



# **Staff Computer, Internet, Email and Social Media Policy**

***Version 1:0***

**Date Released: April 2022**

**Date to be reviewed: April 2023**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

## **Use of School Computer Equipment**

To control the use of The School's computer equipment and reduce the risk of contamination, the following will apply:

- The introduction of new software must first be checked and authorised by a senior member of The School before general use will be permitted.
- Only authorised staff should have access to The School's staff computer equipment or the Administrator login for the pupil laptops.
- Only authorised software may be used on any of The School's computer equipment. Only software that is used for business I education applications may be used.
- No software may be brought on to or taken from The School's premises without prior authorisation.
- Unauthorised access to the computers will result in disciplinary action. Unauthorised copying and/or removal will result in disciplinary action. Such actions could lead to dismissal.

The school reserves the right to carry out regular monitoring of Employee's use of all computer equipment including the e-mail system, particularly in cases where it is suspected that some form of system or equipment abuse may be happening or where other unacceptable practices are taking place.

## **Internet**

The Internet is an important communication facility providing contact with professional and academic sources throughout the world. Where appropriate and duly authorised, staff are encouraged to make use of the Internet as part of their official professional activities. Attention must be paid to ensuring that published information has relevance to normal professional activities before material is released in The School's name. Where personal views are expressed, a disclaimer stating that this is the case should be clearly added to all correspondence.

- Intellectual Property Rights and Copyright must not be compromised or infringed when publishing on the Internet.
- The availability and variety of information on the Internet has meant that it can be used to obtain material reasonably considered to be offensive. The use of the Internet to access and/or distribute any kind of offensive material or non-related employment issues will leave you liable to disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

## **E-Mail Policy**

### **Policy**

- The use of the e-mail system is encouraged, as its appropriate use improves efficiency. Used correctly, it is a facility that is of great assistance to employees. Its inappropriate use, however, causes many problems, including distractions, time wasting and legal claims. This policy sets out The School's position on the correct use of the e-mail system, both on computers and voicemail on telephones.

### **Procedure**

#### **Authorised Use**

- The e-mail system is available for communication on matters directly concerned with the legitimate business of The School. If you use the e-mail system you should pay particular attention to the following points:
  - All e-mails must comply with Channels and Choices communication standards.
  - E-mail messages and copies should only be sent to those for whom they are particularly relevant.
  - E-mail should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face communication. E-mails, which are rude or abusive, must not be sent. Hasty messages, sent without proper consideration, can upset and cause concern or misunderstandings.
  - If an e-mail is confidential, you must ensure that the necessary steps are taken to protect confidentiality of all parties as The School will be liable for infringing copyright or any defamatory information circulated either within The School or to external users of the system.
  - Where communications contain pupil information, such correspondence will be considered to be "sensitive personal data". All such communication should refer to the pupil via initials only (or other such pupil number) and not by name or in such a way as to readily identify the pupil.
  - Offers or contracts transmitted via e-mail are as legally binding on The School as those sent on paper.
- Any failure on your part to observe these guidelines could result in disciplinary action, including summary dismissal.

#### **Unauthorised Use**

- The school will not tolerate the use of the e-mail system for unofficial or inappropriate purposes, including:
  - A message that could constitute bullying, harassment, or other detriment,

- personal use, e.g. social invitations, personal messages, jokes, cartoons, chain letters or other private matters,
  - on-line gambling,
  - accessing or transmitting pornography,
  - transmitting copyright information and/or any software available to the user,
  - posting confidential information about other employees, The School or its stakeholders or suppliers,
- any unauthorised or inappropriate use of e-mail may result in disciplinary action being taken against you, which could include summary dismissal.

### **Implementation of the Policy**

- Regular monitoring of e-mail messages will be carried out on a random basis. Hard copies of e-mail messages will be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings.
- Unknown files or messages should never be introduced into the system without first being checked for viruses.
- Training in the use of e-mail will be run on an in-house basis on request. Managers are required to ensure that all new employees are instructed in the use of the e-mail system.
- E-mail users may be issued with a confidential password which will be changed at irregular intervals. Access to the e-mail system using another employee's password without prior authorisation is likely to result in disciplinary action.
- Critical information must not be stored solely within the e-mail system. Hard copies must be retained and it is the responsibility of the individual issuing the e-mail to ensure the hard copy is filed. If necessary, documents must be password protected.
- Users are reminded that the mere deletion of a message or file may not fully eliminate it from the system.
- Users are required to be familiar with the requirements of the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** to ensure that they operate in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Please ask your Line Manager for details.
- Users should be aware that The School reserves the right to access individual employee's e-mail accounts in cases where, in The School's view, there is a legitimate business need to do so.
- If you have cause for complaint as a result of e-mail communications you should raise the matter, in writing, initially with your manager. If appropriate, the complaint

can then be progressed through The School's Grievance Procedure.

## **Social Media Policy**

### **Policy**

- The school recognises that social media and networking sites have become a regular part of everyday life for many people. However care must be taken not to breach our confidentiality policy, disseminate any information about yourself, your colleagues, any of The School's supplier's, the wider Channels and Choices organisation or clients / stakeholders, or even a member of the public.
- Social media is a rapidly developing area. For the purposes of this policy social media will be deemed to include any data that can be transmitted, uploaded, downloaded or received and exchanged through any means. This data is not limited to print, text, email, photo, video, any electronic file format.
- This policy aims to provide guidelines as to what The School expects from you as an employee. This includes your actions whilst at work or at any other time, using The School's equipment, or other equipment you may use.

### **Personal use**

- If you have a personal profile on a social media site you should ensure that others may not access content, media or any other data that a) you would not be happy to disclose or b) which would or could reasonably undermine your position as a professional and trusted employee of The School.
- It is imperative that you ensure that the normal boundaries kept between yourself and your pupils during school time are maintained outside working hours and that you protect your privacy. To this end, it is not permitted for pupils to be added to personal contacts on any social networking sites. If you currently have a student in any "friends" group, you will need to delete them off your list with immediate effect.

### **Employees must not:**

- Publicly identify themselves as working for The School, make a reference to The School or provide information from which others can ascertain the name or other identity in relation to The School.
- Act in any way, by their actions or failure to prevent the actions of others that may be detrimental to The School or The School's reputation or brings The School into disrepute.
- Use a Channels and Choices email in registering or setting up any personal social media site.
- Allow any use or interaction on social media sites or via blogging, tweets or other means, damage working relationships between current or past employees, suppliers, partners, clients or pupils.

- Make any derogatory, offensive, discriminatory or defamatory comments about current or past employees, suppliers, partners, stakeholders or pupils.
  - Make any comments about The School's past or present employees that could constitute unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying. Further details regarding unacceptable behaviour is contained within The School's Equal Opportunity policy.
  - Disclose any trade secrets or confidential information in relation to The School's activities. Further details are found in The School's Confidentiality agreements (see contracts).
  - Disclose any personal information of any past or present employees, suppliers, partners, clients or stakeholders. Any disclosure would be a direct breach of the Data Protection Legislation.
- Any official account set up on The School's behalf must have prior authorisation by senior management and may only be used by authorised staff to post information online. As well as the above general conditions being applicable, all information posted must comply with The School's policies on confidentiality and intellectual property, copyright laws and not identify third parties without their express consent.
  - Employees who contravene these rules will be subject to The School's disciplinary rules and procedures and be liable to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
  - If in doubt seek advice from your line manager.

### **Disclosure of Information**

- You must not directly or indirectly disclose to any unauthorised person any knowledge or information relating to school pupils, The School's business, or the business of any of The School's stakeholders without first obtaining permission in writing from The School.
- You must not use for your own purposes or profit or for any purposes other than those of The School, any information which you may acquire in relation to The School's and/or its stakeholders' business.
- The rules concerning disclosure of information apply both during and after your employment with The School.
- Unauthorised access to Channels and Choices information, whether computerised or manual, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you. In the case of computerised information "hacking" will be considered a dismissible offence.
- At the time of leaving The School, for whatever reason, you are required to return all products; documentation or any other information related to The School and, if requested, confirm compliance of the same in writing.
- In addition, The school reserves the right to request such information to be

returned during any period of notice should it deem it possible that there could be a risk, intentional or otherwise, of Channels and Choices or commercially sensitive information being made available to other parties.