



20 October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Upcoming Changes to Social Media Access for Students Under 16

I am writing to inform you of important changes to social media access that will affect all Australian schools and families from December 2025. Under new federal legislation, children under the age of 16 will no longer be permitted to access social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube through logged-in accounts. These changes are designed to delay - not ban - young people's exposure to social media, in response to growing concerns about:

- Harmful content including violence, hate speech, and disordered eating.
- Manipulative algorithms and addictive design features.
- Mental health impacts such as anxiety, poor sleep, and reduced attention span.

Social media platforms will be required to block under-16s from creating or using logged in accounts. Non-compliance may result in significant penalties for these companies.

#### Why YouTube Is Included

Although YouTube is widely used in educational settings, it is classified as a social media platform due to its interactive and sharing features. Research indicates that 40% of children's most recent exposure to online harm occurred via YouTube. Even without logging in, its algorithms can quickly lead users to inappropriate or extreme content. YouTube was designed to maximise engagement, not to support structured learning.

#### Impact on Schools

These changes will affect how digital content is accessed in classrooms:

- Students under 16 will need to use YouTube in logged-out mode.
- Some educational videos may no longer be accessible to teachers.
- Schools are transitioning to safer, curriculum aligned platforms such as ClickView, which vet content and remove advertising.

#### How Families Can Support

Parents and carers play a vital role in helping children adapt to these changes. We encourage you to:

- Frame the change as a delay, not a punishment.
- Set clear boundaries around device use (e.g. no devices in bedrooms, tech-free zones).
- Promote balanced screen time and offline hobbies.
- Save any personal content from children's social media accounts before closures.
- Supervise and discuss online content to build critical awareness.
- Collaborate with other families to create a united approach to digital wellbeing.





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### For Students

This change is not about removing creativity or connection; it is about protecting wellbeing. Students will still be able to create and share videos through school platforms and communities. We will continue to encourage healthy digital habits such as timed sessions, safe sharing, and speaking with trusted adults about any concerns.

### In Summary

The upcoming social media delay represents a significant step toward improving student wellbeing and digital safety. Schools will continue to provide safe alternatives for learning, and families can support this transition by modelling positive digital habits and maintaining open communication.

Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting our students' growth and wellbeing.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Bonnici  
College Principal



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