




Yewstock School

# Email Policy (Staff & Volunteers)

<b>Date reviewed by FP&amp;E</b>	<b>06.03.2023</b>	<b>Policy Type</b>	<b>School</b>
<b>Date adopted by FGB</b>	<b>13.03.2023</b>	<b>Review Cycle</b>	<b>2 Years</b>
<b>Date of next Review</b>	<b>05.03.2025</b>	<b>Signed by Chair of Governors</b>	
			

## Yewstock School Email Policy

The primary objectives of this policy are:

- To set the expectations for email etiquette and establish email management standards at Yewstock School;
- To help comply with the legal requirements for email management and protect Yewstock School against litigation;
- To support the School's Acceptable Use Policy and Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

### Introduction

The use of email, both within Yewstock School and the wider community, is an essential means of communication for both staff and children. In the context of school, emails should not be considered private and staff should assume that anything they write or email could become public. Therefore staff should ensure that they are professional, maintaining a clear distinction between their personal and professional lives.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedure and the protocols to be used when staff use email.

### Managing Emails

The school gives all staff their own email account as a work-based tool.

For the safety and security of users and recipients, all mail is filtered and logged. If necessary, email histories can be traced.

The following rules will apply:

- If sending an email to a group of parents, staff should use the BCC facility to prevent sharing of email addresses. For whole school parent emails, the office should use our secure Teachers2Parents facility.
- It is the responsibility of each account holder to keep their password/s secure.
- All external emails, including those to parents, should be constructed with a polite and respectful greeting and closing.
- If any issues/complaints are involved then staff sending emails to parents or external organisations should speak to their line manager and/or Head of Department before sending a response.
- All emails should be written and checked carefully before sending.
- Emails created or received as part of your school job will be subject to disclosure in response to a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Staff are expected to manage their staff email account in an effective way as follows:

- Delete all emails of short-term value.
- Organise emails into folders and carry out frequent house-keeping all folders and archives.
- Respond to emails in a timely fashion, it is courteous to respond to emails within 24 hours.
- However you access your school email (whether directly in school, through Outlook when away from the office or on non-school hardware) all the school ICT, e-safety and email policies apply.
- Staff must immediately inform their line manager/IT Technician if they receive an offensive email.

- Any suspicious emails should be reported to the IT Technician and should not be opened.
- Staff may wish to use the 'send later' function to support colleagues mental health and well-being.

### **Sending emails**

The following rules apply:

- If sending emails containing personal, confidential, classified or financially sensitive data to external third parties or agencies, please see the section below 'Emailing personal, sensitive, confidential or classified information.'
- Use your own school email account so that you are clearly identified as the originator of a message.
- Keep the number and relevance of email recipients, particularly those being copied, to the minimum necessary and appropriate. We only send emails to the relevant people. Use the 'cc' tool correctly, which is to keep other people 'in the loop' with no expectation of a reply from them.
- Don't hit reply all or CC everyone.
- Do not send whole school emails unless essential for school business. We have the weekly briefing each Monday at 8.30 am. All staff are invited to attend to keep up to date with school happenings. If you would like something mentioning, please let the Headteacher know before 8.15 am.
- Do not send or forward attachments unnecessarily.
- Do not forward emails without the permission of the original sender, unless they are addressed to the wrong person and it has been received in error. Staff and parents should have the expectation that their emails are private and will only be read by the intended recipient. Exceptions to this would be if there is a conduct issue, or a safeguarding concern, then the relevant Line Manager, LMT or DSL would have access.
- Emails to the school office must, of course, be forwarded to specific people as this is the first point of contact for many parents and outside agencies.
- Before sending, check the email trail content is appropriate and relevant and does not contain information that should not be shared with others.
- Staff can send an email message to pupils of the School using the pupil's school email account in relation to Teaching and Learning.

### **Receiving Emails**

The following rules apply:

- Check your emails regularly. There should be no expectation of a response outside of working hours-it is at staff discretion if they respond.
- If appropriate, activate your 'out-of-office' notification when away for extended periods.
- Never open attachments from an untrusted source. If unsure, always consult the IT Technician first.
- Do not use the emails systems to store attachments. Detach and save business-related work to the appropriate shared drive/folder.

### **Language in Emails**

- This is a professional environment and as such, we expect all emails to be written in a polite and respectful manner using professional language

- Emails should be used to instruct or to share information, not to enter into debate - Consider whether a telephone call or face to face meeting would be a better response – follow up conversations with a quick email to clarify points discussed.
- With email often being our first point of contact with outside agencies, it is vital we present ourselves as well as we can. As staff at a school, we are expected to have a good knowledge of the English language and spelling. Therefore, we expect some effort to be made to email using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling especially when interacting with parents or outside individuals.
- Be wary of using humour or colloquialism across cultures.
- Consider the purpose of your email.
- Please do not use emojis outside of personal emails to colleagues, they do not give a professional appearance.

### **Emailing personal, sensitive, confidential or classified information**

Assess whether the information can be transmitted by other secure means before using email. Emailing confidential data without the use of encryption is strictly prohibited.

Where the conclusion is that your school email must be used to transmit such data, then exercise caution when sending the email and always follow these checks before releasing the email:

- Verify the details, including accurate email addresses, of any intended recipient of the information.
- Verify (preferring by phoning) the details of a requestor, if unknown, before responding to email requests for information.
- Do not copy or forward the email to any more recipients that is absolutely necessary.
- Do not send the information to any person whose details you have been unable to separately verify.
- Send the information as an encrypted document attached to an email. If you are unsure as to how to encrypt a file please speak to the ICT technician. Internal emails sent within the school do not need to be encrypted to be secure.
- Or, send the email as a secure encrypted email by simply adding the word 'Confidential' to the subject line in Microsoft Outlook.

### **GDPR**

- The school adheres to General Data Protection (GDPR) practice and as part of a 'Subject Access Request' we can be asked to supply all written and electronic material relating to an individual (this could include a student, parent or member of staff). If other individuals are also mentioned then their information would be redacted.

### **General Use of Email**

Staff must not:

- Use a personal or non-work email account to send or receive School business emails;
- Use a false identity in emails nor use email for the creation or transmission of anonymous messages;

- Create emails, or alter a message and then forward it, with the intention of deceiving the recipient;
- Create, transmit, or forward any illegal, offensive, obscene or indecent images, data, or other material, or any data capable of being resolved into obscene or indecent images;
- Create, transmit, or forward material that is designed or likely to cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety;
- Create, transmit, or forward material that is designed to or would conflict with the School business, or undermine the School in any way;
- Create, transmit, or forward emails containing staff, pupil or family personal information, or information that is sensitive, to a personal or non-work email account or to a work email account where the recipient does not require it for legitimate use;
- Attempt to gain access to the email mailbox of any other member of staff without their permission;
- Include sensitive personal data within emails;
- Forward emails containing anyone's personal messages without their permission unless this is a conduct or safeguarding concern which needs to be forwarded for advice.
- Forward material via email in breach of copyright.
- Send an email message to pupils of the School using private email addresses (in accordance with school safeguarding policy and acceptable use agreement policy).

Staff must log out from or lock their computer when temporarily away from their desk to prevent unauthorised use of email accounts. This applies wherever you are located at the time of use.

Staff must not open any email from an unrecognised source or emails that have dubious or missing subject lines. Do not open unsolicited email attachments or suspect links unless you are sure of the source. To check suspicious links, hover over the Link to see the source address before making a judgement. Also look for spelling errors or control characters being used. Report all problems with unwanted emails or any suspicious activity to the School's IT Technician. Never send or forward chain email messages or virus warnings as the vast majority are bogus and a waste of time.

**\*Staff must not use the School's email system to send:**

- Personal adverts;
- Personal sponsorship requests;
- Personal appeals; or
- Details of events that are not supported by the School.

**\*Without the express permission of the Headteacher.**

### **Access to Email Records (in exceptional circumstances)**

Staff must comply with a request from the Headteacher, or delegated member of staff, to inspect email records and/or to printout items relevant to a particular individual, case or subject. This will only be requested as part of a disciplinary investigation, monitoring of this policy, or for other legitimate School business reasons.

Email will be checked:

- If there is reasonable cause to believe the member of staff has violated or is violating this policy, any guidelines or procedures established to implement this policy;
- If an email account appears to be engaged in unusual or unusually excessive activity;
- If it is necessary to do so to protect the integrity, security, or functionality of ICT resources or to protect the School from liability;
- To establish existence of facts relevant to School business;
- To prevent or detect crime;

- To investigate or detect unauthorised use of email facilities;
- To ensure effective operation of email facilities;
- To determine if communications are relevant to School business (for example, in the last resort where a member of staff is off sick or on holiday and business continuity is threatened); staff would be notified immediately.
- If it is otherwise permitted or required by law.

Where an individual has reasonable cause to believe that a member of staff has violated, or is violating this policy, or any guidelines, or procedures established to implement this policy then they shall in the first instance inform the Headteacher who may refer the matter for investigation under the School's Disciplinary policies and procedures. In these circumstances the checks may necessitate the immediate suspension of the member of staff's access to the School Network, ICT resources, ICT systems and applications in order that any potential evidence is not compromised. In case of staff disciplinary procedures, the member of staff may not be notified dependent upon individual circumstances.

The School's email provider will apply automatic message monitoring, filtering and rejection systems as appropriate and deny transmission or receipt of messages with content that represents a threat to the ICT network or is unacceptable in the terms of this and other corporate policies. An ICT administrator may examine messages placed in quarantine, and forward or delete them as appropriate.

Do not use the School's email system to send or receive multimedia attachments that are not related to School work e.g. containing images, video or sound clips. Do not use your School email account as the registration mail address when registering with any organisation or web-site for personal use.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The policy will be monitored and evaluated regularly taking into account any incidents which occur or technical developments which might need a change in the policy.

This policy applies to the use of the School's email facilities to send, receive and manage email messages (and attachments) and is applicable to all School staff, teaching and non-teaching. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Acceptable Use Policy and Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

Staff found to be in breach of this policy may be disciplined in accordance with the School's Disciplinary policy and procedures. In certain circumstances, breach of this policy may be considered gross misconduct.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the Single Equality Policy. The general equality duty requires that, in the exercise of their functions, schools must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. This should endeavour to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations for all.**

***Mental Health and Wellbeing Statement:***

***Yewstock school aims provide a working environment that promotes and supports the mental health and wellbeing of everyone in our school community.***

***All school policies are reviewed to ensure that each policy reflects our commitment to the protection and promotion of the mental health and wellbeing of all and that we will strive to improve the mental health environment and culture of Yewstock School.***

***Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of children, families and staff is important for physical health, social wellbeing and productivity. Mental health at Yewstock is relevant to all and everyone can contribute to improved wellbeing.***