



STAFF SOCIAL NETWORKING

At Cumberland School we are very aware of the issues that have arisen with the growth of the internet, therefore we have detailed below some safeguarding guidelines which we expect all our staff to adhere to.

As a teacher or professional working in Cumberland School, you are entitled to a social life just like anyone else but it should be noted that, within our school community, you will always be an adult linked to the school. This is complicated by the statement in the draft GTC Code of Conduct and Practice which states: ***Uphold the law and maintain standards of behaviour both inside and outside school that are appropriate given your membership of an important and responsible profession.***

Staff should always remember that information published to their site may be read by the Head, other staff, parents or pupils. To prevent any misunderstanding the following guidance is offered:

Separate personal from professional

Decide from the start how you will use your account and the sort of information it will contain, if appropriate you could create two different accounts.

Protect your information

Make sure you understand the privacy settings and can restrict access to information you consider personal.

Think about your profile picture

Facebook will display your profile picture even when your information is set to private. It will also show some of your friends profile pictures.

Think about what you are publishing

Although you may have set strict privacy controls, the information could still be shared by one of your 'friends'. It is sensible to think that, once published, the information is no longer private.

Be professional

Do not discuss your school, colleagues, parents or pupils.

Watch who comments

Although you might be careful with what you are posting, it is possible that you may receive inappropriate comments, pictures or videos from your contacts.

Protect your image

Many sites now encourage you to name (tag) people that appear in uploaded photographs. These tags can be indexed and the original photographs displayed in search results. Even though you don't post pictures you may find that your friends do.

Talk to your friends and contacts

If it is a personal site, they should understand the need to keep your information private and not post inappropriate or potentially embarrassing comments, pictures or video on an open site. If it is a professional site, they need to understand why you may not add them as friends or, if added, the types of posts or comments that are acceptable.

Pupils are not online friends

It would be considered inappropriate to add pupils as friends on a personal site, the same could apply to parents. If you are looking to engage with the school community online then please use Fronter.

Mobile phones

It is not advisable to have pupil numbers saved into your memory. You should not share your number with pupils regardless of your motivation or purpose.

The above guidance is for the protection of the whole school community

E-mail etiquette

When using e-mail, please adopt these simple points of good practice and etiquette.

Remember the laws of the land relating to written communication apply equally to e-mail, including laws on defamation, copyright, obscenity, fraud and discrimination.

Remember that the Internet is an open world - treat the security of e-mail messages you send out of school the same as a postcard i.e. anyone along the chain of distribution might see what you have written. Even for within school messages, think carefully before sending sensitive or confidential information by e-mail.

Make a good impression - your e-mail may be seen by persons who don't know you or the school, so ensure that what you write and how you write it gives the reader the right impression.

Be polite - adhere to the same standards as you would when writing a letter. If you TYPE LIKE THIS, for example, people will think you are shouting. Swear-words are a complete 'no no', even if you might use such words in conversation with the person to whom you are sending the e-mail.

Use humour and sarcasm with care - not everyone will appreciate it and without voice inflection and body language, mail messages can be easily misinterpreted. It sometimes helps to use 'emoticons' such as a smiley face e.g. :-) but use them sparingly.

Don't 'Flame' - Flames are messages or replies that express anger or might anger the reader. Don't get involved in flame wars. Neither post nor respond to incendiary mail.

Keep it simple - e-mail is good for factual information, but not for matters that require tact and diplomacy. People are busy - don't add to their information overload.

Identify yourself - you can use a signature file to put your name at the end of your e-mail automatically (but it's good etiquette to keep it short).

Ensure your e-mail is going to the right destination - it can be easy to use the wrong e-mail address by mistake and your message may be delivered to the wrong person or group. If you do find a message has been misdelivered, send an apology to the person or to the group.

Check your reply settings - it is easy to use 'Reply-All' by mistake, and this could be very embarrassing for you and very annoying to others.

Use a meaningful 'subject' field - don't leave it blank; this is very irritating.

When replying to a message, think carefully whether to reproduce the original message in your response - If it's not necessary, don't do it. If you need to refer to it, be selective in the parts that you include in your response.

Don't send anonymous mail or 'spoof' your address - in 99% of cases, your e-mail can be traced back to its source; disciplinary action may then follow.

Don't 'Spam' - i.e. Don't send electronic garbage. Sending junk e-mail, such as advertisements or other unsolicited material, to mailing lists, newsgroups, list servers or to anyone you don't know is considered 'spamming'.

Don't reply to chain-letters - these are an absolute 'no-no' on all networks.