

Caedmon College Whitby



Social Media Policy

College Governance Status

This policy was first issued in June 2011 and was adopted by the Governing Body on 3 October 2012. It will be reviewed every three years or in the light of new legislation or Local Authority guidance.

Review dates	By Whom	Approval date
September 2013	Staff and Governors	03.10.12
January 2017	Staff and Governors	27.03.17
March 2021	Staff and Governors	13.5.21
May 2024		

Signed by the Chair of Governors:

Email

Caedmon College Whitby uses email provided by Google (Gmail) using the college provided Google account, these use either the suffix 'ccwhitby.org' or 'sixthformwhitby.org'. Access to the Google account and other G-Suite services and apps is done by logging in to <http://www.google.co.uk>.

Staff are expected to take care to ensure that they do not put themselves into situations that could be misconstrued or leave them open to accusations, however unfounded. Should staff receive direct emails, or other direct personal electronic communications from students, they are advised to copy these to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the College (currently Jonathan Bond). Advice should be sought should

students attempt to enter into correspondence using individual email accounts. Staff are expected to use the following, generic College email address - post@ccwhitby.org, if expecting students to send work or contact a teacher by email. They should be advised that the teacher the message is for needs to be clearly marked in the subject line to ensure it is received in good time.

Staff members are expected to keep their system log-on details secure. Students or others users should not be given access to or watch staff inputting log on details. If anyone believes that their account has been compromised in any way, they should report this to the College ICT team as soon as possible.

Staff should not engage in private communications with students via electronic means; this specifically includes Facebook and Twitter.

Social Media

Social Media is a means to communicate with other users across the internet. Social media applications including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat and Pinterest have a minimum age limit of 13; LinkedIn has a lower age limit of 14 and WhatsApp users should be 16 years old. The College has Twitter feeds and a Facebook page. Facebook is blocked on both sites. Staff should be aware that it is their responsibility to use social media correctly adopting the sensible approach of "don't do or write anything on-line that you wouldn't off-line." There is a right to privacy in the personal lives of all staff and their families. Line managers adding subordinates to personal social media groups can leave the individual open to claims of an invasion of privacy or in some cases can lead to serious accusations against the individual, for example HoD / line managers may add their subordinates as friends, but should not include spouses or offspring unless invited to.

Twitter

This application provides an excellent means of communication in a public area and is encouraged for positive College news. Staff promoting College business should:

- use a Twitter username that is clearly recognisable to students and families
- engage in positive messages only
- engage in College business only using this account
- not follow students.

For other types of communication, a more appropriate means should be used. It is best practice not to operate an account with your real name. This is instantly recognisable to students and their parents and people could then attribute what is said to the College, even if you have explicitly said that it will not.

Facebook

Due to the nature of Social Media (in that once a comment is left on a private page it can then be forwarded or made available to other users in a recipients friends group), staff should never have students as Facebook friends. The National Education Union (NEU) issues specific guidance to teachers on not befriending children on Facebook. It states that teachers should not befriend pupils or other members of the school community on social networking sites and should consider carefully the implications of befriending parents or ex-pupils¹. Parents of children in North Yorkshire schools are increasingly using social networking sites such as Facebook to talk to their friends. Sometimes parents have used these sites to criticise or make inappropriate comments about schools or even individual teachers. Making defamatory comments on the internet has exactly the same serious legal consequences as if they were made directly to someone else. Legal action could be taken against the person who has made the online comment. Similarly, threats of violence can lead to criminal proceedings under the Malicious Communications Act 1988. Any concerns about posts of this nature involving the College, its staff or students should be reported to the Principal.

¹ E-safety: Protecting School Staff. NEU guidance and model policy:
<https://neu.org.uk/advice/online-safety-protecting-school-staff-and-pupils>