Wednesday 8 July 2026

ST MARY'S
COLLEGE

Subject: Important Reminder Regarding Social Media Use

Dear Parents and Carers,

The inappropriate use of social media by young people continues to be a growing concern for schools and families. I am writing to seek your support regarding concerns that have been brought to the College's attention involving content posted on TikTok by a student operating under an alternative username.

The content raises several serious concerns, including:

- **Defamatory content** – Posting, sharing, or commenting on material that damages the reputation of another person, student, staff member, or the College may constitute defamation and can have serious consequences.
- **Harassment or bullying** – Online behaviour that targets, intimidates, humiliates, or excludes others is unacceptable.
- **Copyright infringement** – Using or distributing images, videos, music, or other content without appropriate permission is a breach of copyright laws. This includes the unauthorised use of College branding and imagery.
- **Recording and sharing content without consent** – Students must not film, photograph, record, or publish images, audio, or video of others without their knowledge and permission.
- **Damage to the reputation of individuals or the College** – Social media activity that brings the College, its students, staff, or families into disrepute may result in disciplinary action.

The creation, sharing, or endorsement of disrespectful material does not align with the values upheld at St Mary's College and stands in direct contrast to the culture of respect, dignity, and integrity upon which our community is built. Behaviour of this nature can have a significant psychosocial impact on those targeted, including members of our staff, and represents a clear breach of College expectations and Catholic Education Tasmania policies.

In line with established protocols, the College has formally notified the social media platform, the eSafety Commissioner, and relevant senior leaders within Catholic Education Tasmania. In addition, with the support of Catholic Education Tasmania, the College has sought legal advice and is engaging with lawyers to ensure appropriate action is taken.

It is also important to note that Australia now has social media age restrictions requiring platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, X, and others to take reasonable steps to prevent children under the age of 16 from holding accounts. These restrictions came into effect on 10 December 2025 and are designed to support the safety and wellbeing of young people online.

164 Harrington Street, Hobart TAS 7000
GPO Box 1476, Hobart TAS 7001
T (03) 6108 2560 · stmarys@smc.tas.edu.au
ABN 70 118 296 643
www.smc.tas.edu.au

Regardless of a student's age, all members of our College community are expected to use digital technologies responsibly, ethically, and respectfully, both during and outside school hours, particularly when their actions may impact other members of the College community.

We respectfully ask parents and carers to discuss responsible online behaviour with their young person. We are seeking your support in ensuring that this content, and any similar content, is removed immediately and not shared further.

Please ensure that young people in your care understand that any material they post, share, endorse, or comment on must not be degrading, harmful, or unlawful. It is also important that they understand both the legal implications of online behaviour and the long-term impact of their digital footprint.

If you, or your young person, have information that may assist the College in its follow-up of this matter, please contact the Acting Deputy Principal (lherd@smc.tas.edu.au) or myself (cwilsonhaffenden@smc.tas.edu.au).

Thank you for your partnership and ongoing support in helping our students make positive and responsible choices online. By working together, we can ensure that the values of respect, responsibility, and integrity continue to be upheld across our College community.

Kind regards,

Caroline Wilson-Haffenden
Acting Principal