**Appropriate use of social media Policy**

Clermont State High School acknowledges the growing popularity of social media both as a communication and educational tool and supports its appropriate use. We also acknowledge the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to students, families and staff through the inappropriate use of social media. Students must understand they are responsible for the content they publish on social media platforms so it is important they understand what is expected of them while using social media.

Publishing images, videos and/or comments to social media platforms that are defamatory, menacing, or seek to cause harm amount to bullying, and as such will be dealt with by way of Clermont State High School’s ‘Preventing and Responding to Bullying’ policy. Any social media post that adversely affects, or is likely to adversely affect, other students or the good order and management of the school may result in further disciplinary action by the Principal, including suspension, possibly exclusion, from our school.

A serious instance of inappropriate online behaviour may constitute a criminal offence and become a police matter. For example, online content may substantiate the offence of ‘using a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence’ (Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth) s. 474.17). School staff may contact their union or obtain personal legal advice if they feel that online content seriously impacts their reputation. Defamatory online content may give rise to litigation under the Defamation Act 2005 (Qld).

Parental and community feedback is important for schools and the department. If you have a compliment, complaint or enquiry about an issue at school, the best approach is to speak directly to the school about the matter, rather than discussing it in a public forum. Whilst as a school we rely on social media to update parents of information, the department prefers that parents contact schools directly with a compliment, complaint or enquiry due to privacy considerations.

If you upload photos of your children, to social media, be mindful of who might be in the background. You might be happy to share your child’s successes with your friends and family but some parents are not. If you are tagging or naming students, consider that other parents may not want their child’s name attached to images online.

Taking the following steps may help resolve a social media issue in a constructive way:

* refrain from responding
* take a screen capture or print a copy of the concerning online content
* block the offending user
* report the content to the social media provider

If you consider problem content to be explicit, pornographic or exploitative of minors, you should keep a record of the URL of the page containing that content but NOT print or share it. The URL can be provided to the school principal, or police, as needed for escalation of serious concerns.