Using WhatsApp and Other Messaging/ Social Media Platforms Positively as a School Parent

WhatsApp, and similar messaging platforms can be a great way for parents to stay connected, share reminders, and support one another. To help keep these spaces positive and respectful for everyone, it's important to be mindful of how we use them.

This Parent Code of Conduct ***applies*** to all parents and guardians who participate in WhatsApp groups or other social media platforms associated with the school, whether created by the school, class representatives, or parents themselves. It outlines the expectations for parents and guardians in order to promote a respectful, supportive, and safe school environment for all students, staff, and families.

1. Expectations for Appropriate Use

Parents are expected to use WhatsApp groups in a manner that:

1.1 Communicate Respectfully

- If discussion about staff, students, or other parents ***is necessary***, it must be handled with respect, appropriateness, and constructive intent. A good rule of thumb is to assume that the person about which you are speaking will learn what you have written.
- Communicate positively with other parents using appropriate language in all school-related communication, including digital platforms.
- Ensure school-related information shared is accurate and has been confirmed by the office, official staff communication (i.e. through email/Seesaw), and/or administration

1.2 Support a Safe and Positive Environment

- model kindness, patience, and cooperation.
- Encourage children to follow school expectations and treat others with respect.
- Reflect OLM School's values and beliefs

1.3 Use Appropriate Channels for All Concerns

- Raise questions, issues, or complaints directly with the school using the proper procedures.
- Avoid discussing concerns publicly or through informal channels such as social media or group chats.

1.4 Protect Privacy and Dignity of Students, Families, and Staff

- Avoid sharing information about other students or families. Respect every child's privacy—no comments about their behaviour or performance.
- Maintain confidentiality
- Do not post photos or videos of children other than your own without consent.

1.5 Use WhatsApp and other digital platforms responsibly and for appropriate school-related communication.

1.6 Engage Positively in School Life

- Support school events, policies, and initiatives.
- Ask simple questions (e.g., homework, times, events)
- Promote kindness and respect at all times
- Work collaboratively with staff to support your child's learning and wellbeing.

2. <u>What to Avoid in Parent WhatsApp Groups</u>

The following are examples of things that can sometimes cause misunderstandings or hurt feelings, and are best avoided in parent group chats.

2.1 Sharing Concerns About Staff or Students

If issues arise, it's always best to speak directly with the school rather than discussing concerns in a separate group. This helps ensure problems are handled fairly and accurately.

2.2 Passing Along Unverified Information

Sometimes messages spread quickly online. Before sharing something, it's helpful to check that the information is accurate so we don't accidentally cause worry or confusion. Do not share rumours, unverified information, or sensitive details about staff, students, or families.

2.3 Making Comments That Could Hurt Someone's Reputation

We all want to protect our community. Avoiding negative or critical comments about individuals helps keep the group supportive and welcoming.

2.4 Talking About Other Children

To respect everyone's privacy, it's best not to discuss another child's behavior or progress in a chat.

2.5 Sharing Photos or Videos Without Permission

Photos can be lovely to share, but always make sure you have consent from other parents before posting images that include their children.

2.6 Posting Advertising or Political Messages

To keep the group focused and comfortable for everyone, it’s best to avoid commercial promotions or political content.

2.7 Using Strong or Upsetting Language

We all have moments of frustration, but keeping messages calm and respectful helps maintain a positive space for all parents.

🤝 Let’s Work Together

By using WhatsApp and all social media platforms responsibly, we help create a warm, safe, and respectful community for all families.