



Golden Grove Primary & Pre-Primary School

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POLICY FOR SOCIAL NETWORKING GROUPS

Purpose of policy

The following policy stipulates the rights applicable to both parent and staff member when being involved in and/or creating online communication groups linked to the school. The policy is guided by:

1. The Constitution (1996)
2. The Protection of Personal Information Act (2013).
3. The Children's Act (2005)

The function of the policy will be to protect the wellbeing (physical and emotional) and rights of both parties (parents and staff members) who engage in online communication in these groups within and after school-hours.

1. Relevance of the Constitution of 1996 to the policy

With reference to the Constitution of 1996, the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2) states that the following rights should be upheld for any person:

- The right to human dignity
- Freedom of expression

With specific reference to online social networking groups the right to human dignity applies to both parents and staff members as well as those affiliated with the school. Groups formed on these social platforms must not contain information that may not infringe on the dignity of either party. If human 'dignity' is defined as:

'An individual or group's sense of self-respect and self-worth, physical and psychological integrity and empowerment'

then content shared on social networking platforms related to the school, whether it be with the staff member or parent present on that group or not, may not undermine any of the abovementioned aspects of human dignity.

With reference to freedom of expression, groups created on online social networking platforms are allowed to function as a space for both parents and teachers to communicate for the benefit of the child or the functioning of the school. Views and opinions may be expressed on these groups provided they do not violate any aspect of the Constitution, with special reference to ‘human dignity’.

2. Relevance of the Protection of Personal Information Act (2013)

‘Personal information’ is stipulated in the Protection of Personal Information Act (2013) and includes the following:

- * The views and opinions of an individual about the person
- * The name of the person if it appears with other personal information relating to the person or if the disclosure of the name itself would reveal information about the person.

The Act consequently states that:

“If the data subject has objected to the processing of personal information in terms of subsection (3) the subject party may no longer process the personal information”

This statement in context of social networking groups stipulates that if the views or opinions of an individual are shared (processed) without their consent, the subject party (those on the social networking group/perpetrators) will be in violation of the act. In simpler terms, no teacher or parent may be discussed on a group if an individual has not given permission for that occurrence or if that discussion violates any aspect of the Constitution or the Protection of Personal Information Act.

Likewise, if a teacher or parent has objected to their name or personal information being discussed / processed on these platforms, the subject party has no right to make use of it.

3.Relevance of the Children’s Act

- Publishing of photographs or videos of children on media platforms can only be done with consent of parents/guardians. This is stated in the Children’s Act 38 of 2005.
- Parents must sign the attached form in Addendum A on admittance of a new learner to Golden Grove Primary.



Time periods of communication

Staff members or parents may not communicate on the online networking groups before or after certain times as this invades the personal space of the receiver. Unless it is an emergency, staff members and parents should not communicate on Class Dojo groups between:

20h00 pm and 06h00 am on weekdays

AND

No communication must be made on the groups on Saturday or Sunday unless prearranged or in an emergency. To communicate with staff members or parents after hours an email must be sent, or a call made to the school the following working day.

Teachers should restrict their contact with parents to the school email system and class dojo, and not give out their personal numbers.

4. This policy covers but is not limited to the following social media platforms:

- D6
- Class Dojo
- WhatsApp Groups
- Facebook
- The Golden Grove Primary School Website
- Includes any other social media that facilitates communications regarding the school.

4.1 Social Networking Groups

- Any grievance or complaint must be brought to the secretary of the SGB before reaching a social media platform.
- The integrity or reputation of the school must not be put at risk online and should be dealt with by the school first.
- The SGB reserves the right to suggest removing harmful or damaging content from a group.

4.1.1 Starting a Group

- If any parent or group wish to start a Facebook page affiliated with the school permission must be obtained from the SGB to do so citing reasons and purpose for the group.
- The official Facebook page will be administered by an approved staff member.
- GGPS groups are closed groups and should not be made public.



4.1.2 Moderators

- The role of moderator is to ensure content is reliable, accurate and not potentially harmful to the school.
- Debates should be managed, and parents encouraged to use the official channels for communication with the school.
- Moderators are to be selected by the SGB and can be a board or staff member. They may change the status of the group as well as report important information to the SGB.

4.1.3 Posting of Pictures and Sharing of Media

- Media shared on groups must be tasteful and child-friendly.
- Unnecessary media should not be shared.
- The SGB reserves the right to report any members of the group, as well as content on the group.

4.1.4 Closing of a Group

- The SGB may temporarily or permanently close a GGPS group if:
 1. The group has gone dormant (6-12 months)
 2. The group no longer serves its intended purpose
 3. It has been established that the conversations and content of the group encroaches on legislation within this policy and/or does not promote the values and ethos of the school.



5. Conclusion

The institution employing this policy prohibits the defamation of character regarding any individual, parent or staff member, within the realm of communication on groups via social networking platforms.


In accordance with the purpose of this policy, if any staff member or parent/caregiver involved in the school violates these rights and regulations through content on a social networking platform, with either party present on the group or not, the school will take immediate action to hold that person accountable, and appropriate consequences dictated by school protocol will ensue.

Revision and Acceptance Policy:

This policy has been reviewed on 20TH day of AUGUST 20 19.

The revision of this policy has been accepted by:

Name of SGB Member: AHMED DALWIE

Signature:  Date: 20/08/2019

Name of SMT Member: DAWN PETERSEN

Signature:  Date: 20.08.19