

# Teachers, technology and the law



Schools require specific policy and procedures to ensure all members of their community have safe online experiences online.

## **Enhancing Online Safety for Children Act 2015**

The legislation provides a set of tools and powers to protect children and facilitate the removal of harmful cyberbullying material from large social media sites. While the Office has new powers, the duty of care obligations for schools remain unchanged.

### **Federal laws**

*The Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995* makes it a criminal offence to misuse telecommunication services.

### **State laws**

- \* Assault
- \* Defamation
- \* Vilification
- \* Stalking and harassment.

### **School and teacher protection**

Social media policies should define and set out how your organisation will approach and manage social media. Clearly identify what constitutes acceptable and non-acceptable use of social media.

### **Professional standards**

Contact/communication with students by teachers should be conducted on a school endorsed platform. It is important to protect yourself against accusation and inaccurate recollections.

- \* Be aware of your legal and ethical obligations before posting any student details, including their name, photos, video and work.
- \* Teachers should establish separate personal and professional social networking accounts. Set privacy settings to the highest level.
- \* Do not 'friend', 'follow', 'game with' or subscribe to posts from students or parents.

### **Electronic communications**

- \* Seek advice and consider your options before replying to a confrontational, abusive or defamatory email or post.
- \* Avoid writing about 3rd parties using emotionally charged words or your personal opinion.
- \* Remember – all correspondence is discoverable.