

# Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy

## E-mail Policy

At Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy we understand that e-mail is now an essential means of communication for staff in our schools and increasingly for pupils and homes. Directed use of regulated e-mail in schools can bring significant educational benefits, increasing the ease of communication within the school community and facilitating local and international school projects. Because of this the use of freely available, unregulated email within our school is not appropriate and therefore discouraged.

However, e-mail can provide a means of access to a pupil that bypasses the traditional school physical boundaries.

In the school context, e-mail is not considered private and we, like most schools, reserve the right to monitor e-mail. There is a balance to be achieved between monitoring to maintain the safety of pupils and the preservation of human rights, both of which are covered by recent legislation.

The use of personal e-mail addresses, such as Hotmail, is discouraged by staff but we understand that this may be the main route of communication for professional dialogue for staff supporting other schools. We do however encourage staff to use the school's e-mail account for professional purposes.

Email must not be used by staff to transfer information about pupils - unless it is within an encrypted, secured email system. This is mainly done by office staff using the secure S2S website for data transfer and uploaded to the encrypted school area on the SSET website by the Head teacher or Computing SL.

To ensure the safety of the children and staff and the position and integrity of the school and its network -

- 🖥️ We do not publish personal e-mail addresses of pupils or staff on the school website. We use a school e-mail address for communication with the wider public.
- 🖥️ If one of our staff or pupils receives an e-mail that we consider is particularly disturbing or breaks the law we contact the Police.
- 🖥️ Accounts are managed effectively, with up to date account details of users maintained by the ICT technician and Computing SL
- 🖥️ Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the relevant Authority and Police.
- 🖥️ We use the Essex anti-virus product and additional email spam, phishing software provided by our LA.

At Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy the safety and education of our children is paramount so:

- 🖥️ We use communication tools within the 'closed' Learning Platform with the pupils for communication with staff and other pupils at an age appropriate level. All this is audited.
- 🖥️ We do not use email that identifies the name and school of the pupil.
- 🖥️ Pupils are introduced to, and use e-mail as part of the Computing scheme of work.
- 🖥️ Pupils sign the school Agreement Form to say they have read and understood the e-safety rules, including e-mail and we explain how any inappropriate use will be dealt with.

These points are also applicable to staff.

- 📧 Staff are encouraged to use the school e-mail systems for professional purposes, but access to personal accounts is available.
- 📧 We have a secure email system which is used for some transfers of information we consider to be sensitive (some protect-level data). These are the S2S website and SSET website.:
- 📧 We never use email to transfer staff or pupil level data. We use secure, LA / DCSF approved systems. These include: S2S (for school to school transfer).
- 📧 Staff know that e-mail sent to an external organisation must be written carefully, (and may require authorisation), in the same way as a letter written on school headed paper. That it should follow the school 'house-style':
  - 📧 the sending of multiple or large attachments should be limited
  - 📧 personal information must not be sent as attachments on open email. A secure method of encrypted transfer should always be used.
  - 📧 the sending of chain letters is not permitted;
  - 📧 embedding adverts is not allowed;
- 📧 All staff sign our School Agreement Form to say they have read and understood the e-safety rules, including e-mail and we explain how any inappropriate use will be dealt with.

Education and e-safety is an important part of every child's ICT learning journey to ensure that they are fully informed about staying safe and protecting themselves.

- 📧 Pupils are taught about the safety and 'netiquette' of using e-mail both in school and more generally (for example personal accounts set-up at home) i.e.

-  not to give out their e-mail address unless it is part of a school managed project or someone they know and trust and is approved by their teacher or parent/carer;
-  that an e-mail is a form of publishing where the message should be clear, short and concise;
-  that any e-mail sent to an external organisation should be written carefully and authorized before sending, in the same way as a letter written on school headed paper;
-  they must not reveal private details of themselves or others in e-mail, such as address, telephone number, etc;
-  to 'Stop and Think Before They Click' and not open attachments unless sure the source is safe;
-  that they must immediately tell a teacher / responsible adult if they receive an e-mail which makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive or bullying in nature;
-  not to respond to malicious or threatening messages;
-  not to delete malicious or threatening e-mails, but to keep them as evidence of bullying;
-  not to arrange to meet anyone they meet through e-mail without having discussed with an adult and taking a responsible adult with them;
-  that forwarding 'chain' e-mail letters is not permitted.

Children are also taught the appropriate behaviours to adopt if they receive an inappropriate or offensive email, such as closing it and seeking advice from a teacher or responsible adult, but never replying to it. This will allow the teacher or responsible adult to check the message, talk through the issues, reassure the pupil that it was not their fault that they received such a message, and take any other action as appropriate.

As bullying, abuse or harassment by email is becoming an increasing problem, pupils are made aware of the appropriate actions to take if they receive unwanted or upsetting email messages, and should guard against giving out personal information at all times.

Advice and sanctions for dealing with incidents of this nature can be found in our infringements policy.

This policy has been reviewed and accepted by the Governing Body and shared and agreed by all staff. (September 2012)

Review date September 2017 with an interim review during the year.