Social Networking and Young People: Privileging Student Voice

Marie Perry
M Ed, B Ed

School of Education and Professional Studies
Griffith University

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Declaration

I declare that this work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed:  

Date:  30/10/2015
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Abstract

Young adolescents today are growing up in an environment rich in digital technology. They are highly connected with their technology *always on and always on them*. In this digital culture there are consistent concerns regarding the impact of this new way of being, and adult-generated concerns include perceived diminished childhood, bullying and fear which dominate much of the widely held understanding of the digital culture which these young people inhabit. In this culture of fear and in the context of schools, adult-generated strategies for enhancing the experience of young people engaging with social networking is generally the norm and student voice is repressed.

In contrast, this study set out to explore the experience of young people with respect to their engagement with social networking, through the privileging of student voice rather than assuming that adult knowledge be applied. Specifically, students aged from approximately 12-16 years, in the middle years of schooling (Years 7-9), are the subject of this study as they constitute the years where rapid growth and development, identity formation and establishing practices associated with social networking occur.

The development of resilience in young people as they traverse the middle years of schooling is a crucial aspect of identity development, both offline and online. The privileging of student voice is necessary in the facilitation of supporting young people through these formative years, and thus eliciting genuine student voice rather than simply including students as participants in the data collection process was key to this study. Utilising the three factors necessary to facilitate student voice – authenticity, inclusion, and power – as the primary lenses for the study, provided a focus on genuine student engagement.

This study set out to provide an opportunity for the expression of student voice, particularly the needs of young people in regard to their engagement with social networking use as they negotiate their lives in a technology-rich world. It identified many similarities in thinking between young people and adults, as well as identifying divergence and hence areas that require addressing.
A case study approach was employed thereby enabling a rich analysis in a unique context to be undertaken. Mixed methodology was utilised, combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Specifically, review of seven school-based documents was conducted, along with a survey of the entire cohort of Years 7, 8 and 9 students with 236 student participants. Following the survey, focus groups were conducted with students (n=10), teachers (n=8), and parents (n=4) of students in Years 7 to 9.

The data were analysed using a range of appropriate analytic techniques: the documents were analysed using document analysis; the surveys were analysed via basic descriptive statistics; and the focus group data were analysed using Leximancer to conduct content analysis. In each analytic technique there was a continuous focus on privileging student voice and the analysis of teacher and parent focus groups sought to identify areas of consistency and to highlight areas of contrast with those of student data collected in the surveys and focus groups.

The findings of this study revealed that the key concern of students when using social networking sites (SNSs) is privacy. The focus group discussions with parents and teachers also revealed that privacy was a primary concern for them, showing alignment with student opinion. Furthermore, issues arising from SNS use was reported as incidents having largely occurred in the home and not at school and included cyber bullying and technical difficulties. The study also revealed the positive aspect of social networking as predominantly the ability for young adolescent people to be connected to their peers. This study also noted minor differences when data were considered through the lens of gender. Support was requested by young people in the form of case studies or scenarios led by other young people who had experienced actual difficulties when using SNSs.

It is acknowledged that the case study approach adopted in this study has limitations; nevertheless, it provides rich insight into one school context, with close-grained mapping and analysis of issues, tensions and priorities that are likely to be of concern to many. Hence, the insight gained from this study may be more widely generalised, and could be applied to a wide range of school sites and settings.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Setting the scene
The characteristics and needs of young people, aged approximately 12-16 years and hence journeying through the middle years of their schooling, have received increased research attention over the past 20 to 30 years (Pendergast, Keogh, Garrick, & Reynolds, 2009). Internationally, there has been a push for intentional research in this area in order to better understand the prevalence of disengagement and alienation of young people from schooling which, it has been argued (Middle Years of Schooling Association [MYSA], 2008), has manifest itself in a general decline in student performance. Subsequent research and recommendations for the Australian context are now widely accepted as recognising that the needs of learning in the middle years are distinctly different from those in the earlier years and in the later years of formal schooling (Australian Council for Educational Research [ACER], 2012; MCEEDYA, 2008; Pendergast, 2010). A recent change to the structure of schooling in Queensland sharply highlights the middle years as representing a unique stage in schooling, with the mandatory shift of Year 7 from primary to secondary schools and the establishment of Junior Secondary (ACER, 2012). The formal identification of Years 7, 8 and 9 as Junior Secondary is supported by the Queensland Government Department of Education and Training through the implementation of six guiding principles, each of which reinforces the pedagogical uniqueness of the stage of young adolescence in terms of learning and teaching in schools (ACER, 2012).

For the purpose of this study, the term “young people” will be used when referring to adolescent students in the middle years, which pertains to students from Years 7 to 9. As already noted, these students are in a phase of learning that is now recognised as unique in our schooling sector.
Along with the literature concerning the phase of young adolescence, there is also a great deal of information available that characterises the nature and needs of the changing generations, and especially how generational location aligns with digital culture (Bennett, 2008; Jenssen, Gray, Harvey, DiClemente, & Klein, 2014). Generational theory offers a unique lens to view groups of people who share a birth range extending over an approximate 22-year period (Bahr & Pendergast, 2007). One of the features of the recent Generations Y and Z is that their birth period broadly coincides with the start of the digital revolution. With the rapid advancements in digital technology and the influence this has on the workplace, the home and our personal lives, there is also a proliferation of research about the influence of our digital culture on social norms.

Currently, schools typically include teachers who are members of a range of generations including Baby Boomer (1946-1954), Generation J (1955-1965), Generation X (1966-1976), and a small number of Generation Y (1977-1994) teachers. Of these, Baby Boomers and Generation X are digital immigrants, while Generation Y and subsequent generations are described as digital natives – that is, born into a world that is digitally based. Digital immigrants experienced their formative years where their practices were based on analogue culture, hence digital social networking did not feature; social analysts regard people of this generation as being socialised in ways that makes them less fluent with their engagement in the digital world. Schools currently enrol students who are Generation Z (1995-2012) (Bennett, 2008; Wilson & Gerber, 2008; McCrindle, 2009), all of whom are digital natives, distinguishing them from many of their teachers who in the main are digital immigrants, thus setting up a situation that is commonly known as the digital divide. A cultural feature of digital natives is the natural existence of social networking as a part of their social experience.

With the development, refinement and widespread adoption of social networking sites (hereafter referred to as SNSs), the capacity for young people to engage with this specific technology is relatively easy. Even though they now live in a digital world, ironically, young people today experience many of the same
challenges and issues as the generations that preceded them. The development of identity, managing strangers and the practices of youth being perceived as puzzling by their parents is not new. However, there is a perception that these concerns are all new and the product of recent times (Livingstone, 2008). It seems that young people are fundamentally the same as previous generations, but with new tools at their disposal. As Thomas (2007) notes, “[W]hat children do online is essentially similar to what they do offline: make friends, talk about their interests, engage in hobbies and pursuits that interest them, and have fun” (p. 180). Yet, research from the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) is generally undertaken from the risk management paradigm, focusing on cyber safety, and looking at the dangers of online predators and cyber bullying of students and strategies to assist in keeping children safe (ACMA, 2011a, 2013), rather than the social benefits of digital tools and how the tools form a part of establishing and shaping identity and relationships that young people typically traverse during these formative years. This presents a quandary for educators who are keen to utilise the tools digital technology offers, yet cognisant of the perceived and/or real safety challenges.

As an educator in a P-12 context with over 25 years of teaching experience, I have seen a change in the nature and use of technology by young people both within the classroom and in the hours outside school, at home. The most poignant change is that technology has moved from a neutral technical skill that assists in information gathering and presentation of this information to the non-neutral dependency (Rochlin, 1997) of online collaboration and socialising. Technology is no longer considered solely to be something that is used to assist in completing tasks efficiently; it is also a major instrument for communication and socialisation for young people, and increasingly for adults in school settings. The move from an analogue to a digital culture has changed the way we live and work, including the work of teachers.

The increased capacity and ease of access to social networking services has led to wide usage by young people and older generations as an everyday means
of communication (Thomas, 2007). SNSs provide a digital platform for shared communities and collaboration, where individuals can “chat” with each other via messaging, email, video or voice chat, share photos and videos and post comments in online forums, blogs or discussion groups (ACMA, 2009a, p. 21; boyd, 2008). Social networking services are online communities and communication tools that allow individual members to chat and share information in a variety of digital formats (ACMA, 2009a; boyd, 2008). There are currently several hundred SNSs and the number increases constantly. Some sites, such as Facebook, have maintained their popularity with presently over 1.23 billion members worldwide (ACMA, 2013) and approximately 13 800 000 users in Australia (Cowling, 2015). Other SNSSs such as MySpace have reduced in popularity, down to 36 million users from 75.9 million at its peak (ACMA, 2009b; Smith, 2013). The most popular SNSs are primarily used for socialisation, as they provide a platform for quick, easy and instantaneous communication with others (Beaumont, 2009). Regardless of the type of SNS, this technology, for many young people, is part of who they are and how they communicate (ACMA, 2014b; Bennett, 2008).

Students have access to a vast array of SNSs and can make contact 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via their computers, mobile phones, gaming consoles and other readily available devices. Many maintain a “24/7” vigil. Australia features as having one of the highest mobile phone ownership rates in the world (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [DFAT], 2015), resulting in a highly digitally connected society. Internationally, Australians are renowned as early adopters of digital technology, and this effect impacts on all age groups (DFAT, 2015). Of note, 89% of young Australians own a mobile phone and 69% own a smart phone; 72% of young Australians go online more than once per day (ACMA, 2014a).

In my role as a senior administrator in a P-12 independent school, I am involved in assisting with the strategic development of e-learning. Part of my role is to ensure that the school has a plan and implements a strategy that allows students to be ready for the world they will enter when they finish their secondary
education. This means they need to move from being digitally aware, to being digitally proficient. I also deal with the counter side of this, such as matters that impact upon the school and/or individuals due to issues arising as part of our digital culture. It is my experience that there is an increasing trend of student-related issues arising from the use of electronic communication which has been used inappropriately, that is, issues impacting negatively upon the welfare of the individual (particularly young people) or wider school community, which then influences them within the learning context at school.

The research cited by ACMA (2011a) into social networking has guided work in developing programs such as Hector’s World, Cyberquoll, Cybernetrix, and Wiseuptolt (all developed by ACMA) that are primarily focused on assisting students with online “stranger danger” and dealing with cyber bullying, empowering students to develop protective behaviours within the online setting. Whilst it is important for schools to teach these strategies, as many parents are not as technologically competent or confident – commonly referred to as being “tech savvy” – as their children, I see a need to develop a deeper understanding of the role of social networking in the socialisation of young people, to help them to develop the capacity to understand and critique social media, including both negative and advantageous aspects (Burnett & Merchant, 2011), as well as the effect of negative interactions upon individuals.

My experience is that the disembodied, faceless nature of communicating via electronic means may lead to comments being made, and images being shared, that might not occur in a face-to-face setting. The resulting impact, often featuring a lack of empathy, can have disastrous effects, particularly when comments and images can be shared with a global audience in an instant. Thomas (2007) argues that the anonymity of cyberspace allows for a greater level of risk taking and experimentation by young people. Boyle (2010) concurs, arguing that the misuse of technology is an emerging behavioural pattern within our society. ACMA research (2014b) reports that in this space of virtual socialising, there is a growth in internet access by young people via mobile phones, where they are increasingly
engaged in posting both public messages as well as messages sent privately, of which their parents may be unaware. This is to be expected given Australians’ high level of engagement with technology; yet, my experiences as an adult may not be consistent with what young people themselves experience.

Current media reports, which are often inflammatory and sensational in terms of the use of SNSs, have generated fear and alarm regarding their use. The focus of research is typically cyber safety and online stranger danger (ACMA, 2009a, 2013). Many schools are implementing policies and programs that relate to the cyber bullying and online stranger danger aspects. Whilst I believe this is important, I question whether this is enough and indeed if it is what young people need. Eliciting student voice is necessary in order to develop policies and programs that will provide effective guidance and support to young people as they develop their sense of identity and resilience, thus enabling them to navigate successfully the world in which they live. I am interested to investigate what young people think: the pros and cons from their perspective, what they feel they need, and also how parents, teachers and schools can help them with their virtual and real-life interactions. Are our programs and policies giving young people what they need or what adults think they need? An aspirational goal of this research is to generate recommendations for schools in terms of policy development and program implementation.

It is in this context that further research is needed regarding what young people themselves report to be their experience of living in digital times, and what they perceive to be their needs in this context. Yet, the inclusion of student voice is often omitted in the studies undertaken, and as Cook-Sather (2002) points out, frequently when education reform of any kind is undertaken, the missing voice is that of the students themselves. However, including student voice is not always a simple matter. Groundwater-Smith (2011) highlights the challenge of giving students a voice in research, suggesting that its inclusion can lead to paternalism and tokenism if not carefully undertaken.
It is in this context that this research sets out to privilege student voice by investigating the perceptions of students, their parents and their teachers regarding how young people’s use of SNSs influences their lives and whether this influence extends to the classroom environment. It is also intended to identify whether the educational programs offered in the case study school assist students with challenges encountered in their use of social networking digital technologies.

1.2 Research aim

This research aims to explore the experiences of young people and to determine their engagement in SNSs, in a unique case study. It specifically seeks to explore the following questions in the context of a single case study site:

- What influence is electronic communication, in particular social networking, having on the social environment in and out of school?
- What influence is electronic communication, in particular social networking, having on the learning environment?
- Is there a difference in the impact based on gender?
- What do students want in terms of adult support?

The overarching aim will guide the research design with the sub-questions providing specific areas of focus.

In summary, this research sets out to investigate what young people in a single site school are engaged in online and what they value about using SNSs. The research seeks to determine what it is that young people (as those individuals immersed in a digital culture) report would be helpful to them and what this might mean in terms of recommendations for school program and policy development.

1.3 Thesis outline

This thesis is presented in five chapters. The remaining section of this chapter outlines an overview of each chapter to follow.

Chapter 2 provides an insight into the literature in this field. It justifies the definition of young people and of the middle years of schooling used as
parameters in this study. The chapter also investigates the developmental needs of young people related to identity development and resilience. Importantly, the chapter addresses the issue of student voice, how and why young people are using SNSs, and current concerns regarding digital culture, particularly in relation to SNSs.

Chapter 3 provides an outline of the research design and methodology that forms the basis for this research. The research context, purpose and framework are explained and the research setting, methods of data collection and data analysis techniques are outlined. The research is designed as a multi-methods case study within a school setting comprising a document review, a survey of all students in Years 7, 8, and 9, and four focus groups comprised of students (2 groups), teachers (1) and parents (1).

Chapter 4 presents an overview of the document review undertaken on seven school documents, along with findings and analysis of the survey and focus groups. These findings are analysed to determine the influence of SNSs on the social environment, the schooling environment, and differences based on gender, as well as to determine the type of assistance young people would like from adults related to SNS use.

Chapter 5 presents a discussion of key findings relating to the major themes of young people in a digital age, negative factors, positive factors, private versus public, friends, gender, assistance sought, assistance wanted, and assistance needed. This chapter also outlines the limitations of the study and concludes with six recommendations related to the aims of the study.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction
This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the two main fields of literature that inform this work. The first section traverses the literature to provide a definition of the young people who will be featured in this study. Literature related to their developmental needs, along with an overview of the year levels they are enrolled in at school – also known as the middle years of schooling – is contextualised for this study. This section ends with a discussion related to the importance of including student voice in the conduct of research that pertains to them. Section two of this chapter explores the key definitions and terminology of digital culture and SNSs. This is followed by an analysis of the literature in terms of the concerns and paradigms that are typically employed to consider digital culture, such as fear and loss of childhood. The literature review concludes with a summary of current educational programs that are offered to assist students with challenges encountered in their use of digital technologies.

2.2 Definition of young people
The cohort of interest in this study is young adolescents commonly grouped together in year levels in a school setting. Defining this group is somewhat contentious as Bahr (2007) notes: “[T]he term adolescent comes from the Latin *adolescens or adolescens* which means to grow up, or come to maturity” (p. 17), thus establishing a deficit inference. The age of adolescence is generally accepted as between the years of 10 and 15, thus pertaining to the teaching years of Years 6-9 which are also commonly known as the middle years of schooling (Chadbourne & Pendergast, 2010).
The deficit connotation often associated with adolescence relates to the notion that people of this age are still in the process of developing an adult level of maturity, particularly in relation to interpersonal relationships (Bahr, 2010). Adolescence is a time of growth and development where interpersonal skills are tried, tested and developed ready for use in the adult domain. It is a time for construction of personal identity (Bahr, 2010) and includes the development of physical characteristics such as hairstyle, fashion sense, connection to peer groups as well as development of a sense of inner-self. For reasons associated with this idea of adolescents being a work-in-progress, adolescents may not be provided with opportunities to provide their opinion on matters about which adults regard they are better positioned to make judgements and determine processes and protocols that the adults subsequently impose on young people. This premise is one that is being challenged in this study and hence the research has been designed to focus on student voice as the primary data source.

For the purpose of this study, the term young people is used when referring to students in this study. All of these young people are aged between 10-15 years and at the time of the data being collected were in Years 7, 8 or 9 in the unique case study school. The choice of the term young people has been intentionally made by the researcher to reinforce a positive perception of young people within this age group rather than to align with a negative paradigm or deficit model that might automatically be assigned through the use of other language.

2.3 Developmental needs of young people

The following section provides an overview of the literature regarding two main aspects of the developmental needs of young people. The first section addresses the notion of identity development, both in their offline and online worlds, and how this has introduced the concept of a digital divide between adults and young people. The second section explores the notion of resilience in young people, in particular how resilience may be either damaged or developed within online
interactions. Identity development and resilience are key factors in the developmental needs of young people in their non-digital and digital worlds.

2.3.1 Identity development
The need for identity establishment is a driving factor among young people, as is the need to create a strong sense of self through acceptance within peer groups and within the wider community. During this time of identity generation, it is common for the peer group to assume a greater level of influence, sometimes more so than family, in determining success via acceptance of the new identity or rejection via isolation of the individual from the peer group (Bahr, 2007).

The need for young people to establish their identity is not new. What has changed is the ways in which they can do so. Digital technology provides a constantly changing platform for experimenting with identity formation. For example, building a profile page on a SNS may be seen as an “initiation rite”, part of “coming of age”, and affords young people with another platform from which they can learn how to manage their impression (boyd, 2008). Identity formation is an important skill required when moving from the realm of childhood to adulthood.

A key focus for young people is the formation of identity and how they go about constructing their various identities to suit the different aspects of their lives within “various social contexts: social, fantasy, role playing: and for various purposes: leadership, learning, power, rebellion, and romance” (Thomas, 2007, p. 1; boyd, 2008). These contexts and themes have remained consistent over time. What has changed is that digital culture has now created an alternative vehicle through which these contexts and themes can be enacted. The vehicle is no longer the same as in previous generations, thus creating a divide, otherwise known as a digital divide, due to lack of experience and related understanding by adults. The “selfie” is an example of the way the digital divide might be easily represented, where young people today are prolific takers and sharers of digital images of themselves on SNSs (hence the name selfie), whereas their parents would mostly
have had less abundant and more formal photos taken of them at the same age to be shared only amongst close friends and family (Levin, 2014).

As Thomas (2007) notes, our “children’s online lives are intimately connected to their sense of self and their developing identities as subjects of the new media age” (p. 2). Online profiles that young people create within the various SNSs provide a good example of this. Their colourful and animated profile pages are the digital version of the stereotypical teenager’s bedroom where young people display their likes and identity. Where in previous times young people would decorate their bedroom walls with posters, photos, and so on, they now also have the ability to display this information digitally (boyd, 2008). Whilst the need to share this personal information in a public way may be puzzling for adults, it is regarded as essential by young people who want to be seen (Tufekci, 2008).

The greatest difference in identity representation is that when presenting an identity online, the actual physical constructs that describe us in real life, such as appearance, gender, ethnicity, age, fashion sense, tattoos, and so on, can be constructed online to be as we wish they were, not necessarily how they are. Thus the identity is formed more by the text used and this becomes more of an important factor in identity representation (Thomas, 2007). Young people develop their virtual presence by “writing themselves into being” (boyd, 2008, p. 129). They develop their identities with every word that they write, with every photo, video, blog entry, image, and audio file they add to their profile pages. Whilst this may mean that online profile pages may not always provide a true personal representation, they do allow for risk taking through trial and error.

Online identity representation allows young people a sense of control as they can add, change, and eliminate aspects of their profile that they consider unsuccessful. The negative aspect of online identity representation is that the lack of face-to-face interaction means that the impression made via this digital body is more open to misinterpretation (boyd, 2008; Pangrazio, 2013). This study aims to determine which online aspects generate the most concerns for young people and what online assistance they require.
For young people, identity seeking and validation, along with the need to test boundaries through risk taking, is central to their development. Validation and acceptance is sought, not from adults, but rather from peers (Beaumont, 2009). This then perpetuates a lack of understanding by adults regarding the issues that pertain to young people as they develop their identities. This study seeks to privilege student voice in order to understand from the young person’s perspective both the positive and negative aspects they perceive influence them as part of their digital culture. A strong sense of identity, online and offline, is a key factor in developing culture within young people.

2.3.2 Resilience

Along with the development of a sense of self, the development of resilience is of key importance to young people. Resilience, or the ability to cope with adversity, is a necessary attribute for a healthy and successful life (Howard & Johnson, 2000). Resilience is gained through protective factors and processes, some of which include: the characteristics of the individual (being sociable, having one or more talents, the ability to make good decisions); the family environment (interested, stable and supportive); and the wider social context (connectedness to others, support, high expectations, boundaries, goal setting, mastery, high warmth and low criticism) (boyd, 2008; Murphey, Barry, & Vaughn, 2013; Newhouse-Maiden, Bahr, & Pendergast, 2005).

Young people who demonstrate resilience are more likely to develop into resilient adults, with a positive outlook and stronger sense of purpose in life (Dent, 2008; Howard & Johnson, 2000). Connectedness or a sense of belonging to the family, peer group and/or wider community is a key factor in developing resilience in young people (Morie & Chance, 2011).

Despite the advances in modern life with greater access to information, Dent (2008) suggests that we are not producing more resilient young people, with the numbers of young people succumbing to more emotional, social and mental disorders on the increase. Resilience is a necessary protective factor in young
people being socially well adjusted, thus lowering their chances of negative outcomes such as depression and suicide (Howard & Johnson, 2000).

The need to develop resilience in young people is vital as “suicide is sometimes considered in conjunction with consistent patterns of behaviour that seem to be shared by young people who appear to lack resilience” (Bahr, 2007, p. 165). Suicide is an extreme event played out when a total sense of irreversible hopelessness is felt. Of great concern to parents and educators is the continued rise in suicide statistics for young Australians and the strong link that has been established between bullying and suicide, with over 14% of teenagers considering committing suicide on an annual basis and 7% having attempted to do so (Lobo, 2009). Bullying occurs both online and offline and victims are two to nine times more likely to attempt suicide, with 10-14-year-old girls being at the highest level of risk after bullying (Lobo, 2009).

What young people do in their virtual worlds significantly affects how they connect to society (boyd, 2008; Morie & Chance, 2011; Thomas, 2007). Thus the development of resilience in all contexts is necessary for young people of the digital age (Papatraianou, Levine, & West, 2014). These young people will struggle for power, popularity, and identity online as well as in an offline capacity. This double exposure in the identity formation process is a new phenomenon, and as such social media provides a means of connectivity for young people that can be both detrimental and positive in aiding the development of resilience.

SNSs provide a means through which young people can develop this sense of belonging and connectedness through their participation and communication (Collin, Rahilly, Richardson, & Third, 2011; Morie & Chance, 2011). Research by Collin et al. reveals many significant benefits of SNSs in fostering and promoting resilience in young people by facilitating supportive relationships and identity formation, as well as promoting a sense of belonging and self-esteem.

A sense of belonging and being part of a community is a key protective factor for young people. “Communities of practice” are informal groups of people bound together through a shared passion for a joint enterprise (Thomas, 2007, p.
Online interactions via SNS use allow for the extension of the traditional communities of practice as they negate any geographical limitations as well as allowing for extended levels of scale (Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Young people are developing a strong sense of engagement and community through their membership of SNSs (Bennett, 2008). Within these forums they learn many of the same skills that they learn in a face-to-face community and they also have many of the same struggles they would face in their offline world, such as how to gain and maintain power, how to communicate with their peers, how to attract the opposite sex, and how to gain a sense of belonging with others (Bennett, 2008; boyd, 2008; Thomas, 2007).

Bennett (2008) suggests that there are two paradigms of youth engagement – engaged or disengaged – and paints young people as being either engaged within their community or disengaged from their community. These dichotomous views continue to perpetuate the sense of disconnect of our young people and thus reinforces the fear paradigm. Bennett’s research suggests that the negative view overlooks many of the positive trends occurring with young people. For example, there is an increase in volunteer rates of young people; however, the focus in the media appears to be on declining rates of face-to-face interaction in civic engagement of a more formal nature. Thus the perception by some is that young people are disengaged, as they appear to be less involved because they are not as physically visible. This overlooks the creative and innovative ways in which young people engage via digital mediums where they are active community members through their digital engagement. This suggests the need for research to clarify and build bridges between these paradigms in order to better facilitate education and policy making (Bennett, 2008). This research aims to develop a series of recommendations to inform policy and program development in an educational setting by privileging student voice, specifically investigating young people within the middle years of schooling as the subjects of this study.
2.4 Middle years of schooling

For the purposes of this study, young people are students in the middle years of schooling, aged between 12 and 16 (the cohort in this study were born in the years 1996 to 2000). Young people of this age group make up the cohorts of Years 7, 8 and 9. They were invited to participate in the data-gathering stages of the research as this cohort presents within the researcher’s own context as being most relevant in terms of experiencing associated challenges encountered in their use of digital technologies.

The middle years of schooling, or middle schooling, is an intentional approach to teaching and learning which aims to be responsive to the particular needs of students within this phase of education. It recognises that young people within this phase are experiencing a range of significant physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and moral changes due to the dramatic hormonal and structural changes they experience at this time of their lives (Papatraianou et al., 2014). These drastic physical changes affect the learning ability of young people as well as their success in managing emotional, social and moral challenges at this time of their development. Middle schooling provides an intentional approach which includes a signature range of practices to engage young people in relevant, challenging and meaningful learning in order to maximise their engagement (MYSA, 2008; Papatraianou et al., 2014).

Successful middle schooling exists for young people when they have a supportive environment with clear processes for dealing with bullying of any kind, in conjunction with the teaching of real-life skills which assist in the development of resilience and a sense of self (Pendergast, 2010). An authentic curriculum that is negotiated and relevant to their needs and interests and is linked with their lives outside the classroom, allowing for a creative use of time, space and other resources along with the ability to work both independently as well as cooperatively within a setting where their teachers know them well, is also needed. Being known and understood by adults, parents and teachers is a key factor in the success of young people (Cole, 2004; Dinham & Rowe, 2008).
2.4.1 Generational context

These students form part of the cohort commonly referred to variously as Generation Z; Digital Natives; born Digital; Millennials; Screenagers and the Net Generation (Wheeler, 2012). Generational theory attributes a set of generalised characteristics to a generational group in order to provide an insight into people born within the nominated era (McCrindle, 2009; Strauss & Howe, 2000).

Millennials have been attributed several distinguishing traits: special; sheltered; confident; team oriented; achieving; conventional; and pressured (McCrindle, 2009; Strauss & Howe, 2000). They are considered special in that they are largely born to Generation X who put off child bearing in order to pursue work opportunities. As a result, these parents tend to celebrate their children and are prepared to make great sacrifices for them. Millennials are the most sheltered of generations having been raised with a high level of rules and chaperoning, with their parents often referred to as “helicopters” as they tend to hover over their children. Millennials are also labelled as confident as they tend to be optimistic about their future prospects. They are also team oriented, having been raised in an era of group work. Millennials are also achievers as they have big plans, particularly about their careers. They are also conventional, being strongly attached to their parents, especially their mothers, and siblings. Millennials are also pressured, being raised by workaholic parents with the message that they must build strong resumes and quickly. This high level of competition often results in Millennials feeling stressed (Strauss & Howe, 2000).

In terms of generational trends, Millennials are the most formally educated generation as well as the most materially supplied, as they have grown up with prosperity. They are commonly referred to as “digital natives” (Flanagin & Metzger, 2008), a generalisation or labelling that implies that all young people are highly competent within their use of technology, or that they are tech savvy. Rheingold (2002) proposes the opposite, noting that although many young people live online, many still lack the necessary tools and skills required to negotiate their digital world with success (Bennett, 2008; boyd, 2008; Flanagin & Metzger, 2008).
The social skills of the current generation of young people are arguably quite different from that of previous generations. These young people, as a generation, are the most highly connected of all generations and are likely to communicate via technology more often than in person (boyd, 2008). Young people are comfortable in sharing their thoughts and feelings via the World Wide Web in a way that their parents often cannot understand (Bennett, 2008; boyd, 2008). Young people believe that other people, including friends and strangers, are interested in what they have to say (Bennett, 2008).

Herrera and Peters (2011) argue that the current use of social media is a social phenomenon rather than a generational phenomenon as social media usage is not restricted to young people. This study aims to determine what needs this social phenomenon has created for the current generation of young people as predominant users who are seen as highly connected.

Their high level of connectivity has also been attributed to the notion that young people have suffered a diminishing childhood, having to grow up quickly as a result of being exposed to so much more information than the previous generations (McQueen, 2010a). Research by Gadlin (1978) argues against this view by suggesting that young people are experiencing an extended youth in terms of education and economic dependence upon their families; however, he does agree that young people are becoming increasingly independent in terms of sexuality, leisure and consumption. Jans (2004) also highlights the contrast in views, suggesting that whilst on one hand our young people are surrounded with considerable levels of care, on the other hand they are being encouraged to represent themselves as individuals within their own rights. SNSs provide a platform where young people can experience and develop their sense of independence in a digital setting. This study seeks to understand the perspective of young people: how they perceive their needs and how they manage as they negotiate their independence through this digital medium.

Young people of today, our current cohort within the middle years of schooling, are faced not only with the transition from childhood to adulthood and
all of the associated difficulties; they are now also faced with living in a digital-based society while many of their parents transition from an analogue-based society. The skills and associated issues of growing up digital as compared to growing up analogue are foreign to many adults. Digital culture permeates all aspects of our daily lives. The rapid rate of technological change has seen a repositioning of the status of adults and young people. Adults are no longer viewed by some as being the most competent in this area (Flanagin & Metzger, 2008; Pendergast, 2007) thus placing the still developing young people in the position of expert.

Flanagin and Metzger (2008) raise a possible concern with this line of thinking due to the still emerging cognitive and emotional development of young people and their relative lack of life experience, suggesting that even though young people may be more digitally competent than many of the adults in their lives, they are still developing in terms of social, emotional and cognitive maturity, and thus positioning them as “experts” may become problematic (Pangrazio, 2011). The assumption of a young person as being digitally expert or competent may cloud the perceptions of adults regarding the needs faced by young people as they negotiate their online words.

Our young people are growing up in an era of reality TV, where some argue that they are becoming desensitised to bad language, poor treatment of others, and sexually explicit behaviour (boyd, 2008). What may be seen as outrageous to older generations is presented as “normal” to some young people. This blurring of social standards in conjunction with instant communication appears to be influencing the self-esteem of some young people (boyd, 2008) through poor treatment of each other online.

The poor treatment of others online is starting to manifest in the classroom setting as young people have 24-hour access to communication through various SNSs via their smart phones, computers, consoles, and so on (Corby et al, 2014). They attend classes and do not know who may or may not have seen negative comments or images posted about them. This “faceless” factor is ever-present and
as such can influence the school setting by destabilising personal confidence and undermining friendships and peer groups (Pangrazio, 2013).

2.5 Student voice

Privileging student voice provides a mechanism through which to develop greater levels of understanding between adults and young people by valuing the thoughts, perceptions and opinions of young people. Some researchers argue that historically, academic research has repressed the voice of many marginalised groups, including that of young people (Corby et al., 2014; Chadderton, 2011). This marginalisation has been formally addressed in the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which enshrines the child’s right to have a say in matters pertaining to them, and this has had a significant influence in highlighting the need to access student voice in research matters of relevance to them (Hoffmann-Ekstein et al., 2008). In particular, Article 12 of the Convention states that children have the right to say what they think should happen when decisions are being made that affect them as well as to have their opinions taken into account (UN, 1989). This Convention, combined with the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young People (MCEETYA, 2008) which advocates for new levels of engagement with all stakeholders, has assisted in this repositioning of views (Dockett, Main, & Kelly, 2011; Hoffmann-Ekstein et al., 2008).

In many countries, including in Australia, accessing and accommodating student voice has been slow and often superficial due to the perpetuating deficit notion of young people being seen as immature and incompetent (Bahou, 2011). Fielding (2007) challenges the passive role of young people within the educational setting and emphasises the need for schools to value the student-teacher relationships as a partnership capable of developing adept citizens rather than vulnerable or incompetent young people. It seems ironic that schools are focused on creating environments and working with young people to optimise their achievement, and yet the young people are often not factored into research
regarding the effectiveness of reforms. Hence, the need for a focus on student voice is paramount for providing the full picture about any type of investigation in the school setting related to learning.

Nonetheless, successfully privileging student voice is not a simple matter. Ruddock and Fielding (2006) assist in this regard by nominating three key elements necessary to facilitate genuine student voice: authenticity, inclusion, and power. Authenticity refers to the young person’s perception of the leaders’ commitment to the process of participation by young people. Merely eliciting the views of young people does not privilege student voice. There needs to be adequate follow up so that the perceptions of young people and recommendations are responded to, in order for student voice to be authentic. Much of the research that purports to accommodate student voice merely treats the input of young people as “minor footnotes in an altered adult text” (Fielding & Prieto, 2002, p. 20). When factoring in the inclusion of student voice, the researcher needs to demonstrate equality with the young people and adult generated data for it to be seen as authentic.

For the attention given to student voice to be genuine, the researcher also needs to consider the application of voice as well as the silence of student voice. In most research, what is included, or excluded, is decided by the adults rather than the young people and therefore lacks inclusivity. Who is and who is not included is of great importance. The extent of inclusion in most research remains at the discretion of the adults. Fielding and Moss (2011) assert that, in the school setting, student voice tends to be considered through existing organisations, such as school representative councils, where the young people tend to be selected by the adults with the purpose of managing mostly social events, such as discos, rather than to be included in discussions around curriculum or pedagogy. This tokenistic approach does not facilitate the genuine inclusion of student voice (Groundwater-Smith, 2011).

Finally, the researcher needs to consider how young people are positioned in relation to adults. The level of collaboration and ideas initiated by young people will influence the power constructs of the research. If the levels of collaboration
and initiation of ideas by the young people are low, then the representation of student voice is also correspondingly low. Often, the physical spaces where shared dialogue takes place is significantly distorted in favour of the adult, thus positioning the adult in a position of power. This lack of equity then frames the attempt at shared dialogue as paternalistic and tokenistic (Groundwater-Smith, 2011). If the attention given to student voice is to be genuine, the young people should be involved in some of the associated decision making.

When including student voice within research it is essential to consider that the perspectives offered by the young people provide a representation and are therefore subjective. The researcher must also consider whether the views are unitary or singularly representative, as well as considering the authenticity of the data, as the participants do not have influence over the write up of final results. In essence the young people may not be speaking for themselves (Chadderton, 2011), as more often than not, adults are the interpreters and writers of what may have been voiced (Hoffmann-Ekstein et al., 2008).

Cruddas (2007) suggests that genuine inclusion of student voice allows for the development of new shared understandings, as each party is able speak to an issue as they best know and understand it. The genuine inclusion of student voice may offer insight that may have been otherwise unavailable to adults (Dockett et al., 2011) as well as providing more valid data (Hoffmann-Ekstein et al., 2008). Fielding and Moss (2011) comment that these open and equitable discussions may pose a difficulty as not all messages are palatable and unwanted truths (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2009) may therefore be disregarded.

This research aims to genuinely privilege student voice by positioning the student voice in the foreground. The three necessary elements required to facilitate genuine student voice are authenticity, inclusion, and power (Ruddock & Fielding, 2006). As such, this study is designed within the framework of a case study, underpinned by a mixed-methods approach in order to develop a deeper situational understanding. The data are analysed through the lenses of authenticity, inclusion, and power, with the express purpose of identifying the
inclusion or lack thereof of student voice. There is a great need to hear from young people from their perspective on the topic of SNS use and the associated support required by them, a theory espoused by Zhao (2011) who positions young people rather than government policy as the drivers of educational change. The young people need to be provided with the opportunity to have input towards the key issue of SNS use and support, which relates directly to them. Their perceptions then need to be heard and implemented within the recommendations culminating from this research.

2.6 Digital culture and social networking sites

The following section provides an overview of the literature regarding digital culture and social networking sites. It provides the key definitions and terminology used as the basis of this study and is followed with an outline of some of the current concerns regarding SNSs. These concerns include: the new notion of “friends” and how the understanding or interpretation of private versus public may differ between some adults and young people; cyberbullying; parental involvement; and the digital divide, addressing both positive and negative aspects.

2.6.1 Definition and terminology

Social networking sites form part of the cache of communication tools used widely by young people and increasingly by older generations as an everyday communication tool (Thomas, 2007).

A social networking site can be defined as an online social network for communities of people who share interests and activities, or who are interested in exploring the interest and activities of others. As a member of a social networking service, individuals can “chat” with each other via messaging, email, video or voice chat, share photos and videos and post comments in online forums, blogs or discussion groups. (ACMA, 2009a, p. 21) The terms social networking service and social networking site are interchangeable. Social networking sites have also been referred to as “networked
publics” (boyd, 2008, p. 120) where young people are provided with a space to work out their identity, both personal and public.

Traditional communities of practice were formed by people wishing to engage in a shared domain of endeavour as a key to improving their performance (Wenger-Trayner, 2015). SNS use has allowed for these communities of practice to expand as they are no longer bound by geography nor constrained by size (Wenger-Trayner, 2015), resulting in the development of further sub-sets of the communities of practice. Beaumont (2009) classifies SNSs into four distinct communities:

- communities of transactions (commercial, online auctions);
- communities that are interest driven (hobbies, beliefs);
- communities of relations (individuals drawn together by common life experiences); and
- communities of fantasy (such as SecondLife and World of Warcraft).

The number of SNSs is in the hundreds and is continually growing. Whilst there are some favourites such as Facebook and Instagram, membership within SNSs can change based on current fads, such as the decline of membership in MySpace after the advent of Facebook. The most popular SNSs, such as Facebook, are primarily used for socialisation, as they provide a platform for quick, easy and instantaneous communication with others (ACMA, 2013; Beaumont, 2009). SNSs such as these allow young people to be continuously connected with each other, thus supporting their need to belong to their peer group (Bennett, 2008).

The ACMA research (2013) suggests that the use of the internet and SNSs changes in line with the developmental stages of maturity. Young children tend to favour game-related sites, changing to socially-based sites as they move in to the middle schooling phase. SNSs are used as a platform for contact with others. For girls this is predominantly to maintain contact with their friends and also to make contact with the opposite sex. For boys, entertainment is the focus, whether through game playing or through practical joke playing (ACMA, 2009a, 2013; Bennett, 2008).
Regardless of the type of SNS, technology, for many of these young people, is part of who they are and how they communicate (Bennett, 2008; Pangrazio, 2013). The purpose of this study is to develop a deeper understanding within the case study setting, of what SNSs young people are using; the benefits they achieve from being part of these networks; the issues or concerns they may encounter; and what type of adult assistance they feel would be beneficial to them as young people negotiating the online world of social networking. There are several concerns that are raised by adults around the use of SNSs by young people, ranging from minor issues to serious matters. The following section reviews the literature regarding these concerns as well as the associated benefits.

2.6.2 Current concerns
Although there are many associated benefits of SNS use such as quick and easy contact and being able to keep in touch with friends across vast distances, the negative perspective often reported through the media has tended to dominate policy development (boyd, 2008). There are many concerns of adults regarding the use of technology as a social tool by young people, particularly the still developing young person. These concerns range from minor worries, such as the loss of good grammatical and formal language skills due to the use of abbreviated text that is commonly used, through to major worries including the loss of childhood as a result of cyberbullying, online predators and exposure to adult content (ACMA, 2014b; boyd, 2008; Pendergast, 2007).

Whilst adult commentary surrounding SNS use may be highly fear based in that it focuses on the negative aspects of SNS use, young people report in the majority that their experiences are positive for them, with benefits including connecting via social networking thus allowing them to feel closer to others, listening to music, and study, with only a minority reporting bad experiences such as annoying or irritating online experiences (ACMA, 2013).
2.6.2.1 The new notion of “friends”

Flanagin and Metzger (2008) suggest that the high level of connectedness that young people now appear to have with strangers whom they call friends can be baffling as well as concerning to older generations who communicate in person or via more traditional electronic means such as the telephone or email, and usually only with known friends, associates or colleagues.

This concern over the befriending of complete strangers from around the globe has created a great deal of discussion and research into the area of online safety as many adults, particularly teachers and parents, feel at a disadvantage in dealing with the related issues. Conversely, Bennett (2008) states that many of the adults who are using SNSs find value in socialising with strangers, whereas young people find more value in socialising with known friends. As many adults appear to have a higher frequency of initiating contact with online strangers, they may assume that their children are doing the same, thus raising the fears that their children are engaging in potentially dangerous online behaviour.

Along with the apparent concern of some parents about online predators, the other main concern of many parents is the release of personal information, with the perception that many young people are using SNSs to divulge personal details, thoughts and feelings to the online community (ACMA, 2013; Collin et al., 2011), thus generating and perpetuating the fear-based paradigm many adults have regarding the use of SNSs (Livingstone, 2008).

Parental concerns regarding the new notion of friends may emanate from the opposed perceptions and differing understanding of the word “public.” Within the online environment, some young people see public as being information they choose to share widely based upon privacy settings, whereas many parents see public as anything that may be seen or accessed by others (boyd, 2008).

Research by West, Lewis, and Currie (2009) suggests that the notion of privacy as perpetuated by the media is focused on personal security, but that this understanding needs to be expanded to include the connotations of the personal, of secrets, and of intimacy. Williams and Williams (2005) liken the idea of the
private sphere to a “spatial entity” which can be applied to the use of mobile phones and SNSs. Lange (2007) discusses degrees of publicness with what she terms publicly private and privately public behaviour.

In addition to the dismay that many adults express about this generation of young people who have a seemingly endless number of so-called friends, is the perception of many adults that our current cohort of young people have a very limited sense of privacy combined with “a narcissistic fascination with self-display” (Livingstone, 2008, p. 3; boyd, 2008). However, Livingstone has found that teenagers are able to satisfactorily “grade” their friends in terms of importance and intimacy. The issue of so-called friends lies with the SNS design which has a limited ability to discriminate between friends being made available and that the focus on “me” is within the social group. Whilst the apparently constant connection with friends online can seem banal to some parents and other adults, it is an important mechanism within a digital culture for young people to maintain and reaffirm their place within their peer group (Livingstone, 2008).

For some young people, concerns related to friendship are exacerbated by the SNSs where the number of friends listed is an indicator of social success and the “Top Friends” feature on many sites is initiating social discord amongst some actual friends, which may otherwise not have existed. The limited number of friends allocated within the Top Friend list, as well as the order in which the friends are listed in conjunction with the public visibility of the list, has generated stress and social problems including cyber bullying for some young people (boyd, 2008).

2.6.2.2 Cyber bullying

A serious concern for many young people is online bullying, also known as e-bullying and cyber bullying. In previous times young people may have suffered teasing, threats, name calling, punching or other forms of physical torment. Young people now also have to contend with bullying extending to all forms of e-communication (ACMA, 2011a, 2013; Bahr & Pendergast, 2007).
For the purpose of this research, cyber bullying can be defined as “being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material online” (Beaumont, 2009, p. 2). It includes some or all of the following online behaviours: cyber stalking, harassment, denigration and flaming (derogatory comments to cause fights), intentional exclusion or ostracism of a person and impersonation.

ACMA (2011a) research suggests that cyber bullying is an area of concern that is becoming more evident in the school setting with an increase in complaints including of teasing, sharing of inappropriate material (written, photos, video), and harassment via SNSs. There appears to be a trend of material being shared about individuals by others setting up SNS accounts in false names in order to remain “faceless” to those they have targeted (Heverly, 2008). This is affecting some young people as they are unsure of who has targeted them, leading them to worry and question if the online post was made by someone they know and considered a friend. Not knowing who is behind the online postings often causes undue stress as it is very difficult for the individual to address the situation (Heverly, 2008; Scott, 2011).

The other issue that sits alongside this is that the worry experienced is constant (Heverly, 2008). In previous generations, if a young person was being harassed at school, they had some respite from the issue during non-school hours. Usually for them, once they left the school grounds the bullying ceased, allowing for a break in the torment overnight. Now with access to the internet 24 hours a day 7 days per week, there is no opportunity for respite from cyber bullying (Papatraianou et al., 2014).

Whilst there has been a focus on cyber bullying or stranger danger aspects of SNS use, increasingly young people are exposing themselves to possible legal risks associated with cyber bullying and/or sharing of information and images that may breach state and federal laws related to defamation, copyright, privacy, and criminal misuse of telecommunications (Lindsay, de Zwart, Henderson, & Phillips, 2011; Butler, Kift & Campbell, 2010).
ACMA is extensively involved in research related to internet use: e-research by ACMA has determined that in 2009, young people in Australia within the age range of 12 to 17 used the internet on average 6.3 days per week for an average of 2.9 hours per day; that cyber bullying increased in frequency as young people transition into adolescence; and that cyber bullying was more common over the internet than via the use of mobile phones for young people of this age (ACMA, 2009b).

ACMA (2009a) research ascertained that cyber bullying was regarded as a risk by those young people using SNSs. Cyber bullying appears to be most prevalent within the 14- to 15-year age group (ACMA, 2013). For girls, cyber bullying took the form of personal attacks based on appearance; comments about their friends or family; and dissemination of personal information. Girls also reported perceived risks related to webcam use increasing their chance of exposure to lewd or indecent behaviour. ACMA (2009a) research reported little perceived cyber bullying for boys and as such they did not recognise it as a real risk.

More recent ACMA research (2013) reveals that 95% of young people aged 8 to 11 regularly accessed the internet, with 100% of 16- to 17-year olds accessing the internet regularly. The internet is most commonly accessed at home, followed by at school, followed by at a friend’s house. Young people in the age group 8 to 9 were most commonly online playing games (85%), doing homework (75%), and looking at sites of interest (73%). Ten- to 11-year-olds predominantly played games online (87%) and completed homework (87%), then looked at sites of interest (79%). 23% of 8- to 9-year-olds were regular users of SNSs and 45% of 10- to 11-year-olds were regular users of SNSs. With advancing age these statistics increased, with 69% of 12- to 13-year-olds using SNSs regularly, 86% of 14- to 15-year-olds using SNSs regularly, and 92% of 16- to 17-year-olds using SNSs regularly. The 12- to 17-year-old cohort used the internet primarily to access SNSs, to study, and to download and listen to music. These statistics suggest that young people are prolific users of SNSs, and as such it is important for them to learn how to navigate the potential of
increased risk of cyberbullying in order to harness the incredible potential of learning and communication via SNS use (Papatraianou et al., 2014).

Research from ACMA (2014a) suggests a steady growth in young people accessing the internet more than once per day, from 47% in 2009 to 72% in 2013. This research also highlights Google (77%), Facebook (58%) and YouTube (50%) as being the most visited sites by young people in 2013, with the average user spending 2 hours and 27 minutes on Facebook per day. This research highlights a decrease in the use of Facebook by young people with 70% accessing the site in 2012 and 58% accessing the site in 2013.

2.6.2.3 Parental involvement

Research indicates that SNS behaviour is seen by young people as part of a game, that it is fantasy based and not real (Collin et al., 2011). Parental concern with this attitude is that these young people then lower their guard in terms of personal safety when interacting online. Boys, in particular, tend to spend more of their online time in gaming-related SNSs while girls tend to spend more of their online time in chat-based SNSs (Collin et al., 2011). Conversely, research studies have shown that there is an increase in the number of new “online friends” in the teenage years, which also correlates with a decrease in parental supervision provided. Even though parents report that they are concerned that their child may not be as vigilant as they would like, parents are reducing their supervision levels (Collin et al., 2011).

Over a decade ago, Prensky (2001) suggested that by the time an American adolescent enters college they will have spent more than 10,000 hours playing video games and less than 5,000 hours reading books. Data from 2012 indicate that in Australia, 92% of households have a device for playing computer games, including game consoles, personal computers, mobile phones and game compatible televisions (iGEA, 2011). This finding highlights a great difference between generations: Technology is an omnipresent part of our households and our lives. It can be expected that parents and teachers are less able to relate to a
phenomenon in which they did not take part. The digital culture, of which we are all now part, has created a switching of the role of expert, with young people now being considered the expert when using technology (Bahr & Pendergast, 2007; Beaumont, 2009).

Schools, parents and young people appear to be working in isolation regarding safety and support in terms of SNS use. Many schools provide cyber safety workshops and tutorials for young people and parents; however, trends have shown a decrease in attendance of parents at such sessions (Scott, 2011). Parents of these young people suggest that they want more one-on-one support specific to their own child rather than general information sessions. Even though this is an area of increasing concern for families, the traditional way of sharing information and strategies with families via presentation nights to parents and young people may not be effective.

Adding to this is the growing issue of young people not reporting issues to adults as they do not believe adults can help. These young people increasingly see their parents and teachers as being unable to assist them with SNS issues and the problems they face as they do not see the adults as part of the SNS communities. As a result, young people will increasingly seek out friends, particularly as they get older, for support and assistance (Lenhart, Madden, Cortesi, Gasser, & Smith, 2013; Scott, 2011; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008).

In addition, young people report (boyd, 2008) that they do not want their parents involved in their online lives, likening the monitoring of SNSs to having parents rummaging through their bedrooms (Livingstone, 2008). Parents of younger children are far more likely than those of older children to have an accurate awareness of problems their children may be experiencing online, as young people as they reach the mid-teen years are increasingly less prepared to share this information with their parents (ACMA, 2013).

Thomas (2007) relates the concern that the digital divide is decreasing the part played by parents in monitoring and guiding the actions of their children in the online arena as they develop. Young people need to develop a sense of self.
This is constructed through all aspects of their lives, and is becoming increasingly significant in the digital aspects of their lives. Young people are developing their sense of identity; being, becoming, belonging and behaving through a range of everyday practices online that they see enmeshed with their offline lives (Thomas, 2007). Yet Thomas suggests that the vast majority of young people testing and developing their identities and representations online are doing so with limited or no supervision, thus leading to potential safety concerns.

Whilst raising concerns about safety, Thomas (2007) also suggests that the high level of anonymity of online identity representation has a positive side as well, resulting in a greater level of “alternate constructs of the self” being generated. The anonymity of cyberspace allows for greater risk taking but also for the ability to reinvent oneself if the previously constructed version of self was unsuccessful (Bennett, 2008; boyd, 2008).

Beaumont’s (2009) research into digital culture illustrates that there is an obvious divide between young people and their parents and teachers in relation to their ability and/or interest to engage with social networking as a standard format of communicating with others. Snyder and Bulfin (2008) state the need for adults to have a better understanding of what interests and engages young people in and out of their school lives, including developing a more thorough understanding of the sophisticated skills young people have in the area of digital literacy. Findings such as these reinforce my belief that more research is required in this area.

Young people utilise SNSs as part of the digital context within which they have grown. It is a legitimate means of identity development for them, a space where they can develop their sense of self, and many young people want to do so without the intrusion of their parents (boyd, 2008; Livingstone, 2008). Thus the fear-based paradigm generated around the use of SNSs creates a point of conflict between young person and adult. Young people want and need the space to develop their identities and parents want and need to keep their children safe. AMCA research (2013) cites the top four concerns of parents as being: access to
inappropriate material; unwanted contact from strangers; online predators; and cyber bullying. One way in which young people combat this parental concern is to establish false G-rated profiles which they make known to their parents and allow their parents to monitor, whilst having a second (and sometimes multiple) profile where they post material they know would not be considered acceptable to their parents (boyd, 2008).

2.6.2.4 The digital divide: Analogue verses digital

The rapid advancements in technology over the past 30 years have transformed our living from an analogue to a digital world (Heverly, 2008). The shift from an analogue to a digital culture can be seen most readily in the way that young people now spend their leisure time, as opposed to how their parents before them spent their leisure time. Over two decades ago Green and Bigum (1993) made reference to “aliens” within the school setting due to interest from young people in new technologies, with the young people being perceived initially as the aliens due to their interest and involvement in the use of technology. This perception of the alien in the classroom then shifted to teachers being increasingly perceived as the aliens, as the technology gap between young people and teacher increased.

This rapid technological advancement has influenced the teaching and learning environment as well as the social environment for school-age students, particularly for students in the middle years. Rapid advances in technology have transformed how young people relate to their friends, their families, and the wider community with “always on/always on us” technology (Collin et al., 2011; Turkle, 2006). Technology has certainly been a great aide to learning as well as the social aspects of students’ lives.

The majority of present-day adults have grown up in an analogue world where the creation of media at the time of their youth was expensive, time consuming and also limited in terms of the ability to share content created. Young people today have grown up in a digital culture where the exact opposite stands. It is cheap, quick and easy to produce highly professional content and it is just as
cheap, quick and easy to then share this content worldwide. ACMA research (2013) suggests that the vast majority of young people regularly access the internet with statistics of 95 per cent of 8 to 11 year olds and 100 per cent of 16 to 17 year olds. Interestingly, there is an increase in the number of young people accessing the internet at the home of a friend (ACMA, 2013).

As a result, many young people have created a vast number of “digital artefacts” (Heverly, 2008). Whilst the ability to create and innovate is appealing, the concern is raised that digital artefacts, once created, are available forever and once shared, can never be controlled again. This generates a problem for many young people as they have the skill set to create the digital artefacts but may not have fully developed decision-making skills in order to assist them in making choices that may affect them life-long (Heverly, 2008).

However, the creation of digital artefacts has many positive aspects. It can assist families to develop a sense of belonging and community as people are able to relive memories throughout their lives. Jenkins et al. (2006) endorse this viewpoint of engagement with community, labelling it as participatory cultures, which is based upon the premise that online involvement, citizenship, creation of digital artefacts and social interactions matter. Jenkins et al. categorise this into four forms of communities of practice: affiliations (online communities such as Facebook); expressions (creating digital artefacts such as videos); collaborative problem solving (reality gaming); and circulations (blogging, podcasting). The benefits of communities of practice include peer-to-peer learning, collaboration, shared intelligence, skill development and empowered citizenship. Alongside this positive aspect of digital artefacts is the concern about poor choices made in the development and sharing of them and the lack of control and ownership associated with this; Heverly (2008) raises the concern that there is a lack of research into how we can prevent this now that we are aware of it.
2.7 Multiple frames of reference

The following section provides an overview of the literature regarding some of the paradigms regarding the use of social networking services – the digital culture of young people online, online versus offline, diminishing childhood – and concludes with a summary of fear and risk management regarding the use of social media.

The current focus on e-communication and the use of SNSs is predominantly viewed from a negative, fear-driven paradigm (Bennett, 2008). This is quite possibly as a result of adults, namely parents and teachers, being less tech savvy than the young people they care for (Beaumont, 2009). However, there are many positive aspects associated with the use of SNSs in terms of identity development, confidence building and learning for many young people (Alvermann, 2008; Livingstone, 2008).

ACMA research has determined that there are four main ways that young people manage risk: abiding by the rules and advice given by parents, using common sense, learning from experience, and resilience (ACMA, 2009a). As such, it is necessary to understand current concerns and manage these in a way that allows young people to develop the necessary skills required to manage the risks they may encounter in the digital realm.

2.7.1 Digital culture and young people online

SNSs, e-communication, and the like are an integral and important part of our everyday lives. Young people and older people alike are digital citizens. Digital citizenship can be defined as “norms of behaviour with regard to technology use” and encompasses areas of behaviour such as etiquette, safety, rights and responsibilities (Beaumont, 2009, p. 3). Ribble and Bailey (2004) first coined the term “digital citizenship” to address technology issues of use, abuse and misuse. Predominantly, the focus on online activity has centred on the negative aspects; however, SNSs provide young people with a multitude of positive opportunities to connect with each other for socialising as well as for addressing a wide range of social issues (Jenssen et al., 2014).
The notion of off-line and on-line living is no longer relevant as the current generation of students live in a world where both are intertwined and enmeshed with no separation, and this is increasingly becoming the case for older generations as well. Young people are not victims of technology: technology can provide them with power (Flanagin & Metzger, 2008; Thomas, 2007).

The high levels of media literacy possessed by young people place them in a position of power, rather than as passive victims. e-Communication and associated technology is empowering and liberating for young people as it provides opportunities for greater “creativity, for community and for self-fulfilment” (Buckingham, 2000, p. 41). Thus the “gap” is not in relation to online and offline living but rather the gap in media literacy as adults attempt to catch up with young people in their use of social media. Whilst many adults may need to catch up, many schools and other support agencies provide training and educational programs to assist young people in navigating their online worlds.

2.7.2 Online versus offline
Terminology such as online and offline, real versus virtual presently have little application for young people as they have grown up in a digital culture where real and virtual are “entirely enmeshed” (Thomas, 2007, p. 3). It is people of older generations who did not grow up in a digital culture but have adopted it who struggle with the apparent seamlessness of the online/offline existence of younger generations. This is made possible by young people’s increased mobile internet access: 67% of 12- to 13-year-olds, 87% of 14- to 15-year-olds and 94% of 16- to 17-year-olds (ACMA, 2013).

The additional concern raised is the possible blurring of online and offline realities. Apprehension related to this centres around the still developing social maturity of young people, thus placing them in a position where they may struggle with shifting their perspectives between the real and the virtual (Pendergast & Bahr, 2007). Livingstone (2008) states that the relation between opportunity and
risk is a feature of youth development, not of the internet. The ability to make judgements both on and offline are equally difficult for young people.

For young people growing up in a digital culture, their online and offline lives merge seamlessly as a holistic entity. However, this is not always the case. Sometimes these two worlds collide, rather than blend harmoniously (Thomas, 2007). This disjunction can often be seen in the school setting where Ribble & Bailey (2007) reports the focus appears to be on the inclusion of acceptable use policies rather than the teaching of appropriate use of digital technology. Even though there is a higher level of technology use within schools, the industrialised nature of the school environment facilitates more of a divide than a union between the offline and online worlds.

2.7.3 Diminishing childhood

Some argue that young people’s high level of connectivity has also meant they have suffered a diminishing childhood, having to grow up quickly as a result of being exposed to so much more information than the previous generations (McQueen, 2010b). The notion of a teenager did not exist a century ago. By the age of 14 many children were expected to work as manual labourers to assist with family living expenses. Entering the workforce provided the social setting for children to develop their changing identities from child to adult. It was not until the Great Depression that schooling was extended universally to prevent children taking jobs, instead of adults. This had the effect of segregating children from adults, thereby limiting the adult role modelling available to children. This in turn propagated the notion of young people being seen as immature and hence the deficit model of adolescence (boyd, 2008).

The notion of childhood is a shifting and relational term (Buckingham, 2000). The meaning associated with the term childhood varies from context to context depending upon many factors including culture, historical events, social policy and media representation. The term childhood is seen in opposition to the term adulthood, which is also shifting and dependent upon the given context.
(Buckingham, 2000). The widely accepted use of these oppositional terms sets a clear demarcation within our society between children and adults.

The poets and writers of the Victorian era further solidified this belief of difference and reinforced, through their writing, the perception of children being innately pure and good (Buckingham, 2000) and of childhood as a dream or golden era to be treasured and remembered fondly by adults. Childhood and adulthood, when seen as opposites, and when defined by what can and cannot be done by children, places children in a disempowered position and adults in a position of control (Buckingham, 2000). The notion of the death of childhood or diminishing childhood is thus generated when we have a context where children are seen by adults as not developing through the preconceived stages of childhood when they engage in adult-like behaviours or activities (Buckingham, 2000; van den Bergh, van Gils, & van Dongen, 2001).

The notion of a diminishing childhood can be refuted as current youth have highly structured lives. They are required to stay in schooling for much longer than in the past, and they are more likely to be involved in structured after-school activities than their parents were, meaning that many modern young people are spending far less time on their own and/or unsupervised than their parents were (boyd, 2008). By contrast, Bennett (2008) suggests that young people currently have “unprecedented levels of freedom” in terms of managing their development of self as compared to their parents as a result of the digital culture. The dilemma here is that young people are “simultaneously idealised and demonised” (boyd, 2008). Parents fear them but also strive to protect them. A problem arises when parents try to protect their children from the dangers of the online world as they then limit the abilities of the young people to develop the necessary skills to successfully negotiate the digital world in which they live.

Williams and Williams (2005) argue that the conventional relationship between parent and child has been replaced with a negotiated relationship with greater intimacy and communication as parents attempt to befriend their children and thus the traditional power base of adult over child is diminishing.
In addition, the changing nature of television, with the popularity of reality shows where behaviour includes a high level of sexual innuendo, explicit language and distasteful behaviour, in conjunction with the seeming public acceptance of increasingly violent video games, all of which are drawcards for young people, have raised adult concern (boyd, 2008; Buckingham, 2000; Pendergast & Bahr, 2010).

2.7.4 Fear and risk management

An apparent lack of understanding by adults, fuelled by negative media hype, has resulted in an online risk-management paradigm even though there is increasing evidence to support the benefits of SNS use. These benefits include delivering educational outcomes, facilitating supportive relationships, identity formation, and promoting a sense of belonging and self-esteem, as well as a strong sense of community and the ability to develop resilience (Collin et al., 2011).

Despite the many positive aspects of social networking, the negative risk management paradigm has been more readily adopted due to this apparent lack of understanding by adults, who then develop policies and practices based on a fear model (Bennett, 2008). Bennett’s research suggests that the disengaged youth paradigm based on the decline of youth participation focuses only on the negative observations of youth engagement without considering the creativity and many innovations of youth within the civic arena taking place via SNSs. This clear conflict in research findings raises the need for further research.

In this context it is worth noting that research published by ACMA (2009a) suggests children and young people were able to identify their concern regarding online predators, or online stranger danger, as a risk, whereas older teenagers did not see online predators as an area for concern. The younger children were able to articulate this risk as a real concern for them due to the focus educational programs placed upon it as well as the discussions they had with their parents. The older teenagers had a more sceptical approach due to the fact that they had been using the internet and SNSs for many years and had not experienced any issues
associated with online predators. However, this research also found that the protection of privacy often fell victim to the need to “stand out” or be noticed online and that personal information was divulged without a full understanding of the possible consequences that may arise (ACMA, 2009a). However, a young person is more likely to have their privacy compromised by someone they consider a friend than by an online stranger (Beaumont, 2009).

Whilst it appears that there are concerns, particularly from the perspective of adults, it is important to consider that young people are not victims of technology. They have grown up with technology being an ever-present part of their lives, and have in fact embraced it (Boyle, 2010; Papatraianou et al., 2014). Technology can provide them with power, with a means of communication, and with a way to develop a sense of identity. This potential is in conflict with the fear-based paradigm of many adults. Young people are very aware that their parents did not grow up using social networking services and therefore have a limited experience base on which to ground their thinking in terms of risk management (ACMA, 2009a; Flanagin & Metzger, 2008; Heverly, 2008).

2.8 Current educational programs

Young people have been described by Belsey (2008) as always being “on,” in other words always being connected. Bauman (2007) reports that young people are starting to develop a moral compass that will assist them in navigating their way through their digital worlds.

As part of this study, I seek to privilege student voice in order to determine what it is that young people report would be helpful to them as young people immersed in a digital culture and what this might mean in terms of recommendations for school program and policy development. It is intended that, by privileging student voice, the recommendations from this study have genuine relevance for the young people involved. I aim to research the perceptions of young people, their parents and their teachers into how their use of SNSs is influencing their lives and whether this extends to the classroom environment. I
also aim to identify whether the educational programs we are offering in fact assist these young people with challenges encountered in their use of digital technologies.

The following section provides a review of some well-known educational programs utilised within the specific context of this case study, as well as Australia wide and internationally.

### 2.8.1 Context-specific programs

In the context of this research, the case study school is currently supporting young people in developing an awareness and strategies for positive online through several avenues. The school in this study has gained eSmart status via The Alannah and Madeline Foundation (2010). The school has an eSmart committee with staff members across both the Junior School and the Senior School consisting of classroom teachers, both Heads of School, and the school Guidance Counsellor. Parents are invited to join this committee where appropriate. One of the main parent contributors to this group has expertise as a Federal Police Officer working within the area of child safety.

Junior School cohorts in Years 5 and 6 have been involved in the ACMA Cyber Detectives and Cyber Heroes programs (ACMA, 2015). Senior School cohorts in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 are involved in ongoing personal development classes, addressing the issue of creating a positive online profile.

Staff members across the whole school have annual professional development run by ACMA and have also received training from the Federal Police. These training sessions are also then run for parents in the evening, covering the same content but delivered for parents within their context as caregivers. In 2010, both parents and staff members were offered the opportunity to provide feedback to the Federal Government’s Youth Advisory group on cyber safety issues. The focus of these programs is primarily to enhance the ability of young people to remain safe whilst utilising various SNSs.
Whilst these programs provide a positive approach by the school, they reinforce the fear-based paradigm of many adults. They are also void of student participation, let alone student voice.

2.9 Summary

Social network sites have complicated our lives because they have made this rapid shift in public life very visible. Perhaps instead of trying to stop them or regulate usage, we should learn from what teens are experiencing. They are learning to navigate networked publics; it is in our best interest to figure out how to help them. (boyd, 2008, p. 138)

The influence of technology on society and the pressures this has placed upon students to engage with online social networking (boyd, 2008) has been demonstrated to be an area of concern for educators and parents. Research by Moor (2005) identifies that the increase in ethical problems corresponds with the development and use of technology for social purposes. Yet, these issues are not new. Ribble, Bailey, and Ross (2004) reported efforts by educators to address this issue starting back in the mid-1990s. While there are many well-documented risks of SNS use, there are also many benefits for young people (Guan & Subrahmanyam, 2009).

Whilst schools are seen as successful in communicating internet safety “basics” (ACMA, 2009a), there is a need to hear from young people themselves in order to determine a greater level of understanding between young people and adults (Chadderton, 2011) regarding what assistance is needed and wanted in relation to SNS use.
CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction
This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research design and methodology undertaken. The first section outlines the aim and research questions, and provides insight into the case study and research design. The chapter then outlines the phases of research along with the methods of data analysis. The ethical considerations of the research are then addressed.

3.2 Aim and research questions
This research seeks to explore young people’s perceptions of their experience of and their engagement in SNSs, by answering the following research questions.

1. What influence is electronic communication, in particular social networking, having on the social environment in and out of school?
2. What influence is electronic communication, in particular social networking, having on the learning environment?
3. Is there a difference in the impact based on gender?
4. What do young people want in terms of adult support?

The overarching aim will guide the research design with the sub-questions providing specific areas of focus.

For the purpose of this study, the term “learning environment” referred to the physical school setting and the term “social environment” referred to the non-physical school setting.

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of young people with respect to their concerns, needs and wants regarding the use of SNSs, by inviting students to provide voice to their practices. When attempting to privilege student voice it is important to:
address issues that matter to students; create new knowledge about education for critical evaluation and action; set an agenda for students to make a difference; enable students to develop a kind of professionalism whereby student voices can be taken seriously by adults; enhance the conditions and processes of learning and teaching. (Bahou, 2011, p. 7)

Therefore, the privileging of student voice guided the methodology of this research and the data collection tools selected.

Gaining an insight into what it is that young people believe may be helpful to them as individuals immersed in a digital culture, and what this might mean in terms of recommendations for schools when developing programs and policies around the use of SNSs, is of paramount importance. The literature review highlights gaps of student voice in relation to the use of SNSs, as explored in Chapter 2 of this document, with previous studies focusing primarily on the increase in use of SNSs, the demographics of SNS users, and the rates of change relating to the use of various technology-based communication tools (ACMA, 2011b, 2013, 2014a).

Within a school setting, policy and program development is generally adult driven. Ruddock and Fielding (2006) nominate three key elements necessary for genuine student voice to be achieved in a research project: authenticity, inclusion, and power. Merely eliciting the views of young people does not privilege student voice. There needs to be adequate follow up so that the perceptions and recommendations of young people are responded to, in order for student voice to be authentic. This research explored student voice with the aim of developing a set of recommendations guided by young people for young people, which may influence future policy and program development.

3.3 Case study methodology

To undertake this work, a case study methodology was selected as it is appropriate to utilise when investigating contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context (Yin, 2009). As such, this research focused upon a fixed cohort of young people,
their parents and teachers, within a selected school setting, and within a defined timeframe. Hence, the findings were directly relevant for this group of young people within this context. While specific to this group, the findings may also be useful to point to the possibilities for other cohorts of young people in similar contexts.

Case study methodology allows the researcher to investigate a situation or phenomenon within its real-life context (Elliott, 1990; Given, 2008; Yin, 2009). It involves an in-depth study of a single instance or event: a case. By investigating the event and gathering in-depth data, the researcher can develop a heightened understanding of the event as well as generate ideas for future research (Given, 2008).

The literature has revealed that student voice is missing (Bahou, 2011) regarding this area of research. The use of a case study approach enabled this research to be tailor-made for exploring new, or little understood, behaviours, as case studies allow for the exploration of the how and why about a contemporary set of events (Meyer, 2001), in this case, the how and why related to young people and their use of SNSs.

Another reason for selecting case study methodology was that it assists the researcher in determining what is common and what is particular in the case through investigating the uniqueness of the case via such factors as the historical background, the physical setting, the context, and the informants or participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Thus, it is highly pertinent to this study as the researcher was part of the context, having a deep underlying understanding of the history and the background information.

Being part of the context within a case study also allowed the researcher to have ease of access to data, thus allowing flexibility and choice when considering data-collection methods. This was of importance as the choice of data-collection methods employed allowed for further refinement and deeper understanding of the data gained. Utilising a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection within the case study allowed for continuous reflection
and refinement of issues or themes as they emerged from the data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Whilst case studies have validity for the situation and the participants involved, there may still be a degree of generalisability to other similar circumstances (Elliott, 1990). The underlying aim of this research was to gain a sound understanding of the issues within the given context, or case, and from this to develop a set of findings and recommendations which could assist in facilitating student voice in order to improve circumstances for the participants. A secondary aim was that these recommendations may also be of use to others in similar settings, hence the selection of the case study approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

3.4 Research design

As previously outlined in the literature review in Chapter 2, SNSs and e-communication are integral and important parts of our everyday lives. The notion of offline and online living is no longer relevant as the current generation of young people live in a world where both are intertwined and enmeshed with no separation, and this is increasingly becoming the case for older generations as well. Young people are not victims of technology; technology can provide them with power. Through a case study approach, this research aimed to determine a greater understanding of how young people deal with issues concerning SNSs as they arise.

3.4.1 Research setting

This research was conducted in an independent school on the Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia. At the time of data collection, the school was 22 years old. It is a co-educational, non-denominational, Preparatory – Year 12 (ages approximately 5-18) school that is a totally independent, not-for-profit entity and is not affiliated with any system. The school caters for approximately 1400 students across these age ranges. It is considered to be in the average range for socio-economic status with a majority of families of middle class with both parents working. It has a very good reputation for both academic achievement as well as
setting high standards across all areas, and has a considerable waiting list for entry. This school was utilised for ease of access and convenience of data collection and because it has a particular interest in enhancing processes and protocols associated with the use of SNSs.

The researcher had a senior role at the school and worked in a P-12 capacity overseeing all staff (except the Principal) and all students. As such the researcher had a position of power over all young people within the study and this was taken into consideration at all times during the research project by ensuring that, as far as possible, the young people felt they had the right to participate without concern of recrimination. However, whilst there will be a high level of anonymity, this could be classed as “qualified anonymity” as the researcher had the ability to track data back via a student number to determine the identity of a given young person. This may have had the implication of young people answering questions as they perceived the researcher may have wanted them to be answered.

As this researcher worked in a large school, there was access to a wide range of young people to participate within the study. The young people identified for this research project were in Years 7, 8 and 9 as these are the year levels which appeared to have the highest frequency of related issues, as well as the greatest severity of issues arising, related to social networking; these issues then had an influence back into the school setting. These young people were also characterised by traversing the middle years where identity formation and change were features. There were approximately 100 young people per year level which provided a sizeable population from which to form some generalise results. Selection of teaching staff for data collection involved those directly related to the support and or teaching of the young people within these year levels, with parents being those of this cohort also.

### 3.4.2 Data collection

The mixed-methods approach for this research aimed to identify emerging themes. The three data collection methods used were document review, survey
and focus groups. The document review, in terms of privileging student voice, set out to investigate the inclusion or absence of student voice. The survey and focus groups were designed to provide direct opportunities for student responses to be included as primary data; it was anticipated that the insights of the young people would generate a set of resulting recommendations. Included as data sources were all three stakeholders – young people, teachers and parents – as the education process does not happen in isolation. Gathering data from a variety of sources assisted in developing a wider understanding as well as providing an opportunity for triangulation of findings. Having several methods to answer the same focus question allowed this researcher to establish consistency in findings and therefore lend validity to the process (de Vaus, 2001; Sagor, 2005).

Qualitative data collection began with a document review which involved seven documents, including school policy documentation, school prospectus, and school promotional materials related to the area of research. (For the full document review, see Appendix K.) Young people, teachers and parents were invited to be part of focus groups. The quantitative data were generated from a survey of young people. The survey was implemented with all young people within the Years 7-9 cohort. The aim of using a variety of data collection instruments was to gain an informative and thorough reflection of the student voice regarding the research question.

3.5 Phases of research

The data generated from the three sources (document review, survey and focus groups) produced both qualitative and quantitative data. Phase 1, the document review, generated data which were used to determine the inclusion, or lack thereof, of student voice using thematic analysis to identify authenticity, inclusion and power (Ruddock & Fielding, 2006). Phase 2 then followed with the delivery of a survey to students. The survey data were used to establish the main themes as voiced by the young people. These data were then used to inform the development and refinement of the data collection in the following phase. Phase
3 consisted of focus groups conducted with young people, parents and teachers, with the aim of ensuring that the main themes identified in Phase 2 were considered further in order to develop a greater depth of understanding of the emerging issues. This was an important consideration as this researcher aimed to develop an understanding based on the experience of all young people rather than develop an understanding based from their own conceptualisation or preconceived ideas (van Manen, 1990). This was particularly important in this research as the researcher was already part of the social context being researched and therefore needed to ensure that personal assumptions were considered and efforts were made to limit any effects thereof.

Table 3.1  Phases of Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Data Collection Method</th>
<th>Administered to</th>
<th>Data Collected</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Document Review</td>
<td>7 documents</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>Thematic Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1, 2, 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Years 7-9 Young people</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics Thematic Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1, 2, 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>Years 7-9 Young people Teachers Years 7-9 Parents</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>Thematic Analysis</td>
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</table>
3.5.1 Phase 1: Document review
School documents outlining policies and program use and development were reviewed using thematic analysis, focusing on the three key elements necessary to facilitate student voice: authenticity, inclusion, and power (Ruddock & Fielding, 2006). These included formal policy documents as well as current programs that related to social networking. The purpose of this review was to determine the inclusion or absence of student voice through the lenses of authenticity, inclusion and power, and to determine the paradigm from which the documents were developed, with particular reference to any perspectives and assumptions that may be held within the documents. Understandings gained from the document review then informed the development of the survey used in Phase 2 of data collection.

Table 3.2 Phase 1 Data Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Sources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document review data collection</td>
<td>• Enrolment Contract</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Code of Behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student Computer and Network Use Agreement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Parent Handbook</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Bullying Policy</td>
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<td>• Social Network Use Policy</td>
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<td>• Use of Electronic Facilities Policy</td>
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3.5.2 Phase 2: Survey
The quantitative data collection tool of a survey was delivered to all young people within the middle years cohort, in this instance being young people in Years 7, 8 and 9. There were 100 young people per year level giving a total cohort of 300. The generalised findings and themes emerging from the survey results were then
used to inform and refine Phase 3 of data collection, which was qualitative in nature, thus allowing for a more targeted approach to information gathering in an effort to ensure depth of understanding was gained.

The use of survey as a data-collection method allowed for greater anonymity for the respondents. Surveys have a greater level of ease than interviewing. This would potentially allow this researcher to access data from each and every young person within the research cohort. The large amount of data gained in a relatively quick and simple manner then informed the refinement of data collection via qualitative methods in Phase 3.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 3.3 Phase 2 Data Collection</th>
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<td><strong>Respondent</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 8 Young People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 9 Young People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.3 Phase 3: Focus groups

The purpose of using qualitative data-collection tools in Phase 3 of data collection was to develop a greater depth of understanding of the perspectives of young people and related issues. As part of the phenomenological method, it was based upon the need to understand a situation/issue/phenomenon, while also working towards recommendations that had meaning and would bring about positive change for the people involved.

Three separate focus groups for young people, one for each Year level 7, 8 and 9, were conducted. A parent focus group and a teacher focus group were also held for parents and teachers of the young people in Years 7, 8 and/or 9. The young people were informed of the opportunity to participate in the focus group via notification at year level meetings and also through the school newsletter.
Teachers were notified via staff meetings and parents were notified via the school newsletter.

Table 3.4  **Phase 3 Data Collection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Cohort Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Groups</strong></td>
<td>• Middle School Young People</td>
<td>• 3 x groups of 6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Year 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Year 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Year 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Middle School Parents</td>
<td>• 1 x group of 6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Mixed Years 7-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Middle School Teachers</td>
<td>• 1 x group of 6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Mixed Years 7-9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6  **Methods of data analysis**

Due to the nature of the research, being a case study within a given setting, cohort and time, a thematic analysis of qualitative results was employed along with a descriptive analysis of quantitative results (Babbie, 2010; Berg, 2009; Denscombe, 2007; Creswell, 1998a). Thematic analysis was chosen for this study as it is suitable for use in qualitative studies in conjunction with quantitative ones (Babbie, 2010). It works well within a case study (Berg, 2009) and is also useful when working on small-scale research (Denscombe, 2007). Thus a thematic analysis provided a natural choice of method for this research context.

Braun and Clarke define thematic analysis as: “[A] method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data” (2006, p. 77). Thematic analysis is widely employed in qualitative research as it is relatively simple to use and allows for flexibility, allowing for rich, detailed and complex description of data.

There are many advantages to using thematic analysis within a case study. This method is fairly adaptable; it has a focus on practice; it provides a systematic way of analysing data; it can also use computer software (such as Leximancer); and
it provides a means of developing theoretical propositions from data (Denscombe 2007). It can also be virtually unobtrusive, cost effective, and can provide a means to study a process that may occur over an extended period of time to determine themes (Berg, 2009).

Thematic analysis involves the searching across a data set to find repeated patterns of meaning. In this study, the six steps employed in thematic analysis were:

1. Familiarisation with the data, where the researcher became fully immersed in the content of all data collected.
2. Generating initial codes. This was done both manually and with software to generate codes. In this research Survey Monkey software (2015), IBM SPSS Statistics 21 (version 21) software and Leximancer software (version 4) were utilised.
3. Searching for themes, in order to sort codes into generalised themes. In this research the overarching themes were organised around the four research sub-questions.
4. Reviewing the themes, by rereading data to ensure codes were still valid to determine if these relationships still reflected the meaning of the data as a whole. In this study, this involved manual and software-based coding to generate themes which were then compared and contrasted to ensure authenticity.
5. Defining and naming themes, to capture the essence of what each theme was about and what aspect of the data each theme captured, then determining if there were any sub-themes and the naming of these. In this study there were several sub-themes that were consistently generated through the various methods of coding.
6. Producing the report, with consideration of the audience, to ensure that it was concise, coherent, logical, and provided sufficient evidence of each theme using examples from data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 77). In this study, evidence was provided as both raw data and processed data.
Whilst the flexibility within this method is a benefit, it can also pose problems. Issues that may be associated with thematic analysis for this research may be that thematic analysis does not lend itself to precise planning and that “open mindedness” can be variable (Denscombe, 2007) leading to bias. Other issues may include locating unobtrusive messages relevant to the particular research questions, and it may be ineffective for testing causal relationships between variables (Berg, 2009). Another issue identified by Berg is that the researcher has to decide what and what not to include. Dockett et al. (2011) also state that another limitation when attempting to access student voice is that the research project is essentially designed and orchestrated by adults. I attempted to account for this by starting with an overall framework of the research design and an initial plan for the data collection and data analysis. I then continually reviewed and amended this plan if and when it was required. This approach required me, as a researcher, to continually familiarise myself with my data and my processes to ensure that I was not clouding data analysis with my own biases or prejudgements.

The steps utilised in the data collection also assisted in dealing with these issues. Whilst there was an initial overall plan, data collection was phased in order to let the data drive the next phase rather than possibly letting predetermined ideas or biases drive the data-collection methods.

### 3.6.1 Qualitative data analysis

Thematic analysis (Babbie, 2010; Berg, 2009; Creswell, 1998b; Denscombe, 2007) was used to analyse the qualitative data gathered. Categories or themes developed through thematic analysis can be determined inductively, deductively, or by some combination of both. An inductive approach begins with the researcher “immersing” themselves in the documents (i.e., the various messages) in order to identify the dimensions or themes that seem meaningful to the producers of each message. In a deductive approach, researchers use some categorical scheme suggested by a theoretical perspective, and the documents provide a means for
assessing the hypothesis. The development of inductive categories allows researchers to link or ground these categories to the data from which they derive (Berg, 2009). A combination of inductive and deductive approaches was utilised.

Documentation was reviewed to determine explicit and implicit meanings around the adult/child, teacher/student, and institution/individual power influence as well as the authenticity, inclusion and power of student voice or absence thereof. Understandings gained from the document review in Phase 1 informed the development of the survey used in Phase 2 of data collection.

Phase 3 of data collection involved the use of focus groups and utilised an inductive approach. Focus groups were held with young people in each year level included within the cohort and were by invitation and voluntary. Separate focus groups were also conducted with teachers and parents, with the offer for teachers and parents of the young people within this cohort to be involved on a voluntary basis also.

Focus groups were a useful data-gathering method within this research. Teaching is a highly personal profession. In order to develop an informed understanding of the issues involved, talking to teaching staff in a variety of forums assisted greatly. It provided a framework in which we could work together to meet the needs of all involved. Focus groups also produced rich data that was contextually specific, thus giving a voice to the young people.

The focus group data were transcribed into Leximancer software (version 4) to determine correlations and confirmation of survey data findings. The Leximancer software is a tool that can be used to analyse the content of documents and displays extracted information. The Leximancer program uses an algorithm to rank the concepts within a text or texts by their connectedness. This information can be presented as a conceptual map, representing the main ideas, concepts or themes and how they relate to one another. These data identified the main themes within the text by identifying frequently used terminology and how these terms related to others within the text. These main themes were represented as coloured circles within a concept map including lines that
represented the strong links between concepts. The content was analysed to
determine the relationships between themes and concepts identified within the
text, producing a two-dimensional map.

The Leximancer program was chosen as a tool within this research as it is
able to analyse large quantities of prose text quickly, showing concepts in visual
concept map as well as their relative closeness, as it searches for concepts and the
relational value of text rather than simply word counting. Being a software
program, another advantage is there is no human bias. However, this can also be
considered a disadvantage in that the program lacks the ability of human thinking,
therefore some results may be random. Thus there is still the need to read and
understand all of the text.

For this study, a mixed methodology approach was selected in order to
“get the best of both worlds” with the aim of data providing a large enough set of
information to demonstrate trends to provide clarity of meaning; data
triangulation; and developing generalisations to some extent.

When interpreting qualitative data the intent was to determine data that
clarified or provided meaning to the situation in order to lead to findings and
recommendations for improvement.

3.6.2 Quantitative data analysis
In this study, the sample size for the quantitative data collection method of survey
was relatively small. Therefore, in this case, comparative statistical analysis of the
results was not appropriate. Instead, descriptive analysis was employed as this
allowed for the reporting of frequency without establishing causal relationships.

Statistical data may be used in research to clarify issues by attaching a
numerical value or weighting to the data. In experimental research, statistical data
are used to test hypotheses. Research can also use numerical and statistical data
as another way to extend or clarify participant understandings of an issue or
problem (Stringer, 2004).
The survey responses from this research project were entered into Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21.0) software and were analysed using descriptive statistics. Frequency counts and percentages were undertaken for each of the questions.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Ethics in the research process is a key factor in ensuring a worthwhile research study. Stringer (2004, p. 43) defines ethics as, “Steps taken to ensure that no harm is done to people through their inclusion in the research.” A feature of this research study was that it directly involved the young people for whom an issue is being researched. Therefore individuals were directly involved. Their protection needed to be of prime importance to me as the researcher, from the onset of developing the research proposal up to and including the final stages of publishing and sharing findings. Prior to any data collection being undertaken, ethical clearance was applied for and granted by the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee, Protocol Number EDN/44/12/HREC.

Ethical procedures in this research were established by ensuring confidentiality. The young people involved were primarily students and also included some teachers and parents. Permission was obtained to carry out the research by the School Principal as well as the School Board. The aims and objectives of the study were communicated clearly to all involved. Informed consent was gained and participants were informed of the nature of the study and provided formal consent. In the case of the young people, this also included co-signing of consent by their parents or guardians (Stringer, 2004). Participants were also informed that they had the right to withdraw from the research project at any stage. Information sheets for young people, parents and teachers were provided on Griffith University letterhead and included the contact details of the Chief Investigator for follow up if required.

Participants in a research study of this nature should not be identifiable to others. The privacy of the participants was protected by ensuring confidentiality
of information. Young people completing the survey were identifiable via their student number rather than their names. The researcher did not cross check student numbers against names, thus ensuring confidentiality. Students were informed verbally that they would not be traced via their student numbers. Whilst the people involved in the focus groups were known to the researcher, they have been given false, coded names within the research report so that they remain unidentifiable by the others outside of the individual focus groups.

The privacy of the participants is of utmost importance. Methods of data collection within the research framework were planned to ensure that individuals cannot be identified, other than by the researcher. All focus group respondents were provided with a pseudonym in order to protect their identities. This ensures the safety of the individual. This attention to privacy also has the added benefit of increasing the chances of the participants being more open and honest in their responses to the researcher. It is a requirement that data be kept in a secure location for a minimum of five years after the research is published. This is necessary in case the findings are questioned and need to be verified. After this time period has elapsed, it is expected that the data be shredded. These guidelines have been complied with in undertaking this study.

In terms of this research, ethical considerations are of paramount importance. The age of the student participants mainly fell between 12-16 years of age and therefore required parental consent as well as consent from the School Principal and School Board. In order to reduce the power imbalance, the young people in this research project were also asked to provide their consent as volunteers within the project so that they had a direct say regarding their inclusion, or not, within the research project (Dockett et al., 2011). The highly personal nature of the information gathered was a guiding factor in the methodologies used in order to maintain the privacy of all young people involved.

As this research was to be conducted within a school setting, protection from harm needed to encompass the understanding that there would be no negative repercussions for the young people who did not wish to participate, such
as not being punished by the threat (implied or real) of failed grades or other deterrents. As this researcher held a position of power within the research setting as one of the senior administrators, it was vital that the researcher addressed the power imbalance by ensuring that information remained confidential, that involvement was voluntary and via parental consent and the consent of the young people, and that the young people were assured that no penalties would be incurred as a result of not participating.
CHAPTER 4

Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction
In this chapter the research findings from the document review as Phase 1 of the data collection will be outlined, followed by the findings from the student survey delivered as part of Phase 2 of the data collection and then the focus groups will be addressed within Phase 3 of the data collection. These data will be reported in main sections, or themes, which relate to the research aim sub-questions. An analysis of these results, along with an outline of the findings of the results, will be included within these sections. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research findings.

4.2 Document review
This section will provide an overview of the review of seven school documents relevant to the research, constituting Phase 1 of data collection, in order to develop a deeper level of understanding of the context and the associated meanings. Thematic analysis was utilised to foreground key issues and concepts.

The main purpose of this study was to provide an opportunity to privilege student voice in respect to the concerns, needs and wants of young people regarding the use of SNSs. The document review was undertaken to analyse the context of information provided to young people as prepared by adults within the case study setting.

Thematic analysis was employed within Phase 1 of data collection and review. The documents were reviewed to determine the inclusion or absence of the three key elements necessary to facilitate student voice: authenticity, inclusion, and power (Ruddock & Fielding, 2006). Comparison of the data was
utilised in developing an overall understanding of the inclusion, or lack thereof, of student voice.

The themes of authenticity, inclusion, and power were utilised deductively by viewing the data within these three predetermined themes to construct meaning. Authenticity refers to how the adults or leaders are represented in terms of their willingness to have true student participation. Inclusion refers to how the documents envisage the application of student voice and silence, considering the discretion of the adult to include or withhold student voice. Power refers to the level of collaboration and involvement available to different groups in terms of decision making. Each of the seven documents was reviewed in relation to these three themes; in particular, the modals were analysed according to these three themes in order to gauge the level of student voice within the seven documents.

Young people enrolled at the case study school are expected to abide by the rules and policies of the school outlined in various documents. Their parents sign agreements to these policies and procedures at the time of enrolment and are expected to support the school in the implementation of these rules, policies and procedures. The seven key documents analysed in this study were selected for their relevance to this area of research.

Documents reviewed were:

1. Enrolment Contract,
2. Code of Behaviour,
3. Student Computer and Network Use Agreement,
4. Parent Handbook,
5. Bullying Policy,
6. Social Network Use Policy, and
7. Use of Electronic Facilities Policy.

It is important to note that all seven documents referred to in the document review have been written by the senior administration team of the school in conjunction with its legal representatives. At no time were staff, young people or parents consulted or included in the process of developing these documents. All
were written from the need to protect the reputation of the school as well as to contend with any foreseeable issues that may arise to damage the reputation of the school or the viability of the school as a private not-for-profit organisation. A summary of the seven documents outlining the inclusion, or absence, of student voice is provided in Table 4.1. A full summary of each document can be found in Appendix K.

Table 4.1  Inclusion of Student Voice in Relevant School Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document 1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document 2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document 3</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document 4</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document 5</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document 6</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document 7</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. X indicates an absence of student voice.

As highlighted in Chapter 2, in order to successfully and genuinely privilege student voice the three key elements of authenticity, inclusion, and power need to be present. As evidenced in this document review, and highlighted in Table 4.1, there is a lack of authenticity due to the total lack of participation from young people in the writing of all documents reviewed. This lack of participation then negated any level of inclusion as there was a notable absence of student voice. This exclusion of student voice is adult driven and as such positioned the power completely with the adults. Given the purpose, authorship and audience of these documents, questions of power, inclusion and authenticity as they relate to students are absent. When considering the purpose of these documents and the fact that they were all written from a legalised point of view where the position of
power is clearly of the school over the student, it is not surprising that the documents lack student voice.

4.3 Survey

The next section will address the influence of electronic communication on the social environment, in and out of school, and then will address the influence of electronic communication on the learning environment. The following will then address the support requested by students of adults. Points of interest regarding gender will be noted across each section. The section concludes with a summary of the research findings.

Each section has been presented according to the findings of the thematic analysis, which provided the procedure for developing categories of information in order to build a story (Creswell, 1998b). Thematic analysis was utilised to generate repeated patterns of meaning from which generalised themes were developed, both manually and via the use of the IBM SPSS Statistics 21 and Leximancer software programs. The research sub-questions provided the framework from which to group the data and were addressed both independently and combined where necessary for ease and clarity for reporting purposes: the influence on the social environment; influence on the learning environment; gender; and adult support.

4.3.1 Survey administration

On the day of administering the survey as Phase 2 of data collection, there were 236 young people in Years 7, 8 and 9 present. All 236 respondents completed the survey which entailed 28 questions comprised of multi-choice, open-ended and multi-response questions. Of these respondents, 111 were male and 125 were female. The respondents were reminded before commencing the survey that their answers were anonymous. They were also reminded of the purpose of the survey.

The survey was delivered via the Survey Monkey (2015) software program and results were automatically compiled based upon frequency. These results
were used initially to determine the larger themes within the survey data. The data from Survey Monkey were then loaded into the IBM SPSS Statistics 21 (version 21) software program for further refinement of themes. Use of the SPSS program allowed for the fine tuning of themes from the data by analysis of custom-made tables based upon the four overarching themes.

4.4 Focus groups

The focus groups formed Phase 3 of data collection. Initially, it was planned to host three separate focus groups for respondents; one for each Year level 7, 8 and 9. Due to the many school events taking place at the time, two focus groups were conducted and consisted of a combined Year 7 and Year 8 group, as well as a Year 9 group. Details of the focus groups are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Focus Group Cohorts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Cohort Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Focus Groups | Middle School Young People | - Proposed: 3 x groups of 6-8
|            |                     | - Actual: Focus Group 1: 4 respondents and Focus Group 2: 6 respondents |
|            | Middle School Parents | - Proposed: 1 x group of 6-8
|            |                     | - Actual: 4 parents                  |
|            | Middle School Teachers | - Proposed: 1 x group of 6-8
|            |                     | - Actual: 8 teachers                 |

4.4.1 Young people focus groups administration

All young people in Years 7, 8 and 9 were invited to participate in a focus group. Approximately 80 young people took home a consent form. Six respondents returned the consent forms, two from each year level. These six respondents were
then invited to a lunch forum and all accepted the invitation. On the day of Focus Group 1, only four respondents attended one Year 7 male and one Year 7 female, as well as two Year 8 females. Of the two Year 9 respondents, one was away on leave and requested to attend Focus Group 2. All young people in Year 9 were then offered a second opportunity to attend. Focus Group 2 was comprised of six Year 9 respondents, one male and five females.

### 4.4.2 Parent focus groups administration

All parents in Years 7, 8 and 9 were invited to participate in a focus group. Consent forms were sent out with the weekly newsletter in an electronic form. Four parents replied to the request to be involved in the focus group (one male and three females). These parents were then invited to a lunch forum and all accepted the invitation.

The male respondent had two daughters at the school, one in Year 7 and one in Year 10. One of the female respondents had two daughters at the school with one in Year 5 and one in Year 7. The next female respondent had two sons, one of whom was in Year 8 and the other in Year 10. The final female respondent had two daughters, one in Year 5 and one in Year 8. As the literature review has highlighted, there is an absence of student voice in research into this area. The aim of including parent participation in the focus groups was to compare the data of the young people with adult data to determine similarities and differences in voice between young people and adults.

### 4.4.3 Teacher focus groups administration

All teachers of Years 7, 8 and 9 were invited to participate in a focus group. Consent forms were sent out with the weekly newsletter in an electronic form. Eight teachers, three male and five female, replied to the request to be involved in the focus group. These teachers were then invited to a lunch forum and all accepted the invitation. Teachers were invited, along with parents, to participate in the focus groups in order to compare the data of young people with adult data
to determine similarities and differences in voice between young people and adults.

The focus group data comprising of the raw transcripts of each focus group was loaded into the Leximancer (version 4) software program. Concept maps were generated from the raw data which highlighted the main themes expressed therein. These themes were represented in numerical form as a percentage as well as in graphical form, showing the relative size of each theme along with the interconnectedness of each theme.

The sub-themes were generated directly from the Survey Monkey, SPSS and Leximancer data, via a process of manual and software-generated coding. These themes fell into two main categories of cyber safety and usage by young people and included: positive aspects; alignment between school and home; major concerns; alignment between young people and adults; safe sites; privacy; lack of control; friends; time wasting; addiction; concerns; and benefits.

4.5 Influence on the social environment

The following section addresses the combined research sub-questions What influence is electronic communication, in particular social networking, having on the social environment in and out of school? and Is there a difference in the impact based on gender?, to generate the main themes from the findings of the survey and focus groups. These included: membership and use of SNSs; positive aspects; major concerns; assistance sought; and the alignment between young people and adults.

Of the survey respondents, 53% were female and 47% were male. The gender balance was fairly even throughout the year levels and across the entire group (see Table 4.3).
Table 4.3  
**Frequency of Young People’s Age by Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Female frequency</th>
<th>Female Percentage</th>
<th>Male frequency</th>
<th>Male Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger than 12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 years old</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 years old</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 years old</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 years old</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Surveyed respondents were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale the amount of time they spent on SNSs. Twelve percent of respondents surveyed reported that they spent more than three hours per day, 23% reported that they spent between one and three hours per day, 22% spent less than one hour per day, 20% reported accessing SNSs approximately two to three times per week, and 23% reported using SNSs less than twice per week.

The survey data demonstrated variability in the amount of time respondents said they were spending on SNSs. The smallest cohort of 12% spent the most time of more than three hours on SNSs. The other cohorts were evenly spread with respondents identifying as spending one to three hours per week to less than two times per week.

Respondents were asked to identify the SNSs they belonged to in order of most used with the option of identifying up to five different SNSs. This was an open-ended item. Of note, 45 different options were identified by the respondents. These sites included a wide range of options with a mix of age-appropriate and non-age-appropriate sites identified by the respondents in the survey. These included a range of traditional SNSs such as Facebook and Bebo but also included many gaming sites such as Minecraft, which although not primarily established as a SNS, does allow for the capacity to communicate with others.
Young people also included email and text messaging within their umbrella term of SNS.

Facebook was the most popular site nominated, fairly evenly distributed between male (41 – 37%) and female (46 – 37%) young people, followed by Instagram and KiK as the top three choices for most used SNSs. Of those providing a second response, Skype and then Facebook rated the highest. Skype and then email were provided as a third choice response. This suggested that overall, young people are accessing a wide variety of sites but that they tend to restrict their regular use to a few preferred sites (see Table 4.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Third</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kik</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Kik</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kik</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minecraft</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Minecraft</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Minecraft</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The focus group data from these young people reflected a similar pattern. The responses of the young people were related to personal experiences. When the Year 9 Focus Group members were asked what SNSs they were on and using, example responses included:

Um, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Skype. That’s basically all. (Amanda, Year 9)
Facebook, Kik. Yeah, Kik but that’s like on the iPhone. (Andrea, Year 9)

All respondents except for one within this focus group stated that they were on Facebook. These responses confirmed the survey data which suggested that young people utilise a variety of SNSs and that these range in popularity.
4.5.1 Positive aspects

Of the 236 respondents surveyed, the majority (n = 180, 76%) reported having not experienced any problems whilst using SNSs (see Table 4.5). This indicated that whilst the majority of respondents had not experienced any difficulties, approximately one in four respondents had experienced some concerns.

Table 4.5 Reported Problems on Social Networking Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you had any problems on social networking sites?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female 92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both male and female respondents were in the vast majority in responding in the negative, with 92 (74%) females and 88 (79%) males indicating no problems; 33 females (26%) and 23 males (21%) indicated that they had experienced problems with SNS use (see Table 4.5).

The high frequency of responses reported here where young people cite having no problems aligns with the research by ACMA (2013), reflecting only a minority of young people reporting bad experiences as annoying or irritating.

In the survey, 236 respondents were surveyed and responded to the open-ended statement, “Things that are great about social networking sites are...”. All respondents provided a first response. The respondents surveyed reported that the aspects they felt were the best about using SNSs related to the ability to stay connected to their peers. Whilst there were 47 different options provided in the survey answers, the majority had a response in single digits. The highest responses provided as the first greatest thing about SNS use all related to the ability of the respondents to stay connected with each other, with 161 responses (69%: talking to friends 44%, contact over distance 12%, keep in touch 7%, communication 6%).
Both genders were fairly equal in their response of rating *talking to friends* as the most popular response, with 52 male (47%) and 51 female (40%) responses. The next greatest response was *contact over distance*; however, this response differed between the genders with 23 male (21%) and 6 female (5%) responses. These responses, in particular the ability to stay connected with each other, are supported by Bennett (2008), boyd (2008), and ACMA (2009b), who also outline this as one of the primary purposes of SNS use for young people.

When asked to identify “Things that are great about social networking sites”, of those who provided a second response the most predominant answer with 62 (26%) combined responses was the ability to stay connected (*keep in touch 13%, taking to friends 8%, sharing 5%*). The next greatest benefit identified by the surveyed respondents as the second best thing about SNS use was *help with homework* with 14 responses (6%). This was also identified during the focus group discussions:

I think that Skype is something that is really important to me because my relatives, like all of them, are overseas, so I can stay in contact and also like my old friends from overseas. (Jenny, Year 7)

Yeah, I think it’s pretty good because like, we like, as a group we’ve organised things to do on the holidays and the weekend because we might not be able to see each other and we might not have phones but we can go on the internet, so it’s really good. (Ariel, Year 9)

These data suggested that the majority of respondents believe that the ability to stay connected is the greatest benefit of SNS use, reflecting the literature which supports the need of young people to develop their sense of belonging and connectedness through SNS use as being the primary benefit of SNS use (Morie & Chance, 2011). However, these data deviate from research by ACMA (2013) which found that boys tend to use SNS largely for entertainment purposes such as gaming.
4.5.2 Alignment between school and home

When surveyed to determine where SNS problems were occurring, students were given the options of At home, At school, or At home and school. Of the 236 respondents, 73 had experienced problems: 46 (19.5%) responded that the problem occurred at home, 12 (5%) respondents identified the problem as happening at school, whilst 15 respondents (6%) identified that the problem happened at home and school. This suggests that the respondents felt the problems they had experienced with SNS use were more common in the home. With only a 1% increase between the result of At home and At home and school, these results also suggest that the respondents did not perceive that their use of SNSs at home influenced them at school (see Table 4.6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where was the problem?</th>
<th>Total Frequency</th>
<th>Female Frequency</th>
<th>Male Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home and School</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked to identify up to five problems they had experienced when using SNSs, 181 of respondents (77%) stated nothing as their response. This was followed by 29 respondents (12%) identifying cyber bullying as the most common problem. The third most common response identified was from 8 respondents (3%) citing fight with a friend (see Table 4.7). This was reflective of the ACMA (2014a) research which also identifies cyber bullying as one of the main concerns of young people.
Table 4.7  *Nature of Problem with SNS Use*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nothing</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber bullying</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fight with friend</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hacking</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown contact</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>banned from site</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>private</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>addictive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not sure</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parent assisted</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharing of photos</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focus group responses from these young people also identified cyber bullying as an issue. All respondents within the focus groups discussed it as a problem that other people had experienced rather than something they themselves had experienced, as reflected in comments by a Year 7 student:

Yeah, one of my friends, she like got bullied, texting, on her phone but I didn’t get the full story. (John, Year 7)

Focus group discussions also highlighted the concern of some respondents regarding technical issues such as receiving spam and hacking of accounts, perhaps suggesting their perception of a lack of control and/or understanding over their SNS settings, as reflected in the following comments.

I had a friend who got like the spam emails on the school emails and it kept coming through with her name and they kept harassing her. (Jenny, Year 7)

Also, some people know each other’s passwords, school passwords and they actually go onto their emails and write bad emails. I know a friend, a
person on his account like sent a bad email to a person and then they got in trouble. (John, Year 7)

Respondents were surveyed and asked to reply yes or no to the question, “Has a problem that happened on a social networking site at home carried over into your school day?” Surveyed respondents reported in the vast majority that any problems they may have experienced at home when using SNSs had not carried over into their school day, with 215 (91% - 92% of females and 90% of males) reporting having no issues arising at home on SNS that carried into the school day; 21 (9%) responded yes thus indicating that they did have a problem that carried over into their school day.

Eight main types of problems that had carried over into the school day were identified. Whilst the majority of respondents (219 – 93%) responded nothing, problems identified as the greatest concern were cyber bullying (2% of both female and male), fight with friend (2% female and 3% male), and rumours (1% female and 2% male) (see Table 4.8). One percent of females reported feeling uncomfortable, ignoring each other, and self-esteem as problems, while 1% of males reported discussed at school as their other problem, a concern generally expected to be raised by female rather than male respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What happened?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nothing</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber bullying</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fight with friend</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rumours</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discussed at school</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>felt uncomfortable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ignore each other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self esteem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.3 Major concerns

During the survey, respondents were asked to identify “things that worry me about social networking sites.” This was an open-ended item that allowed for up to five responses. Respondents identified 51 different concerns; 235 respondents provided a first concern. The greatest concern listed was cyber bullying (74 – 31% of respondents). However, male responses (49 – 44%) were double that of female responses (25 – 20%). These data was interesting in that they varied from the ACMA research (2009a) where boys reported little perceived cyber bullying and girls were most concerned about cyber bullying. This was followed by nothing with 18% of responses, then predators with 11% of responses. The next identified concern was paedophiles with 10% of responses, and stalkers with 8% of total responses. These data are supported by the research of ACMA (2009a, 2014a) which highlighted cyber bullying as a main concern of young people along with a decrease in young people having any concerns. In particular, a decrease in concerns regarding predators and paedophiles as young people grow older.

A large percentage of respondents (41%) did not provide a second problem; cyber bullying was nominated by 23%. Hacking and fake identity then joined the top five responses within the second greatest concern each with 5% of responses, along with predators at 6%. Of those respondents who chose to provide a third response, cyber bullying at 10% and predators at 4% were the only other responses of note.

During the survey, respondents were asked to identify “concerns my friends have about social networking”. This was an open-ended item that allowed for up to five responses to which the respondents identified 38 different concerns.

A first concern was provided by 236 respondents, with 29% nominating nothing. Respondents then listed cyber bullying (21%) followed by stalkers (9%) as the greatest concern of their friends. First concerns of friends also included don’t know (7%) and paedophiles (6%). These results were in keeping with those of respondents identifying their own concerns.
Of the 101 respondents providing a second concern of their friends, cyber bullying rated at 13%. Paedophiles (4%) and strangers (4%) were both also nominated as concerns.

Sixty respondents identified a third concern of their friends, with 5% nominating cyber bullying. The decline in rates of response continued with only 39 respondents identifying a fourth concern of their friends, with cyber bullying (2%) being nominated as a concern. Only 33 responded with a fifth concern of their friends.

When comparing the survey results for their own concerns compared to their friends’ concerns, additional to the list of own concerns were privacy (13%) and strangers (5%) as well as the response don’t know (7%).

When discussing their concerns regarding SNS use in the focus groups, respondents commented around the theme of site safety as being their main worry. They voiced their views of preferred sites based on their perceptions of which sites were safer than others to use, as suggested in the following comments:

So, I reckon Skype is just an OK social media, not Facebook because it is more like threatening. (John, Year 7)

I want it [Facebook] but then I realised there are a lot of dangers out there so I didn’t get it. (Joan, Year 8)

Respondents also commented on concerns they had that were driven by the decisions of others or the lack of control they had in certain situations, particularly “tagging” and the difficulties they faced with managing their SNS settings.

And sometimes you don’t want to be tagged. You can un-tag yourself. (Alice, Year 9)

The concern over cyber bullying was also reinforced during the focus group discussions. One respondent, Joan, discussed an incident of cyber bullying that had occurred during the school holidays without her knowledge until it was later discussed by other students upon returning to school.
I liked a boy at my old school but because I didn’t have Facebook or anything, over the summer holidays he started saying mean things about me, and saying it all over the place and um I didn’t know about that until the very first day of Year 6, so it kind of screwed up my first day when I was hoping it would be a good day. (Joan, Year 8)

### 4.5.4 Alignment between students and adults

When comparing the focus group data generated between young people and adults for alignment of ideas, seven main areas were identified as having emerged from the data: safe sites; privacy; lack of control; friends; time wasting; addiction; and benefits.

#### 4.5.4.1 Safe sites

Comments made by both young people and parents during the focus group sessions regarding their perceptions of safe SNSs were similar, confirming that both groups had the same perceptions of which sites were safer than others. Both groups expressed their beliefs that Skype was safer than Facebook as they both felt that Skype was more private and Facebook was more public.

#### 4.5.4.2 Privacy

The adult groups, teachers and parents, disagreed with the young people regarding the notion of private. Teachers and parents expressed the view that the young people did not understand that the information they are sharing is not private, whereas comments from young people suggested that they were aware of the issues relating to privacy yet they continued to behave in a manner that compromised their privacy, as outlined in the following focus group comments:

> But everyone is so open and they share their private stuff. They put on their age, on their Skype status you can like scroll and there’s a part where it says age and like where you live, and some people put up their real age and where they live. (John, Year 7)
Parents and teachers also made comment about the notion of privacy and expressed their concerns regarding this during the focus groups:

On Facebook there are a billion people out there who look at Facebook every day and if I put a billboard up on the M1 and put all of your private details on the billboard, would you like that? (Edward, Parent)

That’s the thing isn’t it, they never go away. It is so hard to get across to the kids is that what might seem innocent now, in ten years will come back and haunt you. And that is so hard to get across to them. You say it again and again but. (Ella, Parent)

The research data generated confirmed that both teachers and parents expressed concerns about the lack of understanding by young people regarding their perceived anonymity, along with a perceived lack of control by young people when using SNSs.

**4.5.4.3 Lack of control**

During the focus group sessions, parents and young people both expressed their concerns about the lack of control on sites such as Facebook, in particular, concerns regarding how to manage unknown friend requests, tagging in photos, unwanted contact, and stalkers, as suggested in Alice’s comment.

Checking in at places like you can do that now, like you can say where you are, and I think that is like a really good way for predators to know where you are. (Alice, Year 9)

**4.5.4.4 Friends**

As reflected in the literature review, the high level of online connectedness with strangers whom young people call friends is often seen as both baffling and concerning to adults (Flanagin & Metzger, 2008).

Parents, teachers and students all agreed in the focus groups that the “need” to have a certain number of friends did pose concerns for students. These concerns related to the need to appear popular by having a large number of
friends. This was putting students at risk as they were more likely to accept unknown friend requests in order to boost the number of friends they had. These concerns were shared by both adults and young people, as suggested by the comments of Joan and Cassie.

Someone in my grade said that if you have less than fifty friends your life is just sad. (Joan, Year 8)

You know, fifteen kids in the school are friends with someone and none of them actually know who they are. (Cassie, Teacher)

The survey and focus group data supported the findings of the literature review by reinforcing the perceptions of adults being concerned about breaches of privacy and when friending strangers (West et al., 2009). These data also supported the literature regarding the perceptions of young people feeling that their social success may hinge upon the number of online friends (boyd, 2008).

**4.5.4.5 Time wasting**

In focus group discussions, parents, teachers and young people all raised their concern over time wasting and addiction being an issue for many young people using SNSs. Even though all groups agreed that time spent on SNSs was a problem, the parents disagreed with the perception of young people regarding the need to have 24/7 contact. Parents thought it was detrimental whilst young people felt it was essential, as identified in Ella’s comments.

The biggest thing I would say is a problem with Facebook is time. The time that it soaks up. Once they start to build up a big network of friends on Facebook and everyone’s posting things up and putting up different things to look at and that sort of thing, they could spend 24 hours a day literally looking at all of the different things that are getting posted by all these other people, and that to me is the biggest problem, when they are at school, is the amount of time it soaks up without them realising that time is gone. (Ella, Parent)
Ironically, Adam sums up the need for young people to stay connected whilst recognising the time taken and wasted in doing so.

For me, social networking is not really important because like I think the only important thing that social networking can be used for is to contact friends and tell them about things that you’re planning to do or ask them for some, maybe some help sometimes but other than that I don’t think it should be used for messaging and stuff because that’s just wasting your time. (Adam, Year 9)

4.5.6 Addiction

In focus group discussions, the young people raised their concern over time addiction being an issue for many people using SNSs. Young people were able to identify the possible issue that may arise for some as a result of becoming addicted to using the SNSs, both for young people and adults. Comments from John and Jenny highlighted addiction concerns.

It’s also like an addiction. I’ve seen, I’ve seen um like friends of mine talking to their friends on Facebook at school, so it’s becoming like an addiction. (John, Year 7)

Yeah, like Minecraft, my brother just got it and he has like one computer with Minecraft and another with Skype and he will sit there with his friends like and we can’t get him off the computer. Like, we have had to give him certain hours now. (Jenny, Year 7)

Joan’s comments highlight that addiction can be an issue for both young people and adults alike.

You know how you can get them on your phone? It just like vibrates or something to give you an alert that someone has sent you so you can quickly check it and all that. That’s like with my mum, she is just glued to Facebook but I don’t want to be addicted like her (giggles). So, I am like, no I don’t want to get Facebook. (Joan, Year 8)
### 4.5.4.7 Benefits

Teachers, parents and students all agreed in the focus groups that SNS use can assist students with their homework. The main benefit identified was that this provided instantaneous help by peers and teachers to the student with a query, thus eliminating the need to wait until the next scheduled lesson to gain assistance, as reflected in the following comments.

> Being able to stay in touch with each other, um, you know if they are doing homework and they have got a query, they can hop on line and ask about that. (Edith, Parent)

> But it’s also immediate, you know, the great thing for them is that they will get feedback almost instantaneously, because there are other people online somewhere that will provide feedback and I think that’s probably gratifying, it’s not necessarily a negative thing. It’s a fast paced world, so if you can get a response straight away. (Carol, Teacher)

### 4.6 Influence on the learning environment

The following section addresses the research sub-question, *What influence is electronic communication, in particular social networking, having on the learning environment?* to generate the main themes from the findings of the survey and focus groups. These included: the influence of SNS use on the school setting; positive aspects; negative aspects; preferences of young people for SNS use at school; and the alignment between young people and adults.

#### 4.6.1 Influence of SNS use on the school setting

Young people were questioned regarding problems experienced on SNSs that then carried into their school day. Respondents were asked, “Has a problem that happened on a social networking site at home carried over into your school day?” Respondents were required to indicate either yes (21 responses – 9%) or no (215 – 91%). In the vast majority respondents indicated that they did not experience any problems, with 161 (68%) providing no response. Less than 10% of respondents indicated that
they had experienced problems with SNS use that had carried over into the school day. Respondents who indicated yes were then provided with the opportunity to make up to five open-ended responses outlining what the actual issue was that had carried into their school day, and 64 responses were given: cyber bullying (10%), hackers (4%), fighting (3%), technical (3%), and exclusion (1%) were the primary concerns.

Respondents were asked to provide a yes or no response to the question, “Does your use of social networking sites influence how you perform at school?”; 236 responded in the majority that it did not influence their school performance with 83% responding no and 17% responding yes.

Respondents were then asked to identify how their SNS use influenced their performance at school with an open-ended response. There were 90 responses to this question: 19 (8%) responded in a negative manner stating that SNS use was distracting; 7% responded in a positive manner as 10 (4%) respondents reported that they were able to focus on their school work and 8 (3%) reported that they were able to receive help with their homework. Five (2%) reported that they were able to keep SNS use at home separate from school.

### 4.6.2 Positive aspects

Teachers commented during the focus group that SNS use was a positive factor in assisting young people with their learning, as evidenced in this comment:

> It’s also as an educational tool. Um, kids talk about homework online. If they have a problem they can now just put it out on Facebook that they have an issue with a problem, and um, they all start to talk about it. (Craig, Teacher)

All focus group transcripts were transcribed into Leximancer software (version 4). Leximancer is a tool that analyses the content of documentation, allowing for information to then be extracted in the form of a conceptual map. Leximancer was used to analyse content in order to highlight the main themes emerging from the focus group data by identifying the frequency of words as well as their relation to other words in the text.
From the student focus group discussions, it was identified that the main theme of *people* emerged as highly relevant to the respondents with a connectivity of 100%. This is represented with *people* having the largest sized circle in the graph with clear links to the other key sub-themes of *school, friends, talk* and *tell*, thus validating the need of young people to remain connected as expressed in the survey data (see Figure 4.1). The theme of *social networking* presented as the next major theme with clear sub-theme connections of *contact, time* and *Skype*. *Facebook* also presented as a main theme with the sub-theme links of *contact* and *parents*. The red, orange and yellow circles in Figure 4.1 indicate the most important themes by prevalence and the blue, green and purple circles indicate the least prevalent themes. The combined student focus group data were consistent with findings from the literature review which suggests that young people access SNSs mainly for the purpose of staying connected to each other (Bennett, 2008; Pangrazio, 2013).
4.6.3 Negative aspects

When discussing concerns during the focus groups, young people expressed the two main negative themes of *inappropriate photos* and *addiction* as being of concern to them. For example,

Um, well I have heard of stories of like boyfriends and girlfriends, you know sending photos, inappropriate photos. I have heard of that and I’m like why would you do that? It is so open and it’s a photo, you can copy it or get a screen shot or something. (Joan, Year 8)
I don’t think that people who are already addicted to it understand. Like I see heaps of people walking around the school with their phones and they are on Facebook. (Jenny, Year 7)

4.6.4 Preferences of young people for SNS use at school

When discussing the use of SNSs at school and what sort of assistance young people would prefer, only one respondent, John, suggested that the use of SNSs be banned at school.

I reckon you probably have to do something like ban emails, not like ban ban. (John, Year 7)

Most comments made during the focus groups by the young people were from a positive perspective. Respondents expressed their desire to have access to SNSs at school. Some respondents, for example Jenny and Joan, suggested that a school-run SNS may provide the benefits of SNSs combined with the safety of a school-managed forum.

I think EduKate [school intranet] is like a good version of Facebook, ‘cause if people go to ask other students questions about the homework, I think it is a safer way and I think we should always have a forum up there to ask people in our class. (Jenny, Year 7)

It would be best to set the forums up for like each class and you can only contribute to your class otherwise you get too much, too many posts. (Joan, Year 8)

Young people also commented during the focus groups that they felt the sharing of scenarios by other young people who have actually experienced issues on SNSs would be of benefit to them. For example,

Yes, because they won’t actually happen to you, but it’s like one out of 50 or something, but it will happen, so if something does come up then they are prepared to do something about it and not just sit there and go ‘oh, no just kidding.’ But with social media you are not face to face all of the time, you’re typing or texting so you won’t actually know what they look like, or
their facial expressions, so you never know what they actually mean. (Joan, Year 8)

Respondents also discussed how and when they would like the scenario discussions to occur during the focus groups:

I reckon like twice a term so at the beginning and the end, [in small groups] where you are not like talking to anyone else and teachers can see if you are getting distracted. (Jenny, Year 7)

Well, you should ask them, like have a piece of paper what would you do if someone did this to you and see what they would do. (Joan, Year 8)

4.6.5 Alignment between young people and adults

When comparing the data generated between young people and adults for alignment of ideas, two main areas were identified: cyber safety and SNS use.

4.6.5.1 Cyber safety

Focus group discussions highlighted a common concern between all parties – young people, parents and teachers – in that they all commented that the young people had been well informed about cyber safety issues yet they were still concerned about the usage of SNSs and how this should be monitored. The concern from the adult perspective was primarily about the long-term consequences of poor online behaviour whilst for young people the concern was more about the immediate consequences and how these should be managed.

In some of the focus group discussions, young people expressed the belief that teacher monitoring would be of benefit in reducing the incidents of cyber safety problems. For example,

Instead, so that the teacher can see your screen at all times. (Joan, Year 8)

Adults, both teachers and parents, expressed within the focus group discussions that they perceived the young people as already having received ample education and training in the area of managing their online safety, as identified by the following comments.
I think the education thing is important, I don’t think that solves a lot of the problems though, because I think they are reasonably well informed. I think there have been some good processes for them offered here than there were in the previous school they were in. I wonder though whether added into that are consequences. They know about the kind of sexual predator thing, they know about the cyber bullying, but I don’t think they understand at all it might impact you in 10 years when you’re applying for a job, we haven’t seen that part of it. And maybe adding that into the, you know some actual consequence for real people, we talk about if hypothetically, this is what happened, but we don’t have those, you know real life tangible, this is what it did to me you know or to me. (Ella, Parent)

You know, it’s one of those hard ones that you don’t want to be seen, as you know, the thought police, but also this, you see this is wrong and how do we address it. (Christopher, Teacher)

4.6.5.2 SNS use

Emerging thematic data from the focus group discussions highlight a difference between the adults and young people in terms of adults being more focused upon the type of SNS used whereas the young people appeared more focused on the result of the SNS use. When comparing the Leximancer results from combined adults to the combined young people themes, the combined adults have a more clearly defined theme of Facebook (see Figure 4.2) whereas the combined young people have a more clearly defined theme of people (see Figure 4.3). This difference is further highlighted with the theme of use from the adult data compared to the theme of tell from data of the young people, once again suggesting the difference in perception of the two groups where adults see SNSs as a tool to be used and young people view SNSs as a part of how they communicate.

The Leximancer results from the adults also highlight a focus on the negative aspects of SNS use with problem and time also being of note, whereas
the Leximancer graph for young people highlights *networking* and *talking* with only a minor emphasis on *time, Facebook* and *Skype*. The difference in the number of themes with a negative connotation also suggests that the adults have far more concerns about SNS use than do the young people.

Of interest, the map of Figure 4.2 and 4.3 are distinctly different in that the adult map appears quite complicated as it is heavily lined, representing the many connections adults perceived between the many themes they identified, whereas the map of the young people appears to be very simple. The Leximancer map (Figure 4.3) representing the main themes of young people had fewer themes emerge with fewer links to other themes than did the Leximancer map of combined adult data (Figure 4.2). The adult map (Figure 4.2) represents a high frequency of connections from the theme of *Facebook* to the many other main themes, most of which represent concerns for the adults. Whereas the young people map (Figure 4.3) was opposite in that there were fewer themes and minimal connections between themes highlighting clear links and connections that SNSs provide in terms of facilitating communication.

The adult data generated the theme of *problem*, which was not evident in the map generated by the student data. Both maps included the theme of *time*, with strong links to *social networking* and *Facebook*. Adult data also generated the theme, *online*, which was absent from the student data. This is consistent with Thomas (2007) who suggests that for young people there is no online or offline living; rather, the two merge seamlessly for them. This is also reflected in the difference between the student and adult concept maps, where the adult map has a higher frequency of linking concepts, shown as lines, than the student concept map.
Figure 4.2. Leximancer themes from adult focus group data, showing the SNS “Facebook” as the focus.
Comments from the young people focused more heavily on the connectivity aspects of SNS use, such as their desire to stay in touch and keep in contact with others on an ongoing or continual basis. For example,

Um, I use it just to contact my friends. You know how you are stuck at home and your parents are working but you can’t get out to your friends, um, also if I don’t understand a question in Maths or something I will contact someone or one of my friends or email my teachers. (Joan, Year 8)

Young people were more concerned about this connectivity than the actual SNS used, whereas the adult comments focused more on the types of SNSs being used by young people. The adult comments in the focus group discussions
highlighted their concerns which were predominantly driven by the type of SNS the young people were using, hence the large circle for Facebook (see Figure 4.2).

4.7 Adult support
The following section addresses the research sub-question, What do students want in terms of adult support? to generate the main themes from the findings of the survey and focus groups. These included assistance requested, assistance required, and the alignment between young people and adults.

4.7.1 Assistance requested
Young people were asked to rate who they would ask for help with SNS issues. They were asked to rate these in order from first to last with four options provided: friends, parents, teachers, and no one. Survey results reflected, as a first option, that respondents would ask for help with SNS problems from their parents (127 – 54%: 53% male, 34% female), followed by their friends (77 – 33%: 66% male, 43% female), then no one (29 – 12%), and lastly their teachers (8 – 3%).

When ranking their preferred option for assistance, respondents nominated parents (127) as their first choice, friends (101) as their second choice, teachers (93) as their third choice, and no one (123) as their last choice (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.9 Preferred People for Seeking Help

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who would you ask for help?</th>
<th>First choice Frequency</th>
<th>Second choice Frequency</th>
<th>Third choice Frequency</th>
<th>Last choice Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comments from young people during the focus groups reflected whom they would seek assistance from if they were experiencing problems with SNSs, as the following excerpts indicate.

I just talk to my friends. (John, Year 7)

You consult a parent or someone who can do something. (Adam, Year 9)

If it is school related you could come to like the Heads of House or like the Principal and stuff or Counsellor. (Amanda, Year 9)

These comments acknowledged that young people were aware of a range of adult support, including friends, parents and teachers. However, the survey data strongly suggest that young people tended to rely most heavily upon their parents or friends for assistance.

4.7.2 Assistance required

As part of the survey and focus groups, young people were asked to provide information relating to the type of assistance they required to assist them in their use of SNSs, both at home and at school.

4.7.2.1 Help from home

Young people were asked to respond to the statement, “Help I would like at home regarding social networking sites is”. This was an open-ended item where respondents were able to respond freely. All 236 responded to this item and provided responses falling into 25 different categories. Survey responses indicated that a large number of young people felt they did not require assistance at home in regards to SNS problems, with 142 (60% - male 59%, female 62%) responding nothing, indicating that they did not want help, and 26 (11%) responding don’t need help. Combined, these results account for 71% of the cohort surveyed. These data are supported by Lenhart et al. (2013) who report that young people do not seek assistance from adults as they believe they cannot help.

The next highest response was for parent support with 26 responses (11% – male 16%, female 6%). Advice was the next most requested type of assistance
from home, totalling 15 responses (6% – male 7%, female 6%) in the following
categories: advice (10 – 4%), advice from peers (2 – 1%), advice on cyber bullying
(2 – 1%), and advice on strangers (1 – 0.5%). Combined results for parent support
and advice totalled 41 responses or 17% of the cohort (see Table 4.10). Of note,
advice from peers was included in this item, correlating with previous items
suggesting that young people would seek assistance from their peers.

Table 4.10 Help at Home – Main Requests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Help Requested</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Don’t need help</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Parent support</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Advice</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.7.2.2 Help from school

Young people were asked to respond to the statement, “Help I would like at school
regarding social networking sites is”. This was an open-ended item where
respondents were able to reply freely. All 236 responded to this item and provided
answers falling into 27 different categories.

Survey responses indicated that a large number of young people did not
require assistance at school in regards to SNS problems, with 147 (62%) responding nothing and 20 (8%) responding don’t need help. Combined, these
results account for 72% (72% male, 70% female) of the cohort surveyed.

Support was the next most requested type of assistance from school,
totalling 25 responses (11%) in the following categories: teacher support (15 – 6%: 7% male, 6% female), friend and teacher support (6 – 3%), and friend support (4 – 2%). Combined results for support totalled 11% of the cohort (see Table 4.11).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Help Requested</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>147</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Don’t need help</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses from young people in the focus groups reflected the results in the survey. For example,

I’ve been fine with what the school has been doing because with the X [student named] thing we went to [Head of House] about it and then she emailed you and [Principal] about it I think, so then she stopped doing it and nothing more has been heard of it so I’ve been fine with it. She’s still on Facebook and she’s kept quiet. (Alex, Year 9)

### 4.7.3 Alignment between young people and adults

Comparison between the data of young people and adults revealed many areas of alignment, including young people requesting assistance and what type of assistance might be required.

#### 4.7.3.1 Sources of assistance

Survey data indicated that respondents felt they did not require assistance; however, if they did they were most likely to ask for assistance from their parents, followed by their friends and then their teachers (see Table 4.9). This was also reflected in the focus group data, showing an alignment between the survey results of young people and adult comments within the focus groups. For example,

I find they don’t talk about it very often. They say things occasionally but they are very weary of talking about it because they know that that’s one of the things that’s perceived to be a problem with it, so if they start talking
about how it is a problem then it makes the case bigger for not having it. (Edith, Parent)
I don’t have much conversation in class about it, it’s conversation that happens online. (Cassie, Teacher)
Well I’m with you, I think they know everything, I think they think they know everything, I think that’s the problem. (Edward, Parent)
Survey data indicated that many respondents did not perceive the need to ask for assistance from home or from school (see Table 4.11). This was also reflected in the focus group data by comments made from parents and teachers.

4.7.3.2 Type of assistance needed
The research data revealed that young people and adults were in alignment with their thoughts on proactive ways to assist young people in their use of SNSs.

4.7.3.2.1 Case studies and scenarios
Based on comments made during the focus group discussions, young people and adults both agreed that having other young people who had experienced difficulties with SNS use sharing these experiences as examples, case studies or scenario situations would be of benefit. Suggestions included,

Give an example probably. (Joan, Year 8)
Well, I reckon, we mostly get like teachers and adults that come to us about it but we personally think, well I personally think that people more around our age, junior, so I think that if you get more aspects of like teens sort of like people like twenty or something, where they have had the experience they have got more experience to tell us. ‘Cause some adults, when they were like our age they didn’t really have the social networking like we did, so it is completely different so if someone who has just finished Year 12 would have more experience. So, I think it would be good if they came and talked to us. (Amanda, Year 9)
I just think there has to be an education program so that the kids understand what the implications are when things are done and there is no better way than doing it then bring people around who have been, who are talking, who have been cyber bullied at their age or have been in contact with grubs or whatever it might be and actually talk about their experiences and what else happened to them and about what we should be doing. (Edward, Parent)

4.7.3.2.2 Privacy settings
Comments made during focus groups by both young people and adults suggested the need for assistance with how to work privacy settings on various SNSs. This was raised in each of the focus groups yet did not rate highly in the surveys as an area for assistance. Comments from young people included,

I don’t know how to do it [privacy settings] properly. I have tried to research about it but it is not easy. (Adam, Year 9)

You have to stay aware when you are on Facebook. You have to keep checking that everything is on private if you want it to be private. (Ariel, Year 9)

I think that’s the important thing, like when I did some stuff with Year 8, I literally Googled some of their names and brought up their Facebook pages and I said do you realise that someone can do that and they had no idea and I think Facebook make the settings so complicated that you have, and they update them all the time, that the students need, if they are going to have a Facebook page, they need to be able to go in to the settings and change them and actually understand what all the different settings are, because otherwise they’re just opening themselves up to having anyone being able to see anything they’re putting on there. (Colleen, Teacher)

Plus even for later in life, in terms of going for a job interview, that there are photos from, you know, way back in the day of you doing those silly things or in an inappropriate manner or in an inappropriate dress, that can affect them much later. (Colleen, Teacher)
4.7.3.2.3 Parental supervision

Young people and parents both commented during the focus groups about the value of parental supervision as a protective factor for young people using SNSs. This included having the device in a central and/or visible place within the home as well as the “friending” of a parent or trusted older person. For example,

No, it’s [computer] in a visible place. He [brother] doesn’t do it in his room. He will sit at the main family computer and every time we walk past we will always like check it and we can hear him as well from the living room and Dad’s often there working too. (Jenny, Year 7)

I have my mum as a friend on Facebook so she just looks at my page. (Alex, Year 9)

Yes, that’s the biggest of things I do, just look over the shoulder. You know we have the computer where we can see it and you know we just sort of walk in, look over, see what they’re doing, um, you can see from a distance what screen they are on, um, that’s the biggest thing. As I said they don’t do the Facebook. Emails, you know it’s hard, you don’t know what they are writing on emails sometimes unless you’ve got their passwords. On my younger one I still have got her password, but the older one has changed her password. So I can’t get in anymore. (Elaine, Parent)

4.7.3.2.4 Other comments

Respondents to the survey were asked if they had any other comments to make regarding the use of SNSs. This was an open-ended item allowing for up to five responses; 177 respondents provided additional comments with a total of 236 responses falling within 26 categories. The majority responded none with a total of 179 (76%). The other comments were a mix of positive comments (20 – 8%) and negative comments (20 – 8%) with 13 (6%) responding neutrally, that there were both good and bad aspects of SNS use (see Table 4.12).
Table 4.12  Other Comments about Social Networking Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Comments</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t use them</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they are good</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good for communicating</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fun</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good for collaboration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no problems</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>should have SNSs at school</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they need a new social networking site</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumblr is life</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>useful</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good and bad points</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have had enough help from school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safety concern</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school should stay out of it</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adults only see the bad points</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pointless</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time waster</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ban them</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be more considerate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>better blocking facilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dangerous</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distracting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>need monitoring</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not age appropriate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>porn is free</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the focus group discussion, parents and teachers also agreed with the notion of positive and negative points to SNS use as reflected in the following comments.

And also Facebook and social media can be used as a good thing, you know not just for the entertainers of the world but the other people, there’s other people. (Edith, Parent)

Yeah, that’s something that [Teacher X] did, her session in Year 9 HPE about, um, what is positive about using social media, um, because yeah you’re right it is so negative all the time and, um, I think a message as well is there are all these issues, all these problems same as cyberbullying and I think we’ve moved away from saying, as adults, oh just get off, because you can’t do that, because it’s hard enough to do that when you’re an adult, let alone when you’re a, you know like a kid trying to fit in and find out what’s going on. (Catherine, Teacher)

I think that’s something that young people don’t quite understand, the longevity of things, that they can go and delete it, but between them posting and the deletion somebody else might have accessed it and stored it elsewhere. (Carol, Teacher)

Or what’s acceptable in one family which is totally unacceptable in another family and that’s where the differences start. (Elaine, Parent)

4.8 Summary

In this study, three main data sources were used: document review, survey, and focus groups. The document review highlighted that the documents were written primarily from an authoritative and legalistic frame of reference and as such tended to reinforce the fear-based paradigm held by some adults regarding the use of SNSs. It also highlighted the lack of power, inclusion and authenticity within the documents, in other words, the total lack of inclusion of student voice.
The data utilised in this research have highlighted a range of key points regarding the use of SNSs by young people, including both positive and negative aspects as well as areas for consideration for future support of young people within the realm of social networking.

Data from respondents revealed that young people were using a wide range of SNSs, including some sites that are not age appropriate. The most important factor regarding SNS use for students was the ability to be connected to their peers.

Young people and adults both recognised that privacy was an issue when using SNSs. However, the adults differed from the young people in that they felt that the young people did not have a clear and thorough understanding of what private versus public meant.

The majority of young people reported having no problems with their SNS use. The problems that did occur were reported as largely having occurred in the home and not at school. Young people also felt, on the whole, that these problems did not transfer into the school setting.

Problems that were most prevalent included cyber bullying, fight with friends, technical difficulties (including how to control privacy settings, un-tagging, spam), hacking of accounts and fake identities, inappropriate pictures, as well as stalkers and predators. The reported dangers or problems were consistent between adults and young people. The issue of “unknown friends” was a concern for adults and young people, as was timewasting (adult perception) or distracting (young people perception) and addiction to SNSs.

Girls used SNSs primarily to talk to friends. Although they had few concerns they commented that they were most concerned about paedophiles. Boys also used SNSs primarily to talk to friends and whilst they also had few concerns, they were most concerned about cyber bullying and privacy.

Overwhelmingly, young people were consistent in their belief that they did not have any problems and/or did not require assistance at home or at school with
SNS use. When asked what type of assistance they may require from home and school, support was the most prominent response.

If they were to seek assistance, young people ranked parents, friends, teachers and then no one. Boys aligned with this ranking; however, girls ranked parents, friends, no one, and teachers lastly.

Both adults and young people felt that young people were well informed about the dangers of SNS use. However, young people were more concerned with the immediate dangers or problems whereas the adults were more concerned with long-term issues.

Young people had a positive view of their perception that “they know it all”, whereas the adults had a negative perception of young people “knowing it all”.

Young people agreed with the adults that the monitoring of their sites by their parents was a good protective factor or safety mechanism for them.

Young people expressed that sharing of stories or scenarios by other young people who had actually experienced difficulties in real life on SNSs would be of the most benefit to them.

Both young people and adults could clearly articulate that there were good points and bad points to SNS use.
CHAPTER 5

Discussion and Implications

5.1 Introduction
This research set out to investigate the experience of young people with respect to their engagement with social networking through the privileging of student voice. This chapter provides a discussion on a series of findings generated from the data analysis. The first section addresses aspects related to the themes of: young people in a digital age; negative factors relating to cyber bullying, identity development and time wasting; positive factors; private versus public; friends; gender; assistance sought; assistance wanted; and assistance needed. The second section then addresses the limitations of the study, followed by six recommendations from the context of student voice, and finally, the conclusion to the research project.

5.2 Discussion of key findings
The study found that the young people involved overwhelmingly reported that their online interactions were of a positive nature, and that the adults and young people were aligned in many of their perceptions regarding the positive and negative aspects of SNS use. Overall, young people reported that the influence of SNS use on the social environment in and out of school was positive, as was the influence on the learning environment. Of note, the influence on the social environment outside of school caused the most cause for concern and the influence on learning environment was the cause of least concern. Gender differences within this study were both typical and atypical of the wider research and the young people within the study were able to articulate the type of assistance that they required regarding SNS use.
5.2.1 Young people in a digital age

Research has detailed concerns about the diminishing childhood of young people growing up in a digital age (McQueen, 2010a). Due to their constant connection to information and thus being more exposed to adult material and concepts, it has been suggested that our young people are suffering from a loss of innocence by having to grow up too quickly. Gadlin (1978) disputes this by noting that our young people are experiencing the opposite by living an extended youth. Young people today are better educated, stay at home longer, and are more protected by their parents than any generation before them.

Data from this study highlighted that 12% of respondents spent more than 3 hours per day on SNSs and a further 23% of respondents reported that they spent between 1-3 hours per day on SNSs. This corresponded with ACMA (2013) research which showed that young people spend approximately 2.9 hours per day accessing the internet. Respondents in this study represented as typical in their time use and site use when compared with the wider research done by ACMA (2009b; 2013), which may support the transference of the recommendations to other similar settings.

Data confirmed that the young people involved in this study are using a wide range of SNSs, including some sites that are not age appropriate. In the vast majority, respondents reported that they were on age-appropriate sites and were using SNS for legitimate purposes, and that the most of their online experiences were positive. Respondents in this study also confirmed their reliance on SNSs to stay connected with their peers during out-of-school hours whilst they were at home, with 69% of respondents stating this as the greatest thing about SNS use, thus reinforcing Gadlin’s (1978) perception that young people today are more protected than previous generations as they appear to have less physical freedom than young people of previous generations.
5.2.2 Negative factors

It has been noted in the literature review that there is currently a varied perception of how young people are engaging with their online world. Some research reflects a fear-based paradigm, which situates young people as being at risk and/or victims of the digital age (Collin et al., 2011) by focusing on the issues arising from poor online interactions, including defamation, copyright, privacy issues, and criminal misuse of communication tools (Lindsay et al., 2011). Other research (boyd, 2008; Livingstone, 2008; Pengrazio, 2013) highlights the positive aspects of SNS use, particularly in the identity and social development of young people.

5.2.2.1 Cyber safety

The document review undertaken within this study supported the negative paradigm of SNS use, highlighting that the documents reviewed were written primarily from an authoritative and punitive frame of reference and as such tended to reinforce the fear-based paradigm held by some adults regarding the use of SNSs. These documents were written within a legal context and directly addressed the types of online interactions that were not acceptable as well as providing the reader with a clear understanding of the associated consequences. The document review demonstrated that the documents were written by school administrators and legal representatives for the purpose of reputation management. These documents had the purpose of clearly stating rules and expectations to be abided by as part of the enrolment process, hence it is not surprising that there was a total lack of the factors necessary for the presence of genuine student voice.

The literature review highlighted the main concerns within the risk-management paradigm as being centred upon cyber safety, in particular online predators and cyber bullying (ACMA, 2011a). Australian and international schools are aware of these concerns and implement a wide variety of programs which address the issues of online safety.
Within the study the majority of respondents (76%) said they had no problems with their SNS use. The problems that did occur were reported as largely having occurred in the home and not at school. Young people also felt, on the whole, that these problems did not transfer into the school setting. Both young people and parents agreed that the school had provided an adequate cyber safety program.

Problems that respondents did identify as being most prevalent included cyber bullying, fight with friends, technical difficulties (including how to control privacy settings, un-tagging, spam), hacking of accounts, fake identities, inappropriate pictures, as well as stalkers and predators. Interestingly, one in four young people reported that they had experienced a problem online, which could be considered to be significant enough to be of concern.

5.2.2.2 Identity development

Formation of identity is a developmental factor for all young people of this generation, as well as for the generations that have preceded them. What has changed is the platform by which this identity development now takes place (Livingstone, 2008). Young people are utilising the online environment to develop and establish their persona, yet many adults find the “need to be seen” puzzling (Tufeki, 2008).

Thomas (2007) suggests that the anonymity of cyberspace actually encourages greater risk taking by young people, compared to what they may engage in face-to-face. This, combined with still developing maturity levels (Bahr, 2010), is cause for concern by adults. This also corresponds with research by Flanagan and Metzger (2008) who raise concerns relating to the still emerging cognitive and emotional development of young people along with their relative lack of experience.

This study has showed that both young people and adults agreed that the study school provides adequate cyber safety training. Both young people and adults also agreed that they were concerned about the long-term ramifications of
poor choices played out online. Heverly (2008) also echoes this point, raising his concern about the lack of research into the area of assisting young people in their understanding of the consequences of inappropriate digital artefacts they may be creating. Both young people and adults within this study agreed that whilst young people were provided with adequate training in cyber safety and reputation management, they were still involved in making inappropriate choices whilst using SNSs.

5.2.2.3 Time wasting
It has been noted in the literature review that the offline and online activities of young people are congruent (Thomas, 2007). What they do online is primarily to foster their social relationships and develop their sense of community. The struggles they deal with are the same as they would experience face-to-face (Bennett, 2008).

What is different is that this generation is the most highly connected of all generations due to the technology they have available to them. They are more likely to communicate via technology than in person (boyd, 2008), but this is a social phenomenon and not a generational phenomenon (Herrera & Peters, 2011). The need for peer affirmation is not new, but the means by which this is achieved, that is via SNSs, is new. This study has showed through focus group discussions that the amount of time that young people are connected via SNSs and other electronic means is often perceived as time wasting by adults but as essential by young people, although young people did state that SNS use could be distracting and addictive at times.

5.2.3 Positive factors
Whilst much of the literature refers to the negative aspects of SNS use (ACMA, 2007, 2011a), there is increasing evidence of the many positive aspects of online interaction, including improved educational outcomes, facilitating supportive
relationships, identity formation, promoting a sense of community and wellbeing (Collin et al., 2011).

For the young people in this study, the most important factor regarding SNS use was the ability to be connected to their peers. This online “anytime” access to their peers and friendship groups is a crucial part of their identity development as young people seek validation and acceptance from their peers rather than from adults (Beaumont, 2009). It also provides them with quick and easy access to each other. Data from the focus groups held with young people highlighted their need to be connected to each other at all times as being “essential” to them. They also reported their preference for SNS sites, such as Skype, which allowed for chat facilities that were easy to use and were free or cheap to access. Young people today are more physically protected than their predecessors (Gadlin, 1978) as they have less freedom in terms of their spare time, with parents now restricting unsupervised time and promoting more and more organised activities for their children. Online access to each other via SNSs allows young people to facilitate their connection with each other.

5.2.4 Private versus public
This study revealed that young people and adults all regarded privacy as an issue when using SNSs. However, the perceptions of adults differed from those of the young people. The adults felt that the young people did not have a clear and thorough understanding of what private versus public meant. Adults were concerned that young people were sharing via SNSs information that they considered to be private. This finding aligns with research of Collin et al. (2011) and Livingstone (2008). Research by boyd (2008) and Livingstone (2008) proposes that young people describe their SNS profiles as private spaces for themselves and their friends and emphasise the need to keep this private from their parents. Young people in this study expressed their need for privacy on SNSs from their parents but did also acknowledge that friending parents provided a safety mechanism for them.
5.2.5 Friends
The high level of connectedness that young people now have has generated other areas of concern for adults. The large number of “friends” that young people now have on the SNSs has been an increasing cause for alarm by many adults (Bennett, 2008). Adults are worried about the safety of young people who share private information with unknown friends, perhaps putting themselves at risk (ACMA, 2009c). Some adults also perceive the need to have an extensive number of friends as narcissistic (boyd, 2008; Livingstone, 2008). The focus group responses from adults in this study confirmed these findings. Young people further reinforced this necessity for large numbers of friends during the focus group discussions by referring to other young people with a limited number of SNS friends as being “sad.”

For young people, the need for large numbers of friends causes concerns – not from a safety aspect as it does for adults, but rather from a popularity aspect where young people are often expected to rank or rate their friends in order. This is of concern as it may lead to friendship issues if other young people are offended by the rankings (ACMA, 2009c).

This study confirmed that the issue of “unknown friends” was a concern for both adults and young people. The adult concerns mirrored those of the wider research. The concerns of the young people also added that they felt pressure to have vast numbers of friends as low numbers indicated that they were considered to be unpopular.

5.2.6 Gender
The literature review illustrated that young people use SNSs for different reasons as they progress through their formative years (ACMA, 2009a; Bennett, 2008). The younger ones tended to be involved in games-based SNSs whilst the older ones tended to be involved in SNSs that were primarily established for socialising.

Bennett (2008) further delineates SNS use based upon gender, stating that girls primarily use SNSs for socialising whilst boys use SNSs for entertainment
purposes. This study confirmed Bennett’s findings for the girls (40%) which indicated that they used SNSs primarily to talk to friends. However, the boys (47%) in this study added to the previous research by suggesting that their primary use of SNSs was also to talk to friends, thus using SNSs for socialising, as did the girls, rather than for gaming, as suggested by Bennett.

Gender-based data from this study regarding worries about SNS use were also of interest. Whilst the cohort predominantly reported having no worries, the female response to this (23%) was almost double that of the male response (12%). Although the majority of young people responded that they did not experience any problems with their SNS use (74% female; 79% male), findings from this study suggest that the main concern of those who did have problems was cyber bullying, which was represented fairly evenly with 30% male and 35% female responses.

5.2.7 Assistance sought

Previous studies have highlighted the lack of young people’s reporting of concerns to adults regarding their SNS use. They are more likely to seek out help from their friends as they are fearful of adult interference, namely being cut off from use of their technology and SNSs (Lenhart et al., 2013; Scott, 2011; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008). Research from ACMA (2013) also informs us that young people are less likely to report concerns as they grow older.

According to ACMA (2013), the majority of young people have positive experiences online. This correlates with the findings from this study. Overwhelmingly, the young people in this study were consistent in their belief that they did not have any problems and/or did not require assistance with SNS use at home or at school. When asked what type of assistance they may require from home and school, support was the most prominent response.

If they were to seek assistance, young people ranked parents, friends, teachers and then no one. Boys aligned with this ranking; however, girls ranked parents, friends, no one, and teachers lastly.
5.2.8 Assistance wanted

Both adults and young people in this study felt that young people were well informed about the dangers of SNS use. However, young people were more concerned with the immediate dangers or problems whereas the adults were more concerned with long-term issues. This is consistent with research by Burnett and Merchant (2011) who found that young people are trained well enough in the cyber safety basics but not well enough in the social aspects, or “netiquette” of managing their interactions and long term digital artefacts.

When considering issues related to the digital age, adults are no longer perceived as the experts by young people (Flanagin & Metzger, 2008; Pendergast, 2007). This perception has arisen due to the proficient technical capacity of many young people. However, this perception of young person as expert is fraught with danger due to their still developing maturity levels and their ability to consider risk and consequences appropriately (Bahr, 2010).

These perceptions were confirmed in this study where young people had a positive view of their perception that “they know it all”, whereas the adults had a negative perception of young people “knowing it all”.

5.2.9 Assistance needed

This study found that young people were in agreement with the adults in their belief that the monitoring of their sites by their parents was a good protective factor or safety mechanism for them. Parents were in agreement that they needed to be aware of what sites their young people were accessing and who their friends were, as well as having electronic devices in a visible place in the home for ease of monitoring. Young people expressed that having their parents as friends on Facebook took pressure off them to participate in discussions or sharing of information and images they considered to be inappropriate, as they could blame having their parents as friends as their reason for not participating.

These findings correlate with research by Collin et al. (2011) which showed that the increase in the number of friends that a young person had directly
correlated with a decrease in adult supervision. ACMA research (2013) also supports this with the finding of 45% of 8-9-year-olds being supervised online by their parents with only 2% of 16-17-year-olds being supervised online by their parents. Yet 78% of young people aged 14-17 in the ACMA study (2013) turned to their parents for assistance when they had issues online. This suggests that young people with greater levels of adult supervision are more likely to be operating online within a more guided, and hence safer, environment.

The young people and the adults in this study were also in agreement as to another possible strategy for aiding young people in their use of SNSs as they progress through to maturity. Both young people and adults indicated that sharing of stories or scenarios by other young people who had actually experienced difficulties in real life on SNS issues would be of the most benefit to them. They agreed that cyber safety training was of benefit, but felt this needed to be complemented with scenario-based training led by young people. This could cover issues such as cyber bullying, inappropriate photo sharing, and unwanted friend requests, as well as technical support such as how to update safety settings and disable GPS tracking settings.

5.3 Limitations of the study

There were a number of limitations to this study. Firstly, it was limited to one school only. The study was conducted within an independent school where continued enrolment is based upon maintaining high standards of appropriate conduct. This may have influenced how participants responded within the survey and focus groups. Secondly, the study was conducted by a senior leader within the organisation. This may have influenced the responses of some participants and may have also influenced the nature of respondents volunteering to be part of the study.

The study focused upon privileging student voice, which can be open to interpretation. The data provided a representation of student voice which is inevitably subjective, despite the researcher attempting to remain neutral and
objective. In essence, the researcher speaks for the students, thereby positioning their voice as dominant.

The use of thematic analysis does not lend itself to precise planning and may also lead to difficulties for the researcher in determining what and what not to include. Possible bias was considered and addressed by having an overall framework for the research design, then continuously reviewing and amending the plan to ensure possible bias was considered.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the findings of this study provide valuable insight into this field through the privileging of student voice. The following recommendations have been developed from these findings in order to be utilised within the given case study setting; however, these findings may be generalised in similar settings to be utilised across a range of schools.

5.4 Recommendations
This study provided insights into the perceptions of young people regarding their online interactions, particularly with SNSs. Ruddock and Fielding (2006) nominate three key elements for genuine student voice: authenticity, inclusion, and power. Merely eliciting student views does not privilege student voice. There needs to be adequate follow up so that student perceptions and recommendations are responded to, in order for student voice to be genuine. As such, I outline six recommendations arising from this research.

This research study was authentic, as student perceptions from the data in the survey and focus groups were gathered and are responded to and form the basis of the recommendations presented. This research study considered the inclusion of student voice by addressing the silence or absence of student voice as well as including the whole cohort rather than just a select few. This research study also attempted to privilege student voice by recognising the power constructs within the data-collection phase.

As the literature review in Chapter 2 highlighted a focus on the adult perspective, this eliciting of student voice will make a valuable contribution to the
school referenced in this case study through the implementation of a set of recommendations which will then privilege student voice. These recommendations may also be transferable to the wider field. Emerging from the study, the following six recommendations have been framed:

1. The school should continue with the structured cyber safety training and this training should be ongoing and regular for young people both in the primary school setting and the high school setting. The content of this training should also consider topics as requested by the students. As referenced in Chapter 2, there are a plethora of cyber safety training programs that are being implemented nationally and internationally. It is recommended that these programs also be considerate of topics suggested by the young people for whom they are designed.

2. Cyber safety training, for the school and the wider field, should include the safety aspects such as online stranger danger, managing security settings, and cyber bullying strategies, but should also include training in online netiquette in order to develop understanding of appropriate communication and interactions between young people, to understand the differing purpose of differing SNSs, and to maintain a positive digital footprint.

3. School documentation relevant to use of electronic resources should be reviewed and re-written within a positive and proactive frame of reference rather than a fear-based position. These documents should be re-written in order to make them clear to both young people and adults so that they are more accessible to the young people to whom they refer. Including young people as part of this process would assist in making these documents more relevant to them. All schools should consider reviewing their documentation to determine the inclusion or absence of student voice.

4. All schools should continue to provide training and information to parents to assist them in their knowledge and understanding of strategies they can use in the home regarding the online interactions of their children. These
strategies should encourage active supervision and open and positive dialogue between young people and their parents.

5. The school should develop a peer mentoring model as part of its Personal Development Program where young people who have experienced issues relating to online interactions lead discussion sessions with other young people. These sessions would be scenario based, providing young people with real-life situations and practical solutions and strategies for managing similar issues if they were to arise. These scenarios should include cyber bullying, contact from unknown friends, sharing of inappropriate content, managing positive digital footprints, and possible consequences for breaching state and federal communication laws. The scenarios should be developed in consultation with the young people. All schools should consider determining avenues for relevant scenario-based training within their structures that are driven by the needs and choices of young people in order to ensure that training is applicable to the young people for whom it is intended.

6. The school should develop a peer coaching model as part of its Personal Development Program where young people with technical expertise train other young people. The purpose of this is to develop a higher level of technical proficiency, particularly in the areas of privacy and security settings on the various SNSs young people are utilising, as well as to develop a better understanding of the varying purposes of different SNSs in order to engage in SNSs that are most suitable to them. The areas of training should be developed in consultation with the young people. All education providers of young people should consider providing access to technical training related to SNS use, driven by the needs as directed by young people who are experiencing technical difficulties.
5.5 Conclusion

This research has sought to enhance previous research by exploring the experiences of young people and their engagement in SNSs by privileging student voice, specifically to determine the influence electronic communication, in particular social networking, is having on young people.

This research has helped to widen the scope of reference regarding SNS use by establishing both the positive and negative aspects of SNS use as identified by young people and adults, and has acknowledged similarities and differences based upon gender and age. Online communication is not a short-lived phenomenon but rather a popular and legitimate form of communication for young people and adults alike. Learning how to manage oneself in a positive manner, with appropriate netiquette, is a necessary life skill for all people accessing this as a form of communication. This is also true of the need to understand how to create suitable digital artefacts and maintain an appropriate digital footprint.

This research has added to the field as it has helped to establish that young people do want and need assistance in developing appropriate skills and knowledge that will allow them to have positive online experiences. It is important that adults do not assume that young people are experts in this arena simply because they have “grown up digital”. It is important that adults do not assume what assistance young people need, but rather ensure that young people have a voice and legitimate say in what that assistance encompasses. It is important for adults to assist young people in their online lives as they would in their offline lives, since for young people these two are no longer separate. A balance between safety skills and online life skill training is needed to assist young people in their development as safe and productive online citizens.

A change from the fear-based paradigm where the internet is considered to be a bad place, to a balanced view and understanding of both the necessary safety aspects as well as the many positive benefits of online interaction, is needed. This will encourage young people and adults to work together to develop
in our young people the skills necessary to be effective and positive digital citizens. Open and supportive dialogue between adults and young people is essential in encouraging young people to seek assistance when they need it without fear of being banned from their technology use.

Investigating the needs of younger children by privileging their student voice may be a useful direction for further research following this study, as the level of independent access to electronic devices continues to grow and the age levels of children with access to these devices, and hence possibly experiencing difficulties, continues to fall. It may be timely to investigate what issues young children are encountering and what support and assistance would be most beneficial to them.

By eliciting student voice with the aim of privileging it, this research has reinforced that for young people, there is no offline and online living. These two worlds are one for them, and increasingly for adults as well. Continual collaboration, dialogue, support and development, at school and at home, is needed to ensure that young people grow up with developmentally appropriate skills and understandings which allow them to be safe and to manage their interactions in a positive manner.
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Appendix A: Enrolment Contract

ENROLMENT CONTRACT

Student (full name).................................................................................................................................................. ("student")

Year Level on Entry .................................................. Proposed Calendar Year of Entry ..............................................

Parent/ Carer 1 (full name)........................................................................................................................................

Parent/ Carer 2 (full name)...................................................................................................................................... parents/carers 1 and 2 are "you"

Education:
We will educate the student with due care and skill.
You will encourage the student to take full advantage of the curricular and co-curricular opportunities we will provide to further their education, including school camps.
You assure us that you have given us full information about the prior academic development and achievements or special learning support of the student when applying for Enrolment, and this information includes any cognitive or psychological assessment. You will let us know if there is any change within the home or family situation while the student is at the school which may require special consideration of his/her education needs.

We do not guarantee a particular level of achievement for each student. Achievement depends greatly on the individual attributes of the student and the student's willingness to work for their own education. We will act in the best interests of the student and the student body generally. This may mean we do not always act in accordance with your requests.

Our curriculum is delivered in accordance with the philosophy and values of the College as stated on our College website. The College does not offer faith development, and any religious observances conducted within the school relate to Australia's Judea-Christian heritage.

Health;
You assure us that you have given us full information about the health of the student when applying for Enrolment and this information includes any psychological or psychiatric assessment. You will let us know if there is any change in the health or physical abilities of the student while the student is at the school which may require special consideration of his/her education needs.

If something happens to the student in any medical or other emergency and, if it is impossible or impractical to communicate with you, the school may take action and incur expenditure as it considers necessary in the best interests of the student. You must refund to us any expenditure we incur protecting the student.
Communication:

The school will provide information about the student to both natural parents of the student and to any other person signing this enrolment contract. You may request other arrangements relating to the provision of information about the student by giving written notice to us.

To communicate efficiently with parents and as a cost saving measure, we will communicate with parents at the email addresses they provide to us. If you do not provide an email address or if you request in writing that we provide information other than by electronic means, we will communicate by the other means reasonably requested. In this contract 'written' includes communication by email. Where communication is to be with the entire school community or with identifiable sections of the school community, we may communicate through the school website.

We will display on our website the policies and rules with which you and the student are expected to comply.

Fees:

We will determine the fees for each term before the commencement of the term to which the fees apply.

Not later than seven (7) days after the commencement of a term, you must pay tuition fees and levies in advance of the term to which they apply, together with the disbursements billed from the previous term.

If we increase the fees for a term by more than 10% of the fees payable for the preceding term, you may terminate this enrolment contract by notice in writing to us given within fourteen (14) days of the date on which we notify you of the increase.

If you terminate this enrolment contract for any reason other than for:
- our breach; or
- because of an increase in fees within the time limited by this contract,

you must provide us with at least one academic term's notice. If you do not provide us with one academic term's notice, you must nevertheless pay to us one full term's fees. We commit resources on the basis of confirmed enrolments and will most likely suffer loss from early termination. We may have difficulty filling the student's position at short notice.

Should it be necessary to pass overdue fees on to a debt collector, the debt collector's charges and all legal costs will be added to the outstanding account.

If we expel the student, you must pay fees for the remainder of the term during which the student is expelled.

Discipline:

You must comply with policies and rules we adopt from time to time. You must ensure, as far as practicable, that the student complies with those policies and rules. The policies and rules do not form part of this contract.

We may discipline the student for failure to comply with directions given by a person in authority or for failure to comply with the school policies and rules. These failures may occur on or off the school campus. The Principal or acting Principal may expel the student from the school for misconduct considered by the Principal or acting Principal to be serious enough to warrant expulsion.

Where discipline may involve expulsion of the student, the Principal or acting Principal will not expel the student until the allegations of misconduct have been put to the student or the student's representative and the student has been allowed an adequate opportunity to respond.

We may search lodgers, beggars and property of the student where it is reasonable for us to do so, or as part of a general or random search of a place where we conduct our activities.

We may confiscate forbidden or dangerous property in accordance with College policies and rules and where this will support the good of the student or the student body generally.
Indemnity:

You indemnify the school against any loss or damage caused by any failure by you or the student to comply with our rules and policies. You also indemnify us against any loss or damage caused by the wilful disobedience or reckless behaviour of the student.

Excursions:

We will arrange excursions from time to time. We will inform you of intended excursions involving the student. You consent to the student attending excursions with the school. We will obtain your consent to any excursions where the student will be away for one or more nights.

Privacy:

We collect personal information about students at the school, their parents and people who care for them. The primary purpose of collecting the information is to enable us to use the information for all actions connected with educating our students.

You consent to the personal information being used for educational and ancillary purposes including the marketing of the school.

Any medical information will be used discretely and in accordance with the school's Privacy Policy. The Privacy Policy may be viewed on our website. We will provide a hard copy of the Privacy Policy to anyone who requests it.

Contract:

Your obligations under this contract are joint and several.

You authorise us to act on the direction of any one of you.

Termination:

We may terminate this contract if:

- we expel the student from the school;
- we decide at the end of a school year that we do not wish to continue the contract for the following school year for any reason;
- mutual trust and co-operation between us breaks down;
- you are in breach of this contract and you fail to remedy the breach within a reasonable time after notice from us requiring you to do so.

You may terminate this contract at any time, for any reason, with one clear academic term's notice to us in writing. You may also terminate the contract when:

- we are in breach of the contract and we fail to remedy the breach within a reasonable time after written notice from you requiring us to do so; and
- there is an increase in fees of the kind referred to in an earlier clause of this contract and you give us notice as required by the earlier clause.
I/We have read, accept and agree to abide by the conditions of the Enrolment Contract.

Signature: .................................................................  Signature: .................................................................

Parent/Carer 1/ Legal Guardian 1 (please print): Parent/Carer 2/ Legal Guardian 2 (please print):

Address: ......................................................................... Address: .................................................................

Post Code: ................................................................. Post Code: .................................................................

Tel: (H) ........................................................................... Tel: (H) ...........................................................................

0/(lif) ............................................................................... 0(N)

Mobile: ................................................................. Mobile: ...........................................................................

Ezmail: .......................................................................... Email: ...........................................................................

Date: ................................................................................ Date: ...........................................................................

College Principal or Principal's Delegate

Date: ................................................................................

I / we choose to be billed on the following basis: O Annually O Per Term

Account to be rendered to: Name: ......................................................................................

Address: ................................................................................

Office Use

Amount Received:

Enrolment Contract Fee: $  Receipt Number:

Family Levy Fee: $  Receipt Number:

Date: ... ...........
Appendix B: Code of Behaviour

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

The College Motto, 

has been chosen to reflect and influence the thinking and actions of all concerned with the College. It is the basis for the Code of Behaviour.

1. Education for the development of the whole person requires that all associated with the College regard themselves and others with dignity and respect, and that they respect the environment in which they live and work. Students must act at all times in a manner which will not reduce their own reputation or that of the College. This includes avoiding the use of swearing or other offensive language.

2. The opportunity to maximise academic and personal achievement is the right of each student. No student will be permitted to jeopardise this right by inappropriate or disruptive behaviour within or outside the classroom.

3. Students are expected to be courteous and welcoming to each other, to staff, and to all visitors to the College.

4. Pride in appearance is a measure of self esteem and loyalty to the College. Students must wear their full uniform (formal or sporting) and ensure it is kept in good repair. The formal uniform is worn to all College activities unless otherwise advised.

5. Hairstyles must be in keeping with the neat and conservative style of the uniform. This means that hair must be a natural colour and fashion trends or extremes of hair length are not acceptable. Fringes must be above the eyebrows. Boys must trim hair above the collar and the ears; girls must tie hair back from the face with College approved accessories only. Make-up is not permitted and only clear nail polish may be worn.

6. Jewellery is limited for boys and girls to: a watch, and if desired, a religious medal worn out of sight, on a chain, inside the shirt or blouse. Girls may wear one set of plain silver or gold studs on the bottom of the ear lobe only. Tattoos are not acceptable.

7. Students may only use technology for appropriate use in the classroom, grounds or at school related activities. The College accepts no responsibility for any electronic devices, cameras or IT equipment brought to school.

8. It is a legal requirement that students attend school each day and remain within the grounds while at school. Permission to leave the College must be sought from the Head of House (Senior School) or Head of Junior School and the Leave Book signed. In case of illness, parents are requested to ring the school in the morning and provide a note on the student’s return.

9. When a student accepts membership of a sporting team, club or activity, he or she also accepts all the commitments involved in that membership. Not to do so is a mark of disrespect towards the other members concerned.

10. Student involvement in willful damage or theft, in providing or using cigarettes, alcohol and/or illegal drugs, whether on campus or in relation to College activities, will not be tolerated and may result in students being asked to leave the College.

11. It is compulsory for students to attend certain formal functions outside normal College hours during the year. These include the Year 12 Leadership Induction, Founders’ Day and Speech Night.

12. All students are bound by College policies many of which are based on Government Acts and Regulations including, but not confined to: Workplace Health and Safety, Privacy, Anti-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying. These are available for viewing on the College website.

Being enrolled at the College implies acceptance of the above Code of Behaviour. Serious breaches of the code may result in suspension or termination of enrolment.
Appendix C: Student Computer and Network Use Agreement

STUDENT COMPUTER AND NETWORK USE AGREEMENT

STUDENT NAME: ____________________________________________________________

As a student and a user of computer resources made available by the College, I agree to read and obey the following rules.

1. I will always make sure my login details are kept secret and never let anyone else use my College computer account.
2. I will never use anyone else’s College computer account.
3. I take full responsibility for everything done under my computer account.
4. I will only use College computer resources for educational purposes.
5. I will never play games on a College computer unless directed or authorised by the teacher for educational purposes.
6. When a website is blocked by the College’s systems I will not try to find other ways to access it (using school equipment or any other communication device).
7. I will not copy software which is licensed for use at the College and attempt to use it elsewhere.
8. I will not access, download or copy onto the College network any software or media which is stolen or pirated.
9. I will never unplug any cable or device from any College computer equipment or tamper with the operation of any College computer equipment (this includes any manipulation of hardware or software).
10. I will never install software of any kind on College computer equipment.
11. I will not plug my own computing device into the College’s network via a network cable.
12. When using the College’s student wireless network, I will behave responsibly. I understand failure to do so may result in my computer being permanently blocked from this resource.
13. I understand the College’s zero tolerance policy on bullying which applies to harassment or bullying directly person to person, by a third party, or through electronic means. I will not use College ICT equipment or my own to engage in any unlawful purpose or one which does not comply with the College’s anti-bullying policy and/or social networking policy.
14. I agree that College staff may access my account, email and storage areas to ensure the College’s computer resources are being used properly.
15. I will report any damage to College computing equipment or software that I find immediately to a Teacher or IT staff.
16. I will not attempt to access anyone else’s account, nor will I try to gain access to any information on the College’s computer systems for which I do not have authorisation.

Please sign this agreement and return it to your form teacher as soon as possible.

Wording of agreement last revised March 2011.

STUDENT: ____________________________________________________________
SIGNATURE: _____________________________ DATE: ___________________________

PARENT: ________________________________________________________________
SIGNATURE: _____________________________ DATE: ___________________________
Appendix D: Parent Handbook

2012 PARENT HANDBOOK
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2. **DAILY OPERATION**

Information on the following can be found in your son or daughter’s Diary:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Medication at School
- Homework Policy
- Co-Curricular Activities

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**Mobile phones:**

Mobile phones and other electronic devices may be brought to school as some will have educational application. They may be used at break times, but only in classrooms when the teacher requires their use for educational purposes. Use in class time without teacher permission will result in the item being confiscated and locked away until the end of term.

Please remind your son or daughter that privacy laws mean no child can take photographs of others, including friends, and place them on web sites or send to others without permission. Parents would be surprised and concerned at some of the poor choices that students may make in using the photos of others in ways that are negative and even libellous.
Appendix E: Policy on Bullying

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7. POLICY ON BULLYING

7.1 POLICY STATEMENT

The College is committed to implementing procedures that enable students, all staff and parents to attend, work or visit the school in a climate where they are free of harassment, whether sexual physical, emotional or verbal.

In the case of cyber-bullying, this implementation of procedures may extend to beyond school/work-based online behaviour where such behaviour impacts harmfully upon students and staff and becomes known to the College.

The basic beliefs underlying the policy are:
1. Every individual has value in a community
2. Every individual has the right to feel safe from bullying or harassment in all its forms.
3. Every conflict can be resolved. Targets and aggressors both need help to solve conflict
4. Every individual in a community is responsible for the safety of other individuals in that community
5. Every individual in a community is responsible for ensuring that other individuals in that community achieve their personal best in a supportive and non-threatening environment

All staff are required to maintain a preventative, pro-active, and where required a prompt reactive approach in dealing with bullying or suspected bullying of students, staff or visitors.

A major part of preventative and pro-active procedure is for all staff, particularly class teachers and learning assistants, to model appropriate behaviours which show respect to the individual, avoid the use of tabelling, name calling, sarcasm and the use of power to achieve their ends. This applies to dealing with students, staff or visitors.

7.2 DEFINITIONS

"Bullying is repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person and occurs when someone, or a group of people, upset or create a risk to another person's health and safety, or their property, reputation or social acceptance."

Bullying involves a desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + (typically) repetition + an unjust use of power + sense of satisfaction by the aggressor and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the target.

There are three broad categories of bullying:

- Direct physical bullying - e.g. hitting, tripping and pushing or damaging property.
- Direct verbal bullying - e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
- Indirect bullying - This form of bullying is harder to recognize and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
  - lying and spreading rumours
  - playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
  - provoking a food-allergic reaction
  - mimicking
  - encouraging others to socially exclude someone
7. POLICY ON BULLYING

- damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
- cyber-bullying, which involves the use of electronic communication forms such as, and not limited to: email, text messages, chat rooms or social networking sites to humiliate and distress.

If bullying amounts to harm as referred to in the school’s Child Protection Policy then the matter must be dealt with under the Child Protection Policy.

What bullying is not

Bullying is different from ordinary teasing, rough-and-tumble or school yard fights. What makes it different is that the incidents are ongoing, and there is usually an imbalance of size, strength and power between the students involved. In formulating an effective approach to dealing with bullying it is helpful to note what bullying is not.

Bullying is not:
- Mutual conflict where there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for ‘retaliation’ in a one-sided way.

- Social rejection or dislike – It is not feasible to think that every student must like every other student. Refusing to play with a particular child or, for example, not inviting them to a birthday party is not bullying, providing social dislike is not directed towards someone specific and does not involve deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

- Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, including the one off nasty email, or random acts of aggression or intimidation. A single episode of nastiness, physical aggression, verbal abuse or an occasional push or shove is not bullying, neither is nastiness or physical aggression directed towards many different students. The difference is that bullying is, by definition, an action that happens on more than one occasion. However, since schools have a duty of care to provide a student with a safe and supportive school environment, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression must not be ignored or condoned.

Cyber-bullying

Evolving communication technologies allow us to be connected to information sources, family and friends instantly, but they can also be used in a negative way, to intentionally cause hurt to others. They add another dimension to bullying, by making information more public and the source anonymous. The targeted student has no control of the situation and can be prevented from gaining knowledge as to the extent of the audience and who to approach regarding the posting of the information in the public domain. This is a powerful position for the aggressor.

Cyber-bullying or bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as email, (mobile) phone and text messages, instant messaging (SMS), chat rooms, social networking sites, and video internet sites, e.g. YouTube to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group to hurt others. Text messages and emails can be threatening or used to spread nasty rumours, teasing can occur online, and pictures or photos can be distributed or posted online. Cyberbullying may also include defamatory personal Web sites where one person establishes a website which includes unkind comments and photographs about another person. A once only occurrence of the use of electronic communication technologies can have far-reaching effects given the public nature of the communication.
7. POLICY ON BULLYING

Cyber-bullying can be particularly harmful because it can happen anywhere and at any time. Thus young people who are the victims of cyber-bullying have no place where they feel safe. If the bullying is of a serious and threatening nature then obviously it becomes a legal issue and students and parents should seek advice by reporting the matter to the police.

Cyber-bullying is different from other forms of bullying because:

- it is often difficult for adults, who are not as technologically savvy as their children, to detect;
- it is often outside the reach of schools as it happens on home computers or via mobile phones; and
- hurtful messages can be communicated to a very wide audience, around the world, with remarkable speed.

Cyber-bullying is also a particularly cowardly form of bullying because the cyber-bully can effectively hide behind the anonymity of the Internet and is able to reach the target at home. Thus, the home is no longer a refuge for students bullied at school.

7.3 STUDENT-STUDENT BULLYING

All staff should firstly ensure that they are aware of the College Policy on discipline which sees inappropriate behaviour as a learning opportunity to develop more appropriate and effective behaviours, rather than as an occasion for retribution or punishment. Logical consequences of a student's actions should be implemented. The student should be involved in discussing these consequences and deciding on suitable reparation so he/she learns to take responsibility for his or her actions.

The College expects that parents will be involved in dealing with bullying. Bullying can only continue when it is allowed to be secretive activity. The parents of both the targeted student and the aggressor must be made aware that bullying is going on and should be involved in the education and intervention strategies employed to end the bullying.

PREVENTA T/VE STRA TEG/ES

1. School grounds: Vigilance by staff on duty and by Senior student leaders is essential in reducing incidents of bullying. Classrooms: Vigilance by staff during classes is essential to ensure students do not employ bullying tactics face to face or on electronic devices. Staff are to ensure students using computers are on task and only using internet sites relevant to the task at hand. Students should not be accessing personal emails or mobile phones during class, unless required to do so as part of the lesson.

2. Home Room and Personal Development classes are grouped horizontally in Years Prep-6. In Years 7-12 Home Room and Personal Development classes are grouped vertically to help students develop positive relationships across year levels. There are also timetabled Personal Development classes in Years 7-12 which are grouped horizontally to deal with issues specific to developmental stages.

3. The Personal Development programme links to the Virtues Programme and to the College motto, It includes units on conflict resolution, friendship building, self-esteem and dealing with bullying to help students handle such situations and learn to respect each other. A focus of the programme is cyber-bullying as it is facilitated by ever-changing communication technologies.
7. POLICY ON BULLYING

4. Randomised surveys to determine the effectiveness of programmes are conducted and programmes are modified as required.

5. The College policy on bullying is frequently reiterated at whole school, year level and sector assemblies, as well as in Newsletters to parents. The policy statement is also included in Parent and Student Handbooks and stated at Parent Information Meetings.

6. Teachers will develop a class climate where put-downs and other verbal taunts or negative body language have no place.

7. Teachers and all staff must try to develop a whole school climate in which students appreciate their own role in building a positive social environment. This means students are expected to take constructive approaches to the prevention of bullying and reporting incidents to staff to ensure bullying is stopped. They are also made aware of the responsibilities of the bystander which include attempting to stop the bullying through stepping in if safe to do so, and also notifying a member of staff.

8. A trusting teacher-student relationship can offer shyer or "at risk" students a confidante with whom to bring bullying out into the open.

9. The College raises topical issues and provides information to parents and students in handbooks and at information evenings, which are often presented by authorities in the field.

10. Complaints of bullying will be responded to by the teacher. If harassing behaviour does not cease after teacher intervene on and discussion with both sets of parents, Heads of House or Heads of Junior and Senior Schools must pass the situation on to the Principal.

11. Students and parents are required to read and sign the College Student Computer and Network Agreement to indicate their understanding and support of its requirements.

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

Teachers are required to judge the seriousness of bullying through an assessment of the effect on the targeted student, not on the perceived personality traits of the parties involved. All incidents will be followed up, even when name calling or non-physical bullying is involved. This type of bullying can be very serious resulting in extreme cases in the suicide of the target.

Intervention Strategies

The intervention strategy should be consistent with the seriousness of the bullying. All approaches involve an interview situation and must include intervention with both the targeted student and the aggressor. Both sets of parents must be notified.

Bystanders who have not acted to prevent or diminish the occurrence of bullying are regarded as condoning bullying and will also be dealt with appropriately. An instance where a bystander(s) has incited the situation will be treated very seriously and may involve suspension.

First Level Strategy

When dealing with young children it is often difficult and ineffective to focus on the details of the incident or incidents to try and direct allocation of blame. Instead, the effect on the targeted student is described and the aggressor/s is/are invited to contribute ideas and options for improving the targeted student's situation.
7. POLICY ON BULLYING

This approach is usually effective in less serious cases at all year levels

Next Level of Intervention

It is important in more serious cases to build awareness on the part of the aggressor of the seriousness of the incident:

- assist them with perspective taking to understand that they are focusing on the negative aspects of the targeted student rather than on the whole person;
- look at alternative ways of handling annoyances if appropriate;
- work with them to arrange suitable restitution;
- the bottom line, that such behaviour is not acceptable to the College or the community, must be made clear.

The model (2 pages over) indicates the process for dealing with both the targeted student and the aggressor. Each begins with a session to gain an understanding of the situation and in the case of the targeted student, moves through reassurance, discussion of suitable restitution, and preparation for a joint meeting with the person doing the bullying. Alternative ways of reacting to or handling problem situations should be discussed.

When dealing with the aggressor, after restitution has been discussed, the person would need to be prepared for the joint meeting with the targeted student. Both sets of parents should be interviewed to understand the process that has been undergone and to discuss whether there would be the likely need for long term counselling for either party. This will depend on the background, history and the home environment of both students. Head of House (Senior School) or Head of Junior School should be present at such meetings.

The Third Stage- Intervention Process

In more serious cases of sexual harassment, physical assault or ongoing verbal harassment it will be necessary for the matter to be taken to the Head of School or the Principal, to ensure that the student needs to understand the seriousness of the situation and realise that continued enrolment is at risk.

The Head of School or Principal will interview parents and students to find a satisfactory resolution. Where a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved and bullying is likely to continue, suspension or expulsion from the school will follow.

As staff deal with bullying it is a matter of policy that they record all information, including interviews and complete the checklist attached to the end of this policy.

DEALING WITH BULLYING

Assistance in dealing with bullying can be sought from Head of House, Educational Psychologist, Careers and Guidance Counsellor, Senior Staff, or the Principal.

Bullying happens in communities, but it must not be tolerated. Action should be swift so that there is less time for permanent scarring (psychological) or labelling of the students to develop. No incident should wait more than 24 hours to be investigated and dealt with.
7. POLICY ON BULLYING

Students involved in an incidence of bullying must be separated and supervised, never placed in a room together. Such students are not to have contact with each other until the situation has been investigated and diffused.

IF AN INTERVENTION STRATEGY DOES NOT WORK, THE PROBLEM MUST BE PASSED ON FOR FURTHER ACTION BY SENIOR STAFF.

It is absolutely vital that staff follow up with the bullied student to ascertain that intervention has been successful. A passing query of "how is it going" is not sufficient.

VICTIM/SA TION

If students take bullying further by harassment off campus, this will be treated as though it happened at the College. Such behaviour must be reported immediately to the Head of House or Principal.

Should victimisation occur after an intervention strategy, this must be dealt with immediately at Principal level.

Students should be aware that all internet accesses via the College network are logged and if students are found misusing their access to the internet or email by, for example, sending chain letters or abusive letters or accessing offensive material they will be referred for disciplinary action, and access to the network will be denied for a period specified by the Principal or the Principal's nominee.

The College is particularly concerned that the College's email system is not used for bullying or harassing another student. Students found using the College's system or any non-school electronic device, including mobile phones, for cyber-bullying should expect severe disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

7.4 BULLYING OF STAFF/PARENTS/VISITORS

As noted in the Policy Statement above, bullying in all its forms has no place in the College as a work place, or as a learning environment. Staff are expected to treat one another with professionalism and respect and to use procedures of conflict resolution to deal with difficulties with other staff members, parents or visitors.

Conflict Resolution involves talking directly and privately with the person concerned to address issues calmly, and to try to arrive at a 'win win' resolution.

Actions such as:
- spreading gossip,
- making negative remarks about others' personal or professional characteristics,
- speaking with parents or students about other staff in an unprofessional manner,
- using electronic communication to express unhappiness or frustration (which may lead only to further upset and the increased possibility of misunderstanding),

are not acceptable ways to deal with problems. To do so is poor modelling for students, creates a negative and untrustworthy environment, and can escalate even simple situations into unpleasant ones.

Similarly, parents and students are expected to treat staff with respect and to deal with difficulties arising in the course of the student-teacher or parent-teacher relationship in a respectful manner.
7. POLICY ON BULLYING

Further, evolving communication technologies provide increasing opportunities for harassing others and damaging the reputations of others, including staff. It is an offence to do so under law and such matters may be reported to the police. The College Social Networking Policy provides guidelines for the setup and use of social networking sites by individual teams and groups within the College.

The College's Grievance Procedure (detailed in Section 3 of the Staff Handbook and also included in the Collective Enterprise Agreement) sets out procedures for solving problems.
7.5 MODEL OF INTERVIEW PROCESS- TARGETED STUDENT AND AGGRESSOR

Both sets of parents must be advised at the most appropriate point in the process above

(THORSBONE & HYNDMAN, 1994)
### 7. POLICY ON BULLYING

#### 7.6 TEACHER CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

A copy of this pro forma is to be placed in the file of the students involved showing action taken to date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TARGETED STUDENT</th>
<th>AGGRESSOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Class</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Head of House/Tutor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report of bullying received</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview with targeted student</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview with aggressor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advised Head of House and/or Head of School</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Advised the Principal or Assistant Principal if required</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact with targeted student's family phone: letter:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact with aggressor's family (copy in file) phone: letter:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response from targeted student's family</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response from aggressor's family received and filed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intervention strategies implemented as per College policy and documented</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First check with student on outcome</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second check with student and parent on outcome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal or Assistant Principal – no further action necessary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Record made on Behaviour Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19. SOCIAL NETWORKING USE POLICY

19.1 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY ...................................................................................1
   Scope ..................................................................................................................1
   Responsibility .......................................................................................................1
   Point of Contact ...................................................................................................1

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   Guiding Principles ...............................................................................................1
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   Students ...............................................................................................................3
   Related Policies and Documents .........................................................................4
19.1 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to outline guidelines for the setup and use of social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and others) by individual teams and groups within the College for the purpose of dissemination of information, in order to maintain the standards, image and integrity of the College.

Scope

Social networking is a tool of communication, as are letter, emails, text messages etc. Guidelines and policies for the use of social networking sites are the same as those for others tools for communication. The policy applies to all College members intending to use social networking sites, both inside and outside the College.

Responsibility

Principal or delegate

Point of Contact

Network Manager/Head of Admissions & Development

19.2 POLICY

College recognises the value of utilising social networking sites as a means of communicating quickly and effectively with the wider school community. The College has established a Facebook page in order to provide updates on events to the wider school community. This page is monitored regularly by Senior Administration to ensure that the content, including all text and images, provides an appropriate representation of the College.

Faculties, groups and individuals within the College who also wish to set up social networking accounts for the purposes of disseminating information for given events must abide by the College’s policy.

Guiding Principles

- Wherever possible, communication between staff and students should take place through College channels including College email & EduKate. It is not appropriate to text message or send emails etc via personal accounts.

- A professional distance must be maintained with students regardless of the means of communication.

- Staff should never knowingly be in contact with students outside of College sanctioned activities. Staff are not to make contact or accept contact in such circumstances (for example as a 'follower', 'friend' or 'fan' etc).
19. SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

All staff members should be aware of the following in relation to their use of social networking:

- Approval of new accounts – Staff wishing to set up a social networking site on behalf of their faculty, activity, team or group must gain approval from the Principal, or delegate, prior to establishing an account. All material to be shared on this site, including text, images, graphics, video etc, is to be approved by the Head of Admissions & Development prior to it being posted on the site. Any material that is not deemed as being aligned with the College ethos or does not meet standards of presentation will not be approved. The staff member responsible for the set up of the newly approved site is also responsible for monitoring this site to ensure that any posts or comments from ‘followers’ are also appropriate and in keeping with College standards and expectations.

- Private Accounts – staff who have their own private social networking accounts are not to communicate with current students. If a staff member has a private account and they make reference to or identify themselves as a member of College, then they are to ensure that they maintain the same standards in terms of text and imagery as would be expected at the College and in a manner consistent with maintaining the core values of the school. In this instance, they represent the public face of the College and must do so accordingly. Communication with past students must also be conducted in a manner which is in keeping with the College ethos, as would be expected with communication with parents and the wider school community.

- Offensive material- Deliberate attempts to seek, use or transmit material that is illegal or which would be regarded by reasonable persons as offensive is not permitted. Should offensive communication be received by staff members, they should be deleted immediately. The school administration has the final say in deciding what is or is not offensive in the school context, but will be guided by Section 85ZE of the Commonwealth Crimes Act which states that a person shall not knowingly or recklessly: ‘Use telecommunication services supplied by a carrier in such a way as would be regarded by reasonable persons, as being in all circumstances, offensive.’ Use of the Internet in an offensive manner can result in criminal prosecution.

- Employer Liability - the school owns all messages and transmissions conducted through its system and therefore is legally responsible for all messages and transmissions. Staff should be aware that the school’s computer system records all email and internet usage and, although records of usage are not monitored on a systematic basis, nor are random checks undertaken on email and Internet usage by staff, should an issue arise in relation to email and Internet usage, the relevant records would be accessed.

- Technology Harassment – the school complies with all anti-discrimination legislation. Staff should be aware that email harassment and/or technology harassment can occur on any of the grounds of discrimination. The school will not tolerate email and/or Internet harassment. Any issue involving harassment or discrimination could result in disciplinary action.

- Privacy- Staff are required to maintain confidentiality with reference to student and family records and information, as outlined in privacy legislation. Where appropriate, the school will ensure the privacy of staff, student and family records through restricted access to records by relevant staff responsible for maintaining such information. Staff will be made aware through this policy and other appropriate forums e.g. staff meetings, of the need to maintain information security.
19. SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

- Access - Computer systems at the School are protected by password access as well as physical barriers where possible. At no time should third parties be given unsupervised access to School social networking accounts. Access to accounts will be given only on the authorisation of the Principal or his/her delegate where required by law or statutory authority. Staff should ensure that access details are not left in conspicuous places where they could be viewed by third parties, after-hours staff etc.

- Viruses – the school attempts to prevent and/or detect viruses by ensuring suitable virus detection software is maintained on computer networks within the School. External disks will not normally be accepted into School computer systems. If an external disk is used on a School computer, it must be scanned for viruses prior to being used. No shareware type external games disks should be used in a School computer. Files downloaded from the Internet are to be scanned for viruses. If files are in a zipped format, they are to be scanned prior to and after extracting the zipped file. Emails with attached files are also to be scanned for viruses. Please contact the Network Manager if you detect a virus on school equipment.

- Security – Staff should report any security breach, including suspected security weaknesses and software malfunctions, to the schools' system to the Network Manager immediately they become aware of the breach. Staff members should be aware that staff involvement in a security breach is considered serious and may result in an official warning, counselling or termination of a staff member's employment according to the severity of the breach.

Students

Students are able to gain access to the school's approved social networking sites after notification from the relevant manager of that site and understand that the rules and regulations they have agreed to as part of the Computer Use Policy applies here.

- Deliberate attempts to seek, use or post material that is illegal or which would be regarded by reasonable persons as offensive is not permitted. The school administration has the final say in deciding what is or is not offensive in the school context, but will be guided by Section 85ZE of the Commonwealth Crimes Act which states that a person shall not knowingly or recklessly: 'Use telecommunication services supplied by a carrier in such a way as would be regarded by reasonable persons, as being in all circumstances, offensive.' Use of the Internet in an offensive manner can result in criminal prosecution.

- Upon enrolment students and parents sign a Student Computer and Network Use Agreement. As such, students should be aware that all social networking sites established by the College are monitored.

- If students are found misusing their access to the site by, for example, posting abusive comments or sharing offensive material they will be referred for disciplinary action, and access to the site will be denied for a period specified by the Principal or the Principal's nominee.

- The school is particularly concerned that the school's social networking sites are not used for bullying or harassing another student. Students found using the school's system or any non-school electronic device, including mobile phones, for cyberbullying should expect severe disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.
19. SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Related Policies and Documents

Privacy Policy
Anti-harassment Policy
Anti-bullying Policy
Behaviour Management Policy
Assignment and Plagiarism Policy
Student Computer and Network Use Agreement
12. POLICY ON USE OF ELECTRONIC FACILITIES

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12. POLICY ON USE OF ELECTRONIC FACILITIES

12.1 POLICY STATEMENT

This document sets out the security, administration and internal rules which you should observe when communicating electronically or using the I.T. facilities provided by College (the 'School'). You should familiarise yourself with the terms of this Policy in order to minimise potential damage to you, your colleagues, students and the School, which may arise as a result of misuse of email or Internet facilities.

12.2 SCHOOL PROPERTY

The School is the owner of copyright in all email messages created by its employees and contractors in performing their duties.

12.3 MONITORING

From time to time, the contents and usage of email may be examined by the School or by a third party on the School's behalf. This will include electronic communications which are sent to you or by you, both internally and externally.

You should structure your email in recognition of the fact that the School may from time to time have the need to examine its contents.

The School's computer network is a business and educational tool to be used primarily for business or educational purposes. You therefore have a responsibility to use these resources in an appropriate, professional and lawful manner.

All messages on the School's system will be treated as education or business related messages, which may be monitored. Accordingly, you should not expect that any information or document transmitted or stored on the School's computer network will be private.

You should also be aware that the School is able to monitor your use of the Internet, both during school or working hours and outside of those hours. This includes the sites and content that you visit and the length of time you spend using the Internet.

Emails will be archived by the School as it considers appropriate.

12.4 PERSONAL USE

Staff are permitted to use the Internet and email facilities to send and receive personal messages, provided that such use is kept to a minimum and does not interfere with the performance of your work duties.

However, you should bear in mind that any use of the Internet or email for personal purposes is still subject to the same terms and conditions as otherwise described in this Policy.

In the case of shared IT facilities, you are expected to respect the needs of your colleagues and use the Internet and email in a timely and efficient manner.

Excessive or inappropriate use of email or Internet facilities for personal reasons during working hours may lead to disciplinary action.
In addition, use of:

- the technology system; and
- any information, documents, files or other intellectual property on the technology system;

for personal commercial or personal business is prohibited unless the written consent of the Principal is first obtained for that specific purpose and use.

12.5 CONTENT

Email correspondence should be treated in the same way as any other correspondence, such as a letter or a fax. That is, as a permanent written record which may be read by persons other than the addressee and which could result in personal or the School’s liability.

You and/or the School may be liable for what you say in an email message. Email is neither private nor secret. It may be easily copied, forwarded, saved, intercepted, archived and may be subject to discovery in litigation. The audience of an inappropriate comment in an email may be unexpected and extremely widespread.

You should never use the Internet or email for the following purposes:

(a) to abuse, vilify, defame, harass or discriminate (by virtue of sex, race, religion, national origin or other);
(b) to send or receive obscene or pornographic material;
(c) to injure the reputation of the School or in a manner that may cause embarrassment to your employer,
(d) to spam or mass mail or to send or receive chain mail;
(e) to infringe the copyright or other intellectual property rights of another person; or
(f) to perform any other unlawful or inappropriate act.

Email content that may seem harmless to you may in fact be highly offensive to someone else. You should be aware, therefore, that in determining whether an email falls within any of the categories listed above, or is generally inappropriate, the School will consider the response and sensitivities of the recipient of an email rather than the intention of the sender.

If you receive inappropriate material by email, you should delete it immediately and not forward it to anyone else. It would be appropriate for you to discourage the sender from sending further materials of that nature.

Comments that are not appropriate in the workplace or school environment will also be inappropriate when sent by email. Email messages can easily be misconstrued. Accordingly, words and attached documents should be carefully chosen and expressed in a clear, professional manner.

You should be aware that use of the School's computer network in a manner inconsistent with this policy or in any other inappropriate manner, including but not limited to use for the purposes referred to in paragraph 3 of 12.4 above of this policy, will give rise to disciplinary action, including termination of an employee’s employment or contractor’s engagement.
12.6 PRIVACY

In the course of carrying out your duties on behalf of the School, you may have access to, or handle personal information relating to others, including students, colleagues, contractors, parents and suppliers. Email should not be used to disclose personal information of another except in accordance with the School's Privacy Policy or with proper authorisation.

The Privacy Act requires both you and the School to take reasonable steps to protect the personal information that is held from misuse and unauthorised access. We stress therefore, that you take responsibility for the security of your personal computer and not allow it to be used by an unauthorised party, which specifically includes anyone who is not an employee of the School.

You will be assigned a log-in code and you will also select a password to use the School's electronic communications facilities. You should ensure that these details are not disclosed to anyone else. We suggest that you take steps to keep these details secure. For example, you should change your password regularly and ensure that your log-in code and password are not kept in writing close to your working area.

You are encouraged to either lock your screen or log-out when you leave your desk. This will avoid others gaining unauthorised access to your personal information, the personal information of others and confidential information within the School.

In order to comply with the School's obligations under the Privacy Act, you are encouraged to use the blind copy option when sending emails to multiple recipients where disclosure of those persons' email addresses will impinge upon their privacy.

In addition to the above, you should familiarise yourself with the National Privacy Principles ('NPPs') and ensure that your use of email does not breach the Privacy Act or the NPPs. If you require more information on the Privacy Act and how to comply, please contact the College Principal or Director of Business and Finance.

12.7 DISTRIBUTION AND COPYRIGHT

When distributing information over the School's computer network or to third parties outside the School, you must ensure that you and the School have the right to do so, and that you are not violating the intellectual property rights of any third party.

If you are unsure of whether you have sufficient authorisation to distribute the information, please contact the Director of Teaching and Learning.

In particular, copyright law may apply to the information you intend to distribute and must always be observed. The copyright material of third parties (for example, software, database files, documentation, cartoons, articles, graphic files and downloaded information) must not be distributed through email without specific authorisation to do so.

12.8 ENCRYPTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

When email is sent from the School to the network server and then on to the Internet, the email message may become public information. Encryption will reduce the risk of third parties being able to read email and should be used in cases where you feel additional security is required. If you require more information in relation to encrypting messages, you should contact the Network Manager.
12. POLICY ON USE OF ELECTRONIC FACILITIES

As mentioned above, the Internet and email are insecure means of transmitting information. Therefore, items of a highly confidential or sensitive nature should not be sent via email. You should note that there is always a trail and a copy saved somewhere, not necessarily only on the School's network server.

This confidentiality requirement applies even when encryption is used.

Email sent over the Internet may be truncated, scrambled, or sent to the wrong address. There is a possibility that outgoing email sent over the Internet may arrive scrambled or truncated, may be delayed, may not arrive at all, or may be sent to the wrong address. Where outgoing email is important or urgent, you should verify that the recipient has received the email in its entirety.

You must ensure that all emails that are sent from your email address contain the School's standard disclaimer message, which will read as follows:

*The contents of this email are confidential. Any unauthorised use of the contents is expressly prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please advise by telephone (reverse charges) immediately and then delete/destroy the email and any printed copies. Thank you.*

(This message will be set to appear automatically on each outgoing email. Please contact IT if this feature is not working).

There is a risk of false attribution of email. Software is widely available by which email messages may be edited or 'doctored' to reflect an erroneous message or sender name. The recipient may therefore be unaware that he or she is communicating with an impostor. Accordingly, you should maintain a reasonable degree of caution regarding the identity of the sender of incoming email. You should verify the identity of the sender by other means if you have concerns.

Please delete old or unnecessary email messages and archive only those email messages you need to keep. Retention of messages fills up large amounts of storage space on the network server and can slow down performance. You should maintain as few messages as possible in your in-boxes and out-boxes. If there are items in your email which you require at later date, please ensure that these are saved in your network directory so that appropriate backups are made School wide.

12.9 VIRUSES

All external files and attachments must be virus checked using scanning software before they are accessed. The Internet is a potential host for computer viruses. The downloading of infected information from the Internet is potentially fatal to the School computer network.

A document attached to an incoming email may have an embedded virus.

Virus checking is done automatically through the virus protector software installed on the network server. If you are concerned about an email attachment, or believe that it has not been automatically scanned for viruses, you should contact the Network Manager.
12.10  **ABSENCE**

In cases where you are likely to be absent from work for any period of time, you should make arrangements for your emails to be accessible by the School or ensure that an 'out of office reply' is automatically set. This automatic reply will alert those trying to contact you that you are aware from work and that important queries should be directed to a nominated colleague. If you require assistance in installing this feature, please contact the Network Manager.

12.11  **EMAIL COMMUNICATION**

The following should be read as part of this policy and is binding on all College staff.

It is the College's expectation that staff members will treat each other with respect and conduct themselves professionally to encourage a safe, healthy and professionally satisfying workplace. Emerging technologies such as email are part of the communications systems within a workplace, and must be used in accordance with existing College expectations, procedures and policies. The following points clarify the reasons for a specific policy on email use.

- Email communication has the same status as other written materials. Copies can be subpoenaed for use as evidence in litigation.
- Email is quick, handy and can be sent off without proper thought and consideration of the content or the feelings of the intended recipient or those whose names are used, often without permission, in the message.
- Email can be the least effective way of communicating as it leaves much to the personal interpretation of a word, phrase or 'tone' that cannot be checked for intent and meaning by seeing body language, assessing voice tone, pitch, or in some cases, context.
- Potentially negative, angry and hasty emails that flow back and forth interrupt productivity and can cause ongoing conflict between offended parties, wasting energy which should be directed towards the core professional task, undermining collegiality, and can lead to health impairment.
- It is stated clearly in the College's Workplace Agreement that concerns are to be addressed in a face to face manner between the parties concerned as the first step in settling conflict.

Email communication can only be used at the College for the following:

- To share data and information such as setting a meeting time; outlining and agenda; seeking or giving information providing that
- The content cannot emotionally affect another person unless it is pure, positive feedback
- Emails should be short and to the point

Any emotional issues, or those with the potential to be so, must be dealt with face to face or at least by telephone where immediate clarification can be sought and voice tone assessed.
12. POLICY ON USE OF ELECTRONIC FACILITIES

12.12 POLICY UPDATES

This policy may be updated or revised from time to time. The School will not notify you each time the Policy is changed. If you are unsure whether you are reading the most current version, you should contact the College Principal or review the latest School policies on the School's intranet.

12.13 GENERAL

The terms and recommended conduct described in this Policy are not intended to be exhaustive, nor do they anticipate every possible use of the School's email and Internet facilities. You are encouraged to act with caution and take into account the underlying principles intended by this Policy. If you feel unsure of the appropriate action relating to use of email or the Internet, you should contact the Principal.
1. How old are you?
- Younger than 12
- 12 years old
- 13 years old
- 14 years old
- 15 years old
- 16 years old
- Older than 16 years

2. What is your gender?
- Female
- Male

3. What grade are you in?
- Year?
- Years
- Year 9

4. How many years have you attended this school?
- Less than 1 year
- Between 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- All of my schooling

5. Outside of school, there is an adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither disagree nor agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>who really cares about me</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who notices when I am upset or worried</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whom I trust</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who listens when I have something to say</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who expects me to follow the rules</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**At home**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither disagree nor agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I always treat others kindly</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is cool to tease others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been cyber bullied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know of others being cyber bullied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been a bystander to cyber bullying</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have stopped someone from cyber bullying others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is cool to tease others via social networking sites</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use social networking sites to tease others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a computer in my own room</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a mobile phone on at all times</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 7. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither disagree nor agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel close to people at</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am happy to be at this school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel like I am part of this school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel safe in this school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am treated fairly in this school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 8. At my school, there is a teacher or some adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither disagree nor agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>who really cares about me</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who tells me when I do a good job</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who always wants me to do my best</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who listens when I have something to say</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 9. At school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither disagree nor agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I always treat others kindly</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is cool to tease others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been cyber bullied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know of other students being cyber bullied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been a bystander to cyber bullying</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is cool to tease others via social networking sites</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use social networking sites to tease others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I send or post messages that are unkind online</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received unkind messages online</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others have sent unkind messages online about me</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 10. How true are these statements about your friends? I have a friend my own age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all true</th>
<th>A little true</th>
<th>Pretty much true</th>
<th>Very true</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>who really cares about me</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who talks with me about my problems</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who helps me when I am having a hard time</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whom I trust</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 11. My friends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all true</th>
<th>A little true</th>
<th>Pretty much true</th>
<th>Very true</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>get into a lot of trouble</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>try to do what is right</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do well in school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think I get into a lot of trouble</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think I try to do what is right</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think I do well in school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use social networking sites to hassle others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think sending unkind messages and posts online is OK</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think negative messages online is just part of growing up</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. How true do you think these statements are about you personally?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all true</th>
<th>A little true</th>
<th>Pretty much true</th>
<th>Very true</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know where to go for help if I have a problem</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can work out my own problems</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can get along with someone who has a different opinion than me</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel bad when someone gets their feelings hurt</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I need help, I find someone to talk with</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have given someone a hard time on a social networking site</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I stand up for myself</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I stand up for myself without putting others down</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I stand up for others</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would seek help from my friends if I was being hassled on a social networking site</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would seek help from an adult at home if I was being hassled on a social networking site</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would seek help from an adult at school if I was being hassled on a social networking site</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think teasing on a social networking site is just a joke</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think teasing on a social networking site does not really hurt others</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 13. How much time do you spend on social networking sites?

- [ ] More than 3 hours per day
- [ ] Between 1-3 hours per day
- [ ] Less than 1 hour per day
- [ ] Not every day, about 2-3 times per week
- [ ] Less than twice per week
* 14. Which social networking sites do you belong to? List them in order of those you use most.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

* 15. Things that worry me about social networking sites are

2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

* 16. Things that are great about social networking sites are

2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

* 17. Concerns my friends have about social networking sites are

2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

* 18. Have you had any problems on social networking sites?

O Yes
O No

* 19. Where did the problem happen?

O At home
O At school
O At home and school

What was the problem?

...
20. Has a problem that happened on a social networking site at home carried over into your school day?

Q: Yes

If so, what happened?

21. Does your use of social networking sites influence how you perform at school?

Q: Yes

How?

22. What do you think are the biggest benefits of using social networking sites?

23. What do you think are the biggest problems when using social networking sites?

24. List the problems that you have experienced with social networking sites
25. If you had a problem on a social networking site who would you ask for help. Rate in order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First choice</th>
<th>Second choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Last choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. Help I would like at home regarding social networking sites is

27. Help I would like at school regarding social networking sites is

28. Other comments I have about social networking sites

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: Focus Group Themes for Discussion

Project: Social Networking and Students in the Middle Years of Schooling

Time of Focus Group:

Date:

Place:

Focus Group Leader:

Topic: This research seeks to explore the experience of middle years students and their engagement in social networking.

Themes for discussion:

1. Importance of social networking in the lives of young people

2. Benefits of using social networking sites

3. Major issues or concerns coming from students in Years 7-9

4. Current strategies for dealing with issues/concerns

5. Assistance required/needed?

6. Recommendations / what changes would they like to see happen?
Appendix J: Summary of Australian and International Cyber Safety Programs

Australian programs

In recent times, there has been a plethora of cyber safety resources developed and released, yet few have been empirically validated (Dooley et al., 2009). Two programs that have been widely endorsed and implemented include the Cyber programs (DETE, 2015) and Bullying. No Way! (ACMA, 2015) Table 2.1 provides an overview of some of the main online safety programs used in Australian schools. The majority of these programs have a cyber safety focus, thus reinforcing the perception of the fear based paradigm of social networking and online interaction.

Australian Online Safety Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CyberQuoll</td>
<td>Developed by the Australian Government’s Internet Safety Advisory Board, NetAlert which subsequently merged with ACMA</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CyberNetrix</td>
<td>Developed by the Australian Government’s Internet Safety Advisory Board, NetAlert which subsequently merged with ACMA</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CyberSmart</td>
<td>Developed as part of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation’s cyber safety framework. Aims to develop an overall safe school where technology is used in a responsible way. Includes a range of resources and interactive activities for young people, their parents and teachers.</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CyberSmart Detectives</td>
<td>Online game designed to teach internet safety, and supplements the CyberSmart program.</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying. No Way!</td>
<td>Part of the Safe and Supportive School Communities: Finding workable solutions for countering bullying, harassment and violence in schools project. Includes resources on legislation, policies and procedures, teaching materials, support services, and information resources.</td>
<td>Primary and Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ThinkUKnow</td>
<td>Developed by the Australian Federal Police in conjunction with Microsoft and provides interactive safety training to parents, carers and teachers through workshops utilising accredited training.</td>
<td>Primary and Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UsOnline</td>
<td>Promotes digital literacy by teaching young people about safe, responsible use of digital technologies.</td>
<td>Primary and Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>eSmart</strong></td>
<td>Provides a framework for schools to implement whole school culture and behaviour changes relevant to the smart, safe and responsible use of digital technologies and is an initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation.</td>
<td>Primary and Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budd:e</strong></td>
<td>Cyber-security education package comprised of interactive, self-learning modules for primary and secondary students, as well as resources for teachers and parents and aims to assist young people in staying safe and secure online.</td>
<td>Primary and Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Easy Guide to Socialising Online</strong></td>
<td>Easy Guide to Socialising Online is a website that is designed with four main sections for easy access and understanding: Find out about the different social network sites; Overview of features on sites; Cyber safety tips and fact sheets; About the Easy Guide to Socialising Online. This website provides a quick and simple platform for young people and parents to gain an understanding of the various SNSs and tips to utilise them safely.</td>
<td>Primary and Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stay Smart Online</strong></td>
<td>Stay Smart Online website has more of a focus on security and protection whilst being online. It has information relevant to business, adults, young people and schools.</td>
<td>Primary and Secondary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International programs

Whilst there is also a plethora of international program available, The Childnet International – Know IT All program (Childnet International, 2013) and the NetSmartz (NCMEC, 2015) are two international programs that have been researched and shown to have had significant benefits with the cohorts involved (Dooley et al., 2009). Table 2.2 provides an overview of these two programs. Both of these programs have a cyber safety focus, thus reinforcing the perception of the fear based paradigm of social networking and online interaction.

**International Online Safety Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Childnet International – Know IT All | • United Kingdom  
• Integrated within curriculum  
• developed and implemented with support from Microsoft and local law enforcement  
• teacher and parent resources | Secondary         |
| NetSmartz                    | • U.S.A.  
• Developed by the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children  
• Focus being predominantly on cyber safety and cyber bullying  
• resources for parents/guardians, educators, law enforcement officials, teenagers and younger children | Primary and Secondary |
Appendix K: Full Document Review

Enrolment Contract

The enrolment contract was signed by both parents at the time of enrolment on behalf of the young people, see Appendix A. It was written to include expectations of the parents and the young people being enrolled. The form includes basic information e.g. full names of the student and both parents. It was then broken into the following sub-headings: Education, Health, Communication, Fees, Discipline, Indemnity, Excursions, Privacy, Contract, Termination, followed by full detail request for address, contact details etc. Each of these sub-headings then went on to outline what the school would do and what the parent/caregiver and young people would be expected to do.

Whilst this document did not refer to the use of SNSs or other ICT related issues directly, it was a general set of expectations which would, in fact, cover any such issues as these should they occur. This document was written in a generalised manner as it is impossible to foresee all instances that may arise that could warrant termination of the contract.

This document was reviewed by the school’s lawyer to ensure that current contract law had been addressed correctly. As such it was a very formal and quite different from other documentation parents may have previously encountered during the initial phases of enrolment. The school newsletters and yearbooks new families may have seen are very welcoming in tone. The language of this document is clear, firm and ‘black and white’ in its nature and written often as statements rather than in a descriptive manner, thus setting a strict tone to the document and establishing the power relationship from the onset of joining the school.

The use of verbs in the imperative mood throughout the document continually reminded the reader that they were to meet the given expectations or the contract will be terminated, for example:

- You will encourage (Document 1, p: 1).
- You assure us that (Document 1, p: 1).
- You will let us know (Document 1, p: 1).
- You must refund (Document 1, p: 2).
- You must provide us with (Document 1, p: 2).
- You must comply with policies and rules (Document 1, p: 2).
### Enrolment Contract Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This document was a contract and thus legally binding. It immediately raises the issue of power within the document. The majority of the power was with the school in that the school was dictating the contents of the agreement.</td>
<td>The contract did not address specifics but did give a clear understanding that expectations had been set by the school and would be monitored and upheld by the school in a stringent manner. Breach of these expectations, rules and policies would be dealt with.</td>
<td>This document sits over all other documentation and signed by parents on behalf of their children. It outlined expectations of young people and parents as well as possible consequences for breach of expectations, thus perpetuating the lack of participation by young people within the process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When reviewed for the three elements necessary to facilitate student voice, it was clear that there is a lack of evidence of power, inclusion or authenticity across each of these three elements and therefore a total absence of student voice within the Enrolment Contract.
The Code of Behaviour was a one page document that was included in the enrolment package, see Appendix B. It began by stating the school’s motto, which formed the basis of the Code of Behaviour. Twelve (12) statements then follow and were listed numerically down the page. These twelve statements are written in very formal language and form the basis for expectations that are required to be met on a daily basis in order to maintain enrolment at the school. Following on from the twelve statements was a concluding remark, reminding the reader that breach of the Code of Behaviour may result in suspension or termination of the enrolment.

The Code of Behaviour was also written with the use of the imperative modal throughout: will, will not, must.

- Students must act;
- Students are expected to;
- Hair must be;
- will not be tolerated;
- It is compulsory for (Document 2, p: 1).

The Code of Behaviour included one directive related specifically to the use of ICT. This statement was very general, in order to be wide-reaching.

7. Students may only use technology for appropriate use in the classroom, grounds or at school related activities (Document 2, p: 1).
**Code of Behaviour Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This document was written by the senior administrators of the school in order to provide a clear and decisive frame of reference for expectations at the school, hence affirming the position of power with the management of the school and lack of involvement of young people within the development of these rules and the writing of the document itself.</td>
<td>This document suggested a context of ICT use as being something done at home or at school. It did not appear to incorporate the seamless nature of ICT use for young people; rather it appeared to support the notion of a digital divide between home and school.</td>
<td>This document framed the adults as having the power and there was an apparent lack of commitment to any participation of the young people within the writing of this document.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When reviewed for the three elements necessary to facilitate student voice, it was clear that there was a lack of evidence of power, inclusion or authenticity across each of these three elements and therefore a total absence of student voice within the Code of Behaviour.
Student Computer and Network Use Agreement

The Student Computer and Network Use Agreement was signed by both the parent and the young person at the time of enrolment, see Appendix C. It was a one page document that had the young person’s name at the top followed by the statement:

As a student and user of computer resources made available by X School, I agree to read and obey the following rules (Document 3, p: 1).

Sixteen (16) rules were then listed in numerical order down the page, each written as separate statements. Both young person and parent were expected to sign off on this agreement at the bottom of the page.

The way that this document was constructed was succinct and clear. The tone was very matter of fact and written using indicative verbs, such as:

I will always;
I will never;
I will not (Document 3, p: 1).

The document was extensive in covering a raft of foreseeable ICT related issues. The sixteen rules cover everything from basic care and respect for the electronic resources of the school, through to software and copyright issues, use of the equipment for educational purposes only, as well as to inappropriate access of the accounts of other young people, and cyber bullying, specifically:

13. I understand the school’s zero tolerance policy on bullying which applies to harassment or bullying directly person to person, by a third party, or through electronic means. I will not use school ICT equipment or my own to engage in any unlawful purpose or one which does not comply with the school’s anti-bullying policy and/or social networking policy (Document 3, p: 1).
Other documentation provided at the time of enrolment included: Information Collection Notice, Collection Notice, Medical Details Form, Access Details Form, Fee Structure, Acceptable Standards of Attire – School Uniform, Uniform Shop Price list, School Map.

**Student Computer and Network Use Agreement Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The only power that the young people held in terms of the decision making around this document was whether to abide by the rules or not, thereby following (or not) the Code of Behaviour.</td>
<td>Young people were not involved in the writing of this document. Their voice was provided from an adult/carer perspective by implementing rules that will protect them from harm.</td>
<td>This document was essentially a list of rules and obligations by which the young people must abide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When reviewed for the three elements necessary to facilitate student voice, it was clear that there was a lack of evidence of power, inclusion or authenticity across each of these three elements and therefore a total absence of student voice within the Student Computer and Network Use Agreement.
The Parent Handbook, see Appendix D, was a document prepared with the intention of providing parents with a simple guide to the most frequently asked questions. It included information on the following areas: Principal’s Message; About the school; Daily operation; Key staff; Home/school partnership; Teaching and learning; Policy statements; Co-curricular activities; Swimming club; Outside school hours care; Parent lounge; School map.

This document, whilst written in a formal tone, was done so in a way as to provide information and expectations without sounding as strict as the enrolment documents. With indicative verbs used more often than the imperative verbs found in the enrolment documents.

Mobile phones and other electronic devices may be brought to school as some will have educational application (Document 4, p: 12).

Please remind your son or daughter that privacy laws mean no child can take photographs of others, including friends, and place them on web sites or send to others without permission. Parents would be surprised and concerned at some of the poor choices that students may make in using the photos of others in ways that are negative and even libellous (Document 4, p: 12).

Whilst still reinforcing the expectations of the school, the language use in this document set the tone of a partnership of power between the school and the parent over the young person, for the wellbeing of the young person.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In this document mobile phone usage is stated in in the indicative modal in terms of a rule, it again placed the school in the position of power as not complying with school rules could result in serious consequences.</td>
<td>This document was written from an adult/protector perspective, providing a warning against potential harm.</td>
<td>In this document parents were told when the young people ‘may’ use their mobile phone and for what purposes it may be used. The parent was also reminded of their obligation to monitor and supervise their child in supporting appropriate use of mobile phones.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When reviewed for the three elements necessary to facilitate student voice, it was clear that there was a lack of evidence of power, inclusion or authenticity across each of these three elements and therefore a total absence of student voice within the Parent Handbook.
**Bullying Policy**

The Bullying Policy of the school was expanded in recent years to include bullying conducted via electronic means, see Appendix E. The policy included the definitions of bullying as outlined by the school, along with three categories of bullying – direct physical; direct verbal; and indirect bullying. Each of these three categories then included some examples of what this might look like. The indirect bullying category includes the examples of ‘damaging someone’s social reputation and social acceptance; cyber-bullying, which involved the use of email, text messages or chat rooms to humiliate and distress (Document 5, p: 7.1). The policy also included what bullying is not and concludes with how it would be dealt with at the school.

One paragraph was devoted to bullying via electronic methods in particular.

Cyber-bullying or e-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as email, (mobile) phone and text messages, instant messaging (SMS), chat rooms, social networking sites, and video internet sites, e.g. YouTube. It can be particularly harmful as it can happen anywhere and at any time. Thus young people who are the victims of cyber-bullying have no place where they feel safe. If the bullying is of a serious and threatening nature then obviously it becomes a legal issue and students and parents should seek advice by reporting the matter to the police.

If bullying amounts to harm as referred to in the school’s Child Protection Policy the matter must be dealt with under the Child Protection Policy (Document 5, p: 7.2).

The direct and definitive nature of the writing established the writer, the school, as the authority and hence attributed the position of power to the school. The young person was therefore left to take the position of complying with the policy or being seen as a perpetrator or victim of bullying.
Bullying Policy Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The use of SNSs was included within the</td>
<td>This document was written from the perspective of the adult/caregiver with the aim of reputation protection and harm minimisation. It was reflective of the fear-based paradigm. It did not discuss any of the positive aspects of the use of SNSs and it was written by adults for students to follow.</td>
<td>This document stated how the school would manage situations and also suggested how parents should act in given circumstances, informing the school and also informing the police where necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying Policy. An expectation of appropriate use of SNSs was clearly stated and thus formed part of the school rules. These school rules must be adhered to in order to remain at the school, thus asserting the school as the holder of the power within the relationship.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When reviewed for the three elements necessary to facilitate student voice, it was clear that there was a lack of evidence of power, inclusion or authenticity across each of these three elements and therefore a total absence of student voice within the Bullying Policy.
Social Networking Use Policy

The Social Networking Use Policy, Appendix F, was introduced in 2011 to the school as an additional policy to supplement the already held documents of: Privacy Policy; Anti-harassment Policy; Anti-bullying Policy; Behaviour Management Policy; Assignment and Plagiarism Policy; Student Computer and Network Use Agreement; Policy on Use of Electronic Facilities. It was decided to add this as an extra policy due to the increasing number of arising issues related to the use of social networking sites by students and staff.

Purpose of the policy:

The purpose of this policy is to outline guidelines for the setup and use of social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and others) by individual teams and groups within the School for the purpose of dissemination of information, in order to maintain the standards, image and integrity of the School (Document 6, p: 19.1).

This policy was established as there had been several instances where groups within the school were setting up SNS pages to share information, for example a performing arts group discussing rehearsals, fund raising and other ideas. Whilst the school felt it was a great way to share information, the senior administrators were concerned about the loss of control over branding and public image as well as the possibility that inappropriate content may be displayed. Being a fully independent school, reputation was of paramount concern, hence the need for an additional policy.

The school recognises the value of utilising social networking sites as a means of communicating quickly and effectively with the wider school community. The school has established a Facebook page in order to provide updates on events to the wider school community. This page is monitored regularly by Senior Administration to ensure that the content, including all text and images, provides an appropriate representation of the school.
Faculties, groups and individuals within the school who also wish to set up social networking accounts for the purposes of disseminating information for given events must abide by the school’s policy (Document 6, p: 19.1).

This policy differed from some of the other documentation in that it was written in a more positive tone. The policy began by acknowledging the use of SNSs as a useful and effective means of communicating. It was set out under sub-headings of ‘guiding principles’ rather than the previously seen numerical list of instructions. The people to whom this policy applied are referred to as ‘staff’ or ‘students’ rather than ‘I will, I must, You will, You must’ as per the Code of Behaviour and the Enrolment Contract documents. Whilst the expectations of staff and young people were made explicitly clear in this document, they were done so in a way as to reduce the perception of an ‘us versus them’ power play to more of a shared responsibility than the previous documents. However, it should still be noted that the document was written in such a way as to make it clearly understood that the school, via the senior administration team, have the ultimate power within these circumstances.

Wherever possible, communication between staff and students should...

Staff should never knowingly be in contact with students outside.... (Document 6, p: 19.1).

Modals such as ‘must’ were used in the document, however, were found in lesser frequency and were couched within a more descriptive and explanatory sentence structure than the Code of Behaviour or Enrolment Contract. Rather than ‘You will...’ statements such as:

A professional distance must be maintained with students regardless of the means of communication (Document 6, p: 19.1)

were used. Whilst imperative verbs were still in use in this document, the style of writing has changed from being framed as a list of directives to an explanation and description of the necessary guidelines and rules. This still set the writer in the position of power as they had these rules to fall back upon if needing to follow up with a concern, however, it did reposition the reader in a slightly more positive position in being more of a partner to the policy than a victim of it.
### Social Networking Use Policy Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This document placed the school in the position of power as it is a policy that must be adhered to. The reference to criminal prosecution within the document also aligned the power of the school with the police.</td>
<td>This document was written by the senior administrators of the school primarily for the staff to follow from the perspective of the employer needing to protect its reputation as well as legal obligations.</td>
<td>This document outlined clearly what is and what is not acceptable in terms of electronic communication as well as the potential consequences for inappropriate communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When reviewed for the three elements necessary to facilitate student voice, it was clear that there was a lack of evidence of power, inclusion or authenticity across each of these three elements and therefore a total absence of student voice within the Social Networking Use Policy.
Use of Electronic Facilities Policy

The Policy on Use of Electronic Facilities, see appendix G, was an older policy of the school and is currently being updated to reflect changes in technology. This policy was written for staff and deals mainly with the correct use of email and how the school would monitor email and internet usage. It also covered issues of privacy and sharing of information as well as virus protection for the school’s systems. This policy is now lacking in that it did not refer to communication via other electronic means such as social networking sites, web pages, pod casts, blogs and the many other forms of e-communication currently being carried out by staff and young people.

This document was written from the paradigm of control. The policy began with a statement:

This document sets out the security, administration and internal rules which you should observe when communicating electronically or using the I.T. facilities of the school. You should familiarise yourself with the terms of this policy in order to minimise potential damage to you, your colleagues, students and the school, which may arise as a result of misuse or email or internet facilities (Document 7, p: 12.1).

Indicative modals such as:

you should never (Document 7, p: 12.2)

you should be aware (Document 7, p: 12.2)

make it clear that the expectations outlined were to be met by the reader, in this case the staff member, thus placing the position of power clearly with the writer, in this case the employer. Phrases drawing on a legal lexicon such as:

minimise potential damage (Document 7, p: 12.1)

may be examined (Document 7, p: 12.1)

professional and lawful manner (Document 7, p: 12.1)

disciplinary action (Document 7, p: 12.1)

School’s liability (Document 7, p: 12.2)

termination of employment (Document 7, p: 12.2)

proper authorisation (Document 7, p: 12.2).

were found throughout the document and work to reinforce the power of the writer.
**Use of Electronic Facilities Policy Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As this was a policy, and hence a directive from senior administrators to all staff, the power is held by the school over the staff members.</td>
<td>This document was written to address issues relating to appropriate communication via email and is now due to be updated.</td>
<td>This document addressed what is considered appropriate for staff in terms of email communication and outlined how this would be monitored; acceptable personal use and acceptable content; copyright; privacy; and virus protection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When reviewed for the three elements necessary to facilitate student voice, it was clear that there was a lack of evidence of power, inclusion or authenticity across each of these three elements and therefore a total absence of student voice within the Use of Electronic Facilities Policy.