

The Whitby Secondary Partnership

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

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Introduction and Scope

Most of us use digital technologies every day, both within and outside of school/college. These technologies can help your education and development by promoting creativity, curiosity, and an engagement with the wider world. With an awareness of the risks involved, you should have safe access to these digital technologies and the opportunities they provide.

This Acceptable Use policy outlines what is expected of students when using the School/College/Sixth Form's network - ie, any device on a site within the Whitby Secondary Partnership (WSP) network and related technologies, in order to maintain the safety and security of the systems and other users. This applies to the WSP's computers, devices such as laptops and tablets, personal devices such as mobile phones, and any activity that makes use of computer networks, such as the WSP's Wi-fi.

Using computer accounts and the internet

The WSP technicians will provide you with an email account and use of the internet for educational purposes.

Personal use

Whilst your WSP email account should primarily be used for educational purposes, you may use it in a personal capacity so long as:

- it does not negatively impact the learning environment for other students and teaching staff,
- it does not damage the reputation of the WSP,
- you understand that the WSP has access to your email account and internet browsers, including your emails and browsing history.

Inappropriate use

The WSP does not permit you to send emails or use the internet in any way that could be insulting, disruptive, or offensive to someone else. Material not allowed includes, but is not limited to:

- sexually explicit messages, images, cartoons, jokes or movie files,
- profanity, obscenity, slander or libel,
- ethnic, religious or racial slurs,
- any content that could be seen as bullying or belittling of others based on their sex, gender, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious or philosophical beliefs, or political beliefs.

You are also not permitted to use the internet in a way which could affect usage for others. This means not downloading software, streaming or downloading media files such as music or films, and not using the internet for playing online games. You must also be aware of copyright restrictions when using the internet. You are not permitted to use materials in ways that would infringe intellectual property laws, including copyright. This means you should be careful when reusing online materials and content.

Online security

You will take care to use your accounts with information security in mind. In particular, you will:

- not click on links from untrusted or unverified sources in emails or on web pages,
- keep your passwords unique, private and not share these with others,
- log out when you are finished or lock your account when away from the computer,
- not sign up to marketing material that could jeopardise the WSP's IT network,
- not send very large files without authorisation from a member of staff.

Monitoring

In order to support and protect students and staff, the school may monitor your use of the computer network, including:

- checking and reviewing all email traffic that comes to and from your account,
- monitoring your internet activity,
- using e-monitoring software that blocks banned content, monitors internet use and can alert staff if your use looks like there is a safeguarding concern or inappropriate use.

Social media use

Using social media during lesson times is not permitted. You should not use social media in a way which violates the privacy or dignity of other users, including staff, students and other members of the wider community.

Remote learning and remote access

With remote learning in any of your subjects/courses, you may be engaging in more online activities than usual and provided with accounts for more services.

All of the expectations above apply when you are accessing your WSP accounts from home, such as when completing home-learning or in the event of remote classrooms. When learning from home, you should also consider:

- not leaving drinks or food near your work, computer or devices – if it spills it could destroy your work or equipment,
- only using appropriate methods to contact teachers, such as using designated school email accounts,
- remember that the normal behaviour policy and classroom expectations still apply to virtual classrooms.

Safe use of online services

In addition to the safe applications provided by the WSP for your educational use, students should take care when using online services independently. Some online services are paid for and others are free at the point of use, but are funded by advertisements. These are used at the individual's request and risk of the user.

Online services may include:

- Apps
- Games
- Social media
- Streaming services
- Anything that offers goods and services.

Students are strictly prohibited from accessing gambling sites or apps during school hours.

When using the internet, students should be particularly mindful of protecting their personal information and safety. Before using any online service, students should consider whether the service:

- is age appropriate,
- uses child-friendly language and methods of communication,
- has high privacy settings in place by default, eg, private rather than public profiles,
- has privacy and safety options such as blocking and reporting,
- allows you to set the user age,
- has location tracking switched off by default.

Using age-appropriate services will help protect and promote your best interests.

Consequences of inappropriate use

Inappropriate use may result in sanctions in line with the school's behaviour policy. If you misuse the computer network and related devices, staff may:

- remove your access to the internet or network account,
- temporarily ban you from using school equipment,
- confiscate your personal device(s),
- contact your parents,
- take further action in accordance with WSP's behaviour policy, as appropriate.