



MEDIA POLICY 2021

Signed By:	James Herbert  _____ Waikato Waldorf School Board, Presiding Member
Date Ratified:	Term 3 12 August 2021
Next Review Date:	Term 3 August 2023
Review Cycle:	Every three years (maximum)

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Reinforce the school's position on media use, access and exposure for its students and community.
- Outline the school's approach towards using media to promote the school and its activities across a range of media and communication devices.
- Principles for positive and respectful media-mediated communication within the Rudolf Steiner community

Waikato Waldorf School

...developing the whole child



Policy

- **Special Character: Media Access, Use or Exposure:**

When parents opt to enrol their children at Waikato Waldorf School they agree to abide by the school's position on limiting and regulating media use, access and exposure at home (as part of parental agreement to preserve special character of the school). By supporting the school on this matter the community supports what the school is striving to achieve educationally - To maintain a "stimulating environment for expressive, imaginative, and intellectual exploration" (School Charter). Growing and preserving the culture of the school is simpler when minds are not populated by images derived from (adult) popular culture.

Waikato Waldorf School is dedicated to nurturing each child's capacity for creative imagination, independent thinking, and positive relationships. The school's efforts to foster students' healthy emotional development and meaningful relationships with their environment can be undermined by encounters with media that separate children from authentic experience and promote a distorted, often developmentally inappropriate and consumerist view of the world. The school thus adheres to the belief that media use, access and exposure disrupts the child's formative encounter with the world thus supplanting direct experiences that form an essential part of our educational philosophy.

These statements constitute our best determination of what we believe is consistent and supportive with what the school is aiming to accomplish educationally as a special character school. We understand and appreciate that for some these conditions will require an adjustment to current practices as it goes against the grain of the media rich culture that most people live in.

We ask all members of the community to consider the following questions when considering access to, or engagement with media content:

- How does exposure to media influence or support what we wish to cultivate in our children?
- Where does the use of these media coincide with our pedagogic and social development goals?
- Do these media support or co-opt the freedom of expression and imagination of our children?
- How does media use by a few influence the many?
- Whose needs are being addressed when we expose our children to media?

Waikato Waldorf School

... *developing the whole child*



With regard to media access, use and exposure:

Waikato Waldorf School is a campus defined by only the modest presence of technology for communication, administration and pedagogical purposes (e.g. resources).

Note that the presence and use of multi-media devices (e.g. smart phones, tablets, etc.) is not encouraged on campus during teaching hours.

- **School Media Channels**

Waikato Waldorf communicates to both its current *adult* community and to prospective parents of students via a range of media, including websites, social-media pages and printed materials that are distributed both electronically and by hand. A corresponding set of procedures, outlines how Waikato Waldorf Schools' identity and image remains cohesive, intentional and strategic

- **Media-Mediated Communication Within the Rudolf Steiner Community**

Increased connectivity and social networking within the school community is often useful, practical and convenient. However, where teacher-parent communication is involved we suggest that the community exercise self-regulation and assess the 'need' or 'urgency' of a message before disturbing a member of staff outside school hours. A set of procedures exists that outline the school's expectations around teacher and parent communication.

In addition, the community is encouraged to always exercise the utmost caution when participating in any form of social media or any online communication directly associated with Waikato Waldorf School.

Participants in online interaction must remember that posts are often *public* and reflect on the entire community. *Please pause before you post.*