# SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

MAY 2026

St. Brendan's Community School

**St. Brendan's Community School Mission Statement**

*"Our aim is to create a caring community of learning where each individual is valued as a unique human being."*

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set direction for the creation, management and moderation of St. Brendan's Community School's social media presence on all relevant social media platforms.

Many benefits are to be gained from engaging with social media. The purpose of official St. Brendan's Community School social media channels is to promote the activities of St. Brendan's Community School, its staff, and students to the wider community.

However, it is important to note that anyone taking part in social media activities associated with our school must do so at all times in a responsible manner in accordance with St. Brendan's Community School's values and professional standards. St. Brendan's Community School has developed this policy to clarify how best to use these tools to the benefit of St. Brendan's Community School, its staff and students, so that we maintain a strong and professional presence with all St. Brendan's Community School related communications.

Staff and students need to be aware that any mention of St. Brendan's Community School, whether in professional or personal use of social media and whether inside or outside the workplace/student place must be done in a responsible manner and in accordance with this Policy and in accordance with all laws, professional expectations and St. Brendan's Community School policies in force at the time.

## Scope

The scope of this policy applies to St. Brendan's Community School staff and students in their capacity as members of the St. Brendan's Community School community, using any of the official St. Brendan's Community School social media channels or on any other social networking website.

It also applies to people external to St. Brendan's Community School posting material to official St. Brendan's Community School social networking sites.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities apply in relation to this Policy:

*Board of Management*

- To review and approve the policy on a periodic basis.

*Senior Leadership Team*

- To ensure that staff comply with the policy and to liaise with staff in the event of any breach of policy.

*Staff/Students/External Organisations*

- To adhere to policy statements in this document.
- To report suspected breaches of policy to the Manager.

## Supporting Standards, Procedures and Legislation

Information posted to social networking sites must adhere to legislation that is in force at the time.

Particular attention should be paid to;

- Copyright and Related Rights Acts 2000, 2004 and 2007.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Child Trafficking and Pornography Acts 1998 and 2004.
- Defamation Act 2009.
- Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989.
- The Digital Citizenship Education Handbook ( https://rm.coe.int/16809382f9) .
- Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022
- Child Protection Procedures for Post Primary Schools (Department of Education, 2025 - updated guidance)
- Bi CInealta Procedures for Post Primary Schools (2025)

Any user who posts information onto social networking sites must adhere to existing St. Brendan's Community School policies and must respect copyright, software licensing rules, property rights, privacy, data protection requirements, confidentiality, information and data security with particular attention being paid to the following;

### Personal Accountability and Respect

Respect Intellectual Property laws, including the use of images from the internet.

Confidentiality.

- The St. Brendan's Community School's Digital Citizenship Policy.
- The St. Brendan's Community School's Data Protection Policy.

## Social Networking Channels

St. Brendan's Community School social networking channels exist to promote the activities of St. Brendan's Community School and its staff and students to the wider community.

*It should be noted that any person who contributes/posts to any social networking sites whether in a professional or personal capacity and whether inside or outside the workplace/student place, is personally responsible for the material so posted.*

People who interact with St. Brendan's Community School's social media channels shall not:

- Post information which is confidential to St. Brendan's Community School.
- Post material that is: threatening/harassing/illegal/offensive/defamatory/indecent/inappropriate in nature.
- Use social media to engage in cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation or reputational damage against any member of the school community.
- Post contact information, such as phone numbers/email addresses, of any member of the St. Brendan's Community School community without their consent.
- Infringe on the rights of St. Brendan's Community School or any individual or entity, including privacy, intellectual property or publication rights.
- Post content or spam of a commercial nature.
- Post content or spam relating to alcohol and drugs.
- Post digital media (audio, video, photography) of students or staff without the appropriate consent in line with the school's Data Protection Policy and parental consent procedures. Photographs or video recordings of students may only be shared on official school social media accounts where parental/guardian consent has been obtained.

Those who list St. Brendan's Community School as their place of work or student in a personal capacity on Social Media Platforms should, where possible, state that the views expressed are their own personal views and not that of St. Brendan's Community School.

## Monitoring/Maintenance

St. Brendan's Community School fully respects the right to privacy of staff, students and external parties. However, this right must be balanced against St. Brendan's Community School's legitimate right to protect its interests.

## Creating New St. Brendan's Community School Branded Social Media Channels

If you want to create a new social media account that will include St. Brendan's Community School in its title, you must obtain written approval from the Principal and send notification to the ICT Department. The ICT Department of St. Brendan's Community School must be notified of all new channels. (itsupport@stbrendanscsbirr.ie) Login credentials for all official school accounts must be securely stored and accessible to school management.

## Presence and Maintenance

Designated staff members authorised by the Principal will manage St Brendan's Community Schools official social media accounts. These staff members are responsible for monitoring comments, ensuring posts comply with school policies, and removing inappropriate content where necessary.

## Breaches of Policy

Any breach of this policy or any failure or refusal to comply with this policy may be a disciplinary offence which may warrant an investigation, which may in turn lead to disciplinary action, up to and including, suspension/dismissal.

## Notice and Take Down Procedure

St. Brendan's Community School operates on a 'Notice and Takedown' procedure for St. Brendan's Community School operated social media.

If you have any complaints or objections to material or content, or if you believe that material or content posted on St. Brendan's Community School Social Media Channels infringes any intellectual property that you hold, please email St. Brendan's Community School's IT Support (itsupport@stbrendanscsbirr.ie)

Upon receipt of the *Take Down* request, St. Brendan's Community School will take the following action:

Acknowledge receipt of the complaint.

- Make an initial assessment of the complaint within 24 hours of acknowledging receipt of the complaint. St. Brendan's Community School may make contact with the complainant during this initial assessment period for the purposes of verifying the complaint.
- Where St. Brendan's Community School considers it appropriate, it will remove the content which is the subject of the complaint, pending a full investigation.
- Any removal will be on a 'without prejudice' basis and shall not constitute any admission of responsibility on the part of St. Brendan's Community School or any other party.
- Upon making a final determination on the complaint, St. Brendan's Community School may:
    - Reinstate or remove the content;
    - Amend the content at its sole discretion;
    - Permanently remove the content.

**Ratification, Implementation and Review**

- This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 28/5/26
- This policy has been made available to School Personnel and the Parents' Association. It is also published on the School Website and the School App. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and the patron upon request.
- This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once every two years. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to School Personnel and the Parents' Association. The review will also be published on the School Website. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department of Education.

Signed: Mary Loughnane Acting

**Joan Hogan**

**Chairperson of Board of Management**

Date: 28/5/26

Signed: John Kennedy

**John Kennedy**

**Principal/Secretary of Board of Management**

Date: 28/5/26

Date of next review: _____