

SPARKLE MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST



ORCHARDS

POLICY FOR USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

REVIEWED SEPTEMBER 2026



Use of electronic communication by staff

-  School computer equipment, mobile phones etc. must be used by staff only for agreed activities in connection with school business (e.g. a school trip), and with the specific approval of senior managers in individual cases. Personal phones and home computers should not be used to communicate directly with a pupil unless this has been specifically agreed as appropriate by a senior manager.
-  Any communication, whether initiated by the child or teacher/ other adult worker, must be solely for the purpose of carrying out the worker's professional duty; e.g. re-arranging a meeting at short notice; confirming a homework deadline etc. or through a recognised secure learning platform. These arrangements, if required, must be sanctioned by senior management and defined in appropriate policies and procedures.
-  Any arrangement to communicate electronically with pupils should be specifically agreed with parents in advance. In most situations, including emergencies, the need for any communication from schools will be with the parent and not with the child or young person directly.
-  School staff should, under no circumstances, use electronic communication in order to contact, or respond to contact from a child or young person, for reasons other than their defined professional responsibility.
-  **Examples of inappropriate conduct might include:**
-  **Participating in chat rooms with pupils,**
-  **Use of a social media site such as Facebook to communicate with pupils or be critical of the school / individuals**
-  **Text-messaging about matters unconnected with school,**
-  **The promotion of non-school activities such as outside clubs and organisations or**
-  **Sending emails that are not directly related to the pupil/teacher relationship and specifically relating to school business.**
-  Where staff have personal friendships with families or relatives who also have children at their school, care must be taken at all times to distinguish between personal and professional contacts. There is usually no legitimate need for staff to give out personal contact details, home or personal mobile phone numbers, private e-mail addresses etc, but this might be an exception. In all such cases, it must be clear that both senior management and the parents of the child or young person concerned have given their consent to any contact beyond the strictly professional. Guidance on these issues must be a specific element of induction training for new staff and made available to all staff on a regular basis. Infringements of the school's expected standards must be the subject of formal disciplinary investigation.
 - **Headteachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies must make it clear to both pupils and parents that they have the right to complain about any behaviour by a member of staff or other adult in a position of trust that may have infringed these standards. Such complaints must be taken extremely seriously and immediate advice sought from the local authority's designated LADO as to how to respond.**

- *Further guidance on the wider issue of staff conduct and personal standards in relation to children can be found in: “Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People” (2007). This is available via www.dfe.gov.uk.*