



THE ALTUS SCHOOL

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

(ICT, Technology and Social Media) for All
Permanent and Temporary Staff

Date Approved: January 2023

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ICT, Technology and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy for All Permanent and Temporary Staff

The Altus School is committed to providing ICT facilities (including internet and email) to employees and students and to promoting employee awareness of the benefits and dangers involved. Whilst ICT, the internet and related technologies have immense benefits improper use of the internet, including social networking sites or email could bring the service into disrepute and may lead to legal claims against individuals and/or the school.

Computer network

- Obtaining, downloading, sending, printing, displaying, distributing or otherwise transmitting or gaining access to materials which are pornographic, obscene, racist, unlawful, abusive, offensive or inappropriate will be regarded as gross misconduct and will result in disciplinary action.
- Distributing abusive, discriminatory or defamatory statements will be regarded as gross misconduct and will lead to disciplinary action.
- You are responsible for the security of your passwords.
- The network must not be used for commercial purposes, e.g. buying or selling goods.
- Any software that is installed must be covered by the appropriate licensing agreements.
- New software is not to be installed on the network without consulting the Operations Manager
- Copyright of materials available on the network must be respected.
- Software to support personal accounts is forbidden (ie iTunes, Spotify, Google Play).
- To comply with current data protection regulations (GDPR) staff must lock their computer screens when they are not in use and ensure all work is saved and computers are logged off at the end of the day.
- Storage of personal documents and property such as; music, films and other digital media is forbidden.
- When they are not teaching, staff should turn off any projectors, large display screens or interactive board to prevent sensitive information being displayed on them.
- Staff are also encouraged to think before they print sensitive information and ensure any such documents that are printed are not left on the printer.

- Memory sticks and portable storage devices are only to be used to store resources and blank forms. Transporting sensitive Altus School information or removing it from the network is strictly forbidden.

Internet / Email

- Use of the internet and email must be solely for legitimate school purposes.
- Use of the internet and email is monitored and any action that might damage the good reputation of the school will be dealt with as a serious act of misconduct.
- Use of the internet for personal financial gain, gambling, political purposes or advertising is forbidden.
- Emails sent from an Altus School email address should contain the same professional levels of language and content as applied to letters or other media.
- You are responsible for the email you send and for any contacts you make that might result in inappropriate emails being received.
- Posting anonymous messages and forwarding chain letters is forbidden.
- Appropriate security must be used or applied before confidential or sensitive information is sent via the internet or email.
- The Local Authority and Safeguarding Children guidelines state that teaching staff should avoid contacting students on social networking sites. This is to avoid any possible misinterpretation of motives and the risk of any allegations being made. Students must not be added to social media sites for staff.
- Caution must be exercised when opening emails and messages from an unknown external source or where, for any reason, they appear suspicious.
- Messages must not be sent from another user's account or under an assumed name unless specifically authorised.

Use of photographs, video and digital images

Staff **must** only use Altus School equipment to record, or take photographs of pupils, and only then if the relevant permission has been obtained.

Staff **must not** transfer any school images onto a personal home computer.

Mobile Phones

Professional tone must be used in **all** telephone calls made and text messages sent using work phones.

Personal calls, other than in an emergency, are forbidden on work phones.

Calls and contact to pupils and parents should be restricted to the hours of 8.00am to 6.00pm and only using Altus School telephones, mobile telephones or personal devices with the 3CX mobile app installed. Staff must not share their personal contact details.

Direct contact with pupils by telephone calls or text messages is limited to essential service needs only.

Social Media

Social Media is used increasingly across society and is recognised as a hugely valuable communication tool. However, the open nature of the internet means that social networking sites can leave professionals (such as teachers and other staff working in education) vulnerable if they fail to observe a few simple precautions. This policy is designed to protect Altus School staff and pupils from potential harm or from becoming victims of malicious, upsetting or inadvisable contact. (For detailed explanations please see the School Safeguarding Policy.)

Staff members **must not** identify themselves as employees of The Altus School in their personal webspace apart from professional websites such as LinkedIn. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and the County Council and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, particularly those involved in providing sensitive frontline services.

Staff members **must not make contact through any personal ICT or social medium with any pupil**, whether from our school or any other school, unless the pupil* is your own family member OR an existing close family friend. School does not expect staff members to discontinue contact with their own family members or significant family friends via personal social media. However, staff are required to inform their line manager of their relationship/association with any new or existing pupil so that any potential conflicts of interest can be discussed and avoided.

Staff **must not** have social media contact with any pupils' family members (parents/carers). This is in-line with the NASUWT teachers' union and other unions which say that teachers should never under any circumstances accept Facebook friend requests from parents of a pupil. Any exceptional circumstances must have written documented evidence of why a friend request has been requested in the staff personnel file.

If staff members need to communicate with pupils for work purposes they can only do so through the official email or work phones. Personal email addresses/telephone numbers **must not** be shared with pupils or parents.

Staff members **must decline 'friend requests' from pupils** they may receive in their personal social media accounts. Pupils/parents will be informed that this will be the case on induction. * 'pupil' is defined as any young person aged 18 or under in a school or college. Or, any young person who has been a pupil with The Altus School (or a pupil staff have met in another school in their professional capacity) who is no longer in a school or a sixth form up until they reach the age of 18.

On leaving The Altus School's employment, staff members **must not** contact pupils* by means of personal social media sites. Similarly, staff members must not contact pupils* from their former schools by means of personal social media. *(Pupil(s) as defined above.)

Any information staff members have access to as part of their employment, including personal information about pupils and their family members, colleagues, county council staff and other parties and service or county council corporate information must not be discussed on their personal web space or social media sites.

Photographs, videos or any other types of image of pupils and their families or images depicting staff members who can be identified as The Altus School or county council staff from their identity badges or logos identifying sensitive Altus School or county council premises must not be published on personal web space or social media sites.

Altus School email addresses and other official contact details must not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff members must not edit open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia in a personal capacity at work. This is because the source of the correction will be recorded as the employer's IP address and the intervention will, therefore, appear as if it comes from the employer itself.

Altus School logos should not be used or published on personal web space/social media sites or professional websites such as LinkedIn

The Altus School does not permit personal use of social media sites in the school as this would be inappropriate use of our computer systems. Staff are expected to devote their contracted hours of work to their professional duties.

Caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be ‘friends’ on personal social networking sites. Social networking sites blur the line between work and personal lives and it may be difficult to maintain professional relationships or it might be just too embarrassing if too much personal information is known in the work place. Staff **must not** use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations, The Altus School or the Local Authority.

Staff members are **advised to set the privacy levels of their personal social media sites as strictly as they can** and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. Staff members should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online; it is not safe to reveal home addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information. It is a good idea to use a separate email address just for social networking so that any other contact details are not given away. (Please see the attached “Social networking – Guidelines for NASUWT members which sets out minimum recommended privacy settings for Facebook)

Breaches of the policy

Any breach of this policy may be investigated and may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the staff member/s involved in line with The Altus School’s Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

A breach of this policy leading to breaches of confidentiality, or defamation or damage to the reputation of The Altus School or any illegal acts or acts that render The Altus School or the Local Authority liable to third parties may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

Contracted providers of Alternative Provision must inform The Altus School immediately of any breaches of this policy so that appropriate action can be taken to protect confidential information and limit the damage to the reputation of The Altus School. Any action against breaches should be according to contractors’ own internal disciplinary procedures.

If you are in doubt about any of the above, please seek advice.

I have read and accept the terms of the ICT, Technology and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy for all Permanent and Temporary Staff

I understand the implications of any breach of this policy as outlined above.

Name (Printed): _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____