



EMAIL USAGE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

At Newberry House communication plays an essential role in the conduct of our business. How you communicate with people not only reflects on you as an individual but also on us as an organisation. We value your ability to communicate with colleagues and third parties, and we invest substantially in information technology and communications systems which enable you to work more efficiently. We trust you to use them responsibly.

This policy describes the rules governing email, and all other forms of internet communication, usage at the School. It also sets out how staff should behave when using email. Staff should read this policy alongside other key policies, including the social media policy.

All information relating to our students and their parents and our business operations is confidential. You must treat our paper-based and electronic information with utmost care

2. WHY THIS POLICY EXISTS

Email is a standard way to communicate. It is widely used and has become just as important as the telephone. Email can lead to problems if used incorrectly or inappropriately. This policy:

- 2.1.** Reduces the security and business risks faced by Newberry House.
- 2.2.** Explains how staff should use email.
- 2.3.** Ensures that staff follow good email etiquette
- 2.4.** Helps the School satisfy its legal obligations regarding email use.

This policy applies to all contractors and volunteers who use the Newberry House email system. It applies no matter where the email use takes place, on the premises or elsewhere. It also applies to all School email on any device, regardless who owns the device.

3. EMAIL USE IN THE COURSE OF EMPLOY

Newberry House recognises that email is a key communication tool. Staff are encouraged to use email whenever appropriate. For instance, staff may use email to:

- 3.1.** Communicate with parents.
- 3.2.** Distribute information to colleagues.
- 3.3.** Communicate with external parties.

4. PERSONAL USE OF EMAIL

Newberry House also recognises that email is an important tool in many people's daily lives. As such, it allows staff to access their personal email account on School computers, on the following conditions:

- 4.1.** Personal email use should be of a reasonable level and restricted to non-work times, such as lunch and breaks.
- 4.2.** All rules described in this policy apply equally to personal email use. Inappropriate content is always inappropriate, no matter whether it is being sent or received for business or personal reasons.
- 4.3.** Personal email use must not affect the service available to other email users, e.g. sending very large files could slow access for others.

5. EMAIL SECURITY

Used inappropriately, email can cause security issues for an organisation. Users should not:

- 5.1.** Disable security or email scanning software.
- 5.2.** Send confidential School data via email.
- 5.3.** Access another user's email account.

Users should note that email is not inherently secure. Most emails are sent in plain text which means that they are vulnerable to interception, although this may happen rarely.

6. INAPPROPRIATE EMAIL CONTENT AND USE

The Newberry House email system must not be used to send or store inappropriate content or materials.

Users must not:

- 6.1.** Write or send emails that might be defamatory or incur liability for Newberry House.
- 6.2.** Create or distribute any inappropriate content or material via email, including any text, images or other media that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- 6.3.** Use email for any illegal or criminal activities.
- 6.4.** Send offensive or harassing emails to others.
- 6.5.** Send messages or material that could damage the School's image or reputation.

Any user who receives an email they consider to be inappropriate should report this to the Head.

7. COPYRIGHT

Users may not use the School email to share any copyrighted software, media, images or materials owned by third parties, unless permitted by that third party.

8. CONTRACTS AND LIABILITY

Users must be careful about making commitments or agreeing to purchases via email. An email may form a legally binding contract between Newberry House and the recipient, even if the user was not authorised to commit the School.

9. EMAIL DISCLAIMER

The standard Newberry House email template includes an email disclaimer. Users may not remove or change this when they send messages.

10. EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Although email is a fairly informal medium, staff should be aware that each email they send does affect the School's name and reputation. As an educational institution it is important that all our communication reflects a standard of professionalism.

Users must:

- 10.1.** Not forward on chain emails or humorous messages. These clog up people's in-boxes and some topics are not suitable for the workplace.
- 10.2.** Always use a meaningful subject line rather than leaving it blank or using a single word like 'hello'.
- 10.3.** Only use the 'important message' setting sparingly for messages that really are important.

- 10.4.** Never ask recipients to send a ‘message read’ receipt. Many people find these annoying and not all email services support them.
- 10.5.** Not use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS in messages or subject lines. This is considered shouting in email terms.
- 10.6.** Always use salutations in greeting and signing off emails.
- 10.7.** Always remain polite in emails, the words we use are a small part of the message we are giving out. Tone and body language comprise a far greater part of communication, and as these cannot be seen in the written word, it is important to be extremely careful of the words we use.
- 10.8.** Check all draft emails for correct grammar, punctuation and spelling before sending.
- 10.9.** Be sparing with group messages, only adding recipients who will find the message genuinely relevant and useful.
- 10.10.** Always be aware of confidentiality when choosing to whom the email is addressed. Should the recipient/s be privy to the information being sent?
- 10.11.** Use the ‘To’ field only for people from whom they expect a response. Others who simply need to be aware of the message should be addressed in the ‘CC’ field.
- 10.12.** Use the ‘BCC’ field when sending a group email where recipients should not be able to see the addresses of others.
- 10.13.** Read a draft through before sending to check that the content of the email is accurate and appropriate.

11. INTERNAL EMAIL

Email is a valid way to communicate with colleagues, but should not be over used for internal communication.

Points to bear in mind:

- 11.1.** Would the issue be better addressed in a face-to-face conversation or telephone call?
- 11.2.** Is email the best way to send a document out for discussion? Often it becomes very hard to keep track of feedback and versions.
- 11.3.** It is rarely necessary to ‘reply all’. It is generally better to reply to the sender and manually add other people who need to see the response.

12. MONITORING EMAIL USE

The School email system and software are provided for business use. Newberry House therefore reserves the right to monitor employee use of email. Any such monitoring will only be done by authorised staff. All emails sent or received through the School’s email system are part of the official School records. Newberry House can be legally compelled to show that information to third parties. Users should always ensure that the information sent via email is accurate, appropriate, ethical and legal.

13. POTENTIAL SANCTION

Users who knowingly breach this policy in a manner that constitutes a serious threat to the reputation or security of the School or any other person may be liable to disciplinary action.

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