnership between the professional, objective role of the teacher and the necessarily personal involvement of the parent in contributing to their children's education.

Information taken from the Educate Together website www.educatetogether.ie

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. makes the distinction between denominational education and moral/religious education. The ethical curriculum followed by the school is called the Learn Together Curriculum. It is comprised of four strands: Morality & Spirituality, Equality & Justice, Belief systems, Ethics & the environment.

Denominational instruction is facilitated by the school insofar as groups are permitted to use the school premises. This is organised by parents outside of school hours.

The Social Media Policy recognises and endeavours to adopt the values that are set out in the ethos of the school for those at work in the school. It attempts to support and sustain a harmonious environment in which the potential of all staff is nurtured through the co-operation between staff, pupils, parents, board members and all other relevant parties.

Aims

The Social Media Policy aims:

- to set standards of behaviour for social media that are consistent with the values and ethos of CETNS.
- to protect the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and the school community.
- to encourage safe and responsible use of social media.

Definitions

Social media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

Social Media: refers to all social networking sites. These sites include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, WhatsApp, Tik Tok, Instagram, SMS, YouTube and includes emails and mobile devices.

Rights and Responsibilities

Staff, students, parents and guardians are expected to show respect to all members of the school community.

Staff will: Plan for the inclusion of cyber safety awareness within the curriculum with guidance from relevant education authorities.

Parents and guardians will: Be responsible for being aware of and informed about their children's online activity and be proactive in the supervision and guidance of their children taking into account this policy and in particular the school's core values.

STUDENT GUIDELINES

When using social media, students are expected to ensure that they:

- Read and agree to the terms and conditions of various social media sites as many of them have age restrictions for their use e.g. Facebook, Instagram and Tik Tok are all restricted to those 13 years of age and above.
- Are aware of what they are posting online and that social media sites and applications are public forums.
- Will not access social networking sites during the school working day.
- Respect the rights and confidentiality of others.
- Do not impersonate or falsely represent another member of the school community.
- Do not bully, intimidate abuse, harass or threaten other members of the school community.
- Do not make defamatory comments towards other members of the school community.
- Do not use offensive or threatening language or resort to personal abuse towards each other or members of the school community.
- Do not harm the reputation of CETNS or those within its community.
- Do not upload video, audio or photographs of any member of the CETNS community (student, parents or staff).

PARENT/GUARDIAN GUIDELINES

Classroom blogs and other social media tools open up communication between students, parents and teachers. This kind of communication and collaboration can have a large impact on learning at CETNS. The school encourages parents to participate in such activities when appropriate but requests that parents act responsibly and respectfully at all times, understanding that their conduct not only reflects on the school community, but will be a model for our students as well.

Parents/guardians should:

- Be aware that many social media sites have age restrictions. Parents need to monitor their children's online social media activity, and read the terms and conditions of various social media sites and applications their children are interested in using. Parents need to be aware that many of them have age restrictions for their use e.g. Facebook, Instagram and Tik Tok are all restricted to those 13 years of age and above.
- Be aware that they are in breach of terms and conditions if they set up a personal account for their children to use if they knowingly understand that age restrictions apply.
- Before uploading photos, audio or video, parents need to seek appropriate permission from any individual involved.

- Online postings and conversations are not private. Do not share confidential information, internal school discussions or specific information about students, staff or other parents.
- Parents should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information in regards to the CETNS community and its members.
- Parents assisting with classroom activities should not make use of social media sites while involved in such activities.

STAFF AND TEACHER GUIDELINES

- Staff should not accept students as ‘friends’ on their own social network sites or interact with students on social networking sites.
- Staff and student online interaction must occur only in an educational context.
- Staff must not discuss students or colleagues or publicly criticise school policies or personnel on social networking sites.
- Staff are personally responsible for content they publish online.
- The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the online world. If staff identify themselves online as affiliated with CETNS then they need to be aware that they are by definition representing the entire school community. Staff should ensure that content associated with them is consistent with their work at the school and the school’s values and ethos.
- Staff should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information in regards to the CETNS community and its members.
- When contributing online, staff should not post confidential student information.

Success Criteria

Our Social Media Policy will be seen to be working well when:

- There is an increased awareness among the children, staff and parents about appropriate use of social media.
- Positive feedback from members of the school community (pupils, teachers, SNAs, parents) is received

Roles and Responsibility

The Board of Management, Principal, staff, parents and guardians have both a role and a responsibility in successfully implementing this policy.

The policy will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis by the policy committee.

Implementation Date

This policy was implemented on 2nd March 2020.

Timetable for Review

This policy is to be reviewed during March 2021.

Ratification and Communication

The policy will be communicated to members of the Board of Management prior to the meeting of the BOM on March 2nd 2020. Parents will be made aware in the next school communication that the policy is available for viewing by appointment in school or alternatively online at: www.carrigalineeducatetogether.ie/publications

Date of ratification: 02/03/2020

Signed:

CHAIRPERSON OF BOM

Date: _____