



Digital Technologies and Social Media Policy PP030

Introduction

Plenty River College (the College) is an independent, specialist senior secondary school and a Registered Training Organisation (RTO Code: 22732), delivering the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) and VCE Vocational Major (VM) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) Certificates. It provides a safe and inclusive learning environment for young people aged 15-20 years who may have been disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from education.

Plenty River College is a school of opportunities in which all students are empowered to achieve their personal best. Our mission is to assist students to develop life and work skills and achieve in their learning by:

- re-engaging them in education;
- fostering their social and emotional development; and
- providing a supportive and safe environment for them

Rationale

The College understands that digital technologies including the internet and computers provide students with rich opportunities to support learning and development in a range of ways.

Through increased access to digital technologies, students can benefit from enhanced learning that is interactive, collaborative, personalised and engaging. Digital technologies enable our students to interact with and create high quality content, resources and tools. It also enables personalised learning tailored to students' particular needs and interests and transforms assessment, reporting and feedback, driving new forms of collaboration and communication.

The College believes that the use of digital technologies allows the development of valuable skills and knowledge and prepares students to thrive in our globalised and inter-connected world. Our College's vision is to empower students to use digital technologies to reach their personal best and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

The College has a responsibility to keep students safe within an online learning environment. The wellbeing and safety of every student at the College is our highest priority and we have a zero tolerance for cyber-bully or bullying in any form.

Purpose

To ensure that all students and members of the College community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing students with the opportunity to benefit from digital technologies to support and enhance learning and development at the College
- (b) expected student behaviour when using digital technologies including the internet, social media tools, and digital devices (including computers and laptops)
- (c) the College's commitment to promoting safe, responsible and discerning use of digital technologies, and educating students on appropriate responses to any dangers or threats to



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wellbeing that they may encounter when using the internet and digital technologies and social media tools

- (d) our College's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour on digital technologies, social media and the internet.
- (e) The College complies with current legislative requirements and regulatory changes relating to the use of social media by students under 16 years of age.

Scope

This policy applies to the College Board, the Executive Principal, Assistant Principal/Curriculum Leader, all teaching and College staff, students, volunteers, visitors and contractors.

Definitions

College environment	Means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the College Board for use by a student during or outside College hours, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A campus of the College • On-line College environments (including email and intranet) • Other locations provided by the College for a student's use (including without limitation, locations used for College camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events).
Cyber-Bullying	Direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology e.g. via a mobile phone, computers, chat rooms, email, social media.
Digital technologies	Are defined as being any networks, systems, software or hardware including electronic devices and applications which allow a user to access, receive, view, record, store, communicate, copy or send any information such as text, images, audio, or video.
ICT Acceptable Use Agreement	An agreement between the College, parents and students that they will abide by the rules for the use of digital technologies in the College as set out in the Digital Technologies and Social Media Policy.
Information Communications Technology (ICT)	ICT is the mode of education that uses information and communications technology to support, enhance and optimise the delivery of information in educational contexts.



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Parent/s	Refers to parents, guardians, step-parents and/or carers as listed in the College Enrolment Form.
Social media	<p>Term used for internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information among people. It includes all other emerging electronic/digital communication applications. Social media tools may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Snapchat) • video and photo sharing web sites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube, Instagram) • blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs • micro-blogs (e.g. Twitter) • forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups) • wikis (e.g. Wikipedia) • VOD (e.g. Netflix) and podcasts • video conferences and web conferences • e-mail and instant messaging.
Student	Child or young person named on the College's Enrolment Form.

Responsibility

1. The College Board is responsible for authorising this policy.
2. The Executive Principal is responsible for:
 - implementing this policy and providing a filtered internet service to block access to inappropriate online content to protect students;
 - referring suspected illegal online acts to the relevant law enforcement authority for investigation; and
 - ensuring that permission from students and parents when publishing student images and/or their work has been obtained through the College's Media Release form.
3. The Assistant Principal/Curriculum Leader is responsible for:
 - ensuring that College staff follow the requirements for student use of digital technologies, social media and the internet as set out in this policy;
 - educating and reminding students of the College's values and expectations of student behaviour when accessing digital technologies, social media and the internet at the College;
 - investigating incidents of digital misuse and developing recommendations for improvement should they happen in future; and



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- investigating any incidences of cyber bullying and disciplining students in accordance with the College's Student Behaviour Management Policy and Bullying and Harassment Policy.
4. Teaching staff are responsible for:
- educating and reminding students of the College's values and expectations of student behaviour when accessing digital technologies in the College environment;
 - supervising and supporting students using digital technologies in the College environment;
 - educating the students on appropriate responses to any dangers or threats to wellbeing they may encounter when using digital technologies;
 - educating students on the types of cyber-bullying and its legal and hurtful ramifications;
 - advising the Assistant Principal/Curriculum Leader of any student breaches of this policy; and
 - advising the Assistant Principal/Curriculum Leader of possible controls and preventative measures to reduce the likelihood of the misuse of digital technologies by students.
5. College staff are responsible for:
- exercising their duty of care and staying alert to the possibility of the misuse of digital technologies and/or social media in the College environment;
 - reporting any incidents of the misuse of digital technologies and/or social media when they occur to the Assistant Principal/Curriculum Leader;
 - advising the Assistant Principal/Curriculum Leader of possible controls and preventative measures to reduce the likelihood of the recurrence of any misuse of digital technologies and/or social media.
 - ensuring not to share links to online videos or content with students from non-public platforms
6. Students are responsible for:
- protecting their own passwords when using digital technologies in the College and not divulging them to another person;
 - behaving in a way that is consistent with the College's values and processes and procedures as set out in this policy;
 - signing the College's ICT Acceptable Use Agreement (see ICT Acceptable Use Agreement FT089) that they have read and understand this policy.
7. Parents are responsible for:
- signing the College's ICT Acceptable Use Agreement (see ICT Acceptable Use Agreement FT089 for more details) that they have read and understand this policy.



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Implementation

Safe and appropriate use of digital technologies and social media tools

Digital technology, if not used appropriately, may present risks to students' safety or wellbeing. At Plenty River College, students are provided with access to College-owned computers and supervised internet services to support their learning. The College is committed to educating all students to be safe, responsible and discerning in the use of digital technologies and social media, equipping them with the skills and knowledge required to navigate the digital environment safely and responsibly.

At the College, we:

- Ensure that where students under the age of 16 are required to access social media for curriculum purposes, authorised staff either embed or contextualise the resource to minimise direct access to the platform where possible or provide a direct link to the publicly available age-appropriate content in a controlled and purposeful manner.
- use online sites and digital/social media tools such as YouTube (public platform) that support students' learning, and focus our use of digital technologies on being learning-centred;
- restrict the use of digital technologies and Social Media in the College environment to specific uses with targeted educational or developmental aims;
- supervise and support students using digital technologies in the College environment, including during periods of remote learning;
- effectively and responsively address any issues or incidents that have the potential to impact on the wellbeing of our students in relation to the internet, and the use of digital technologies and social media, especially during remote learning;
- have programs in place to educate our students to be promoting safe, responsible and discerning use of digital technologies, including cyber safety;
- educate our students about digital issues such as online privacy, intellectual property and copyright, Social Media Minimum Age Scheme and the importance of maintaining their own privacy online;
- actively educate and remind students of our *Student Behaviour Management, Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policies that outline our College's values and expected student behaviour, including online behaviours;
- have an ICT Acceptable Use Agreement outlining the expectations of students when using digital technologies, the internet and social media in the College environment;
- use clear protocols and procedures to protect students working in online spaces, which includes reviewing the safety and appropriateness of online tools and communities, removing offensive content at earliest opportunity;



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- educate our students on appropriate responses to any dangers or threats to wellbeing that they may encounter when using the internet, social media and other digital technologies;
- provide a filtered internet service to block access to inappropriate content;
- refer suspected illegal online acts to the relevant law enforcement authority for investigation;
- support parents to understand safe and responsible use of digital technologies and social media tools

It is the responsibility of all students to protect their own password and not divulge it to another person. If a student or staff member knows or suspects an account has been used by another person, the account holder must notify the classroom teacher immediately.

All messages created, sent or retrieved on the College's network are the property of the College. The College reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system, as necessary and appropriate. Communications including text and images may be required to be disclosed to law enforcement and other third parties without the consent of the sender.

Student behavioural expectations

When using digital technologies and social media, students are expected to behave in a way that is consistent with the College's values and processes and procedures as outlined in this policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our College (including cyberbullying, using digital technologies to harass, threaten or intimidate, or viewing/posting/sharing of inappropriate or unlawful content), the College will institute a staged response, consistent with our Student Behaviour Management Policy.

Breaches of this policy may result in a number of consequences for students which will depend on the severity of the breach and the context of the situation. These includes:

- removal of network access privileges;
- removal of email privileges;
- removal of internet access privileges;
- removal of printing privileges;
- removal of device; and
- other consequences as outlined in the College's Student Behaviour Management, Student Wellbeing and Engagement and Bullying and Harassment Prevention policies.

Permission to borrow ICT & audio-visual equipment

Students may be required to borrow media equipment such as cameras, tripods, lights, microphones or replacement laptops as part of their learning program. Such equipment is not covered by College insurance when it is on student loan. It is therefore necessary for a parent to



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sign the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement to indicate that they guarantee to pay for repairs or replacement if required due to damage or loss of the loaned equipment caused by their child.

Distribution of College owned devices to students and personal student use of digital technologies at College will only be permitted where students and their parents have signed an ICT Acceptable Use Agreement.

Communication

1. This policy will be communicated to the College community either through the College website, newsletter and via request.
2. Parents and Students will be notified of this policy and the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement at the time of their student's enrolment in the College, in the Student and Parent/Guardian Handbook, and in the College newsletter.
3. College staff will be informed about this policy:
 - attending the College induction program for new staff;
 - receiving a copy of this policy at the first staff meeting at start of the College year;
 - the College Teacher Handbook (for teachers); and
 - training programs and professional learning activities

Related Forms
ICT Acceptable Use Agreement FT089
Related Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying and Harassment Prevention • Child Safe • Duty of Care • Student Behaviour Management • Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion
Relevant Legislation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) • Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic) • Ministerial Order 1359



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- Privacy Guidance on Part 4A (Social Media Minimum Age) of the Online Safety Act 2021
Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth)

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Revision Record:

Date	Version	Revision description
14/02/2022	2022.V1	Initial Policy
13/02/2026	2026.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated the introduction • Add details about social media Minimum Age Scheme • Added relevant legislation • Removed appendix and added as from with version control ICT Acceptable Use Agreement FT089 • Added version control