

CROSSHALL JUNIOR SCHOOL

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



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Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, tablets, text messages, emails, instant messages, websites, social media, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, apps, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other handheld devices.

Adults should not share any personal information with pupils and they should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. They should ensure that all communications are transparent and avoid any communication that could be misinterpreted in any way or interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'.

Adults must not give their personal contact details such as home/mobile phone number; home or personal e-mail address or social networking details to pupils. If, for example, a pupil attempts to locate an adult's personal contact details and attempts to contact or correspond with him/her, the adult should not respond and must report the matter to his/her line manager and the Head Teacher immediately.

It is recommended that adults ensure that all possible privacy settings are activated to prevent pupils from making contact on personal profiles and to prevent pupils from accessing photo albums or other personal information which may appear on social networking sites.

Adults are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media and must bear in mind that what is published might be read by their employer, pupils, parents and carers, the general public, future employers and friends and family for a long time. Adults must ensure that their online profiles are consistent with the professional image expected and must not post material which damages the reputation of the school or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people. Those who post material which may be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or, in the case of an employee, an allegation of misconduct which may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedures. Even where it is made clear that the writer's views on such topics do not represent those of the school, such comments could also be considered as inappropriate.

Adults are not permitted to access their social media while children are present in the room/vicinity being used. This is inclusive of times when 'out and about' during day or residential trips. The only exception to this would be when a member of staff is using school equipment to provide updates using school social media accounts. On residential trips, when children are not present, adults may use other social media. However, they should not post any photos from the trip or information about location, children or activities taking place.

Adults are advised not to have any online friendships with any young people under the age of 18, unless they are family members or close family friends. In addition, it is also advised not to have online friendships with parents or carers of pupils, or members of the governing body/trustees. Where such online friendships exist, adults must ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.

When writing on the school's social media platforms, members of staff must remember that this is a public voice of the school. Photographs, writing and the message being conveyed must reflect this. Permission to publish to the school's social media is granted by the Head Teacher or Assistant Heads.