



EMAIL POLICY

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| Status | Approved | Approval | Full Governing Body |
| Maintenance | Full Governing Body | Role(s) responsible | Head Teacher |
| Date Effective | November 2018 | Date of last review | July 2024 |
| Date of next review | September 2025 | Date withdrawn | Not withdrawn. |
| Lead Professional | Deputy Headteacher | Location of policy | www.coltonhills.co.uk |

COLTON HILLS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Email is the expected mode of electronic communication with other members of staff. Whatsapp, and any other form of social media app or website are not school systems of communication for school business purposes. TEAMS can be used to communicate with students following the expectations below. Communication with parents should be through the school information system such as Classcharts or SIMS rather than TEAMS, again following the guidance below. This is to protect staff wellbeing and to ensure that professional dialogue is held in professional systems should there be a freedom of information request or subject access request the school is able to fulfil its information sharing duties.

When the use of emails is appropriate:

A) Checking emails:

1. Staff should only check (or send) email when they are not teaching. It is not usually appropriate for emails to be checked or replied to within lessons: they should never be visible to students.
2. Outside of the school day staff are, obviously, free to check and read their email at any time, to suit their preferred working pattern.

B) Sending/Replying to emails:

1. No email should be sent to staff between the hours of **7:00pm and 7:00am**. This curfew is applied to encourage a better work-life balance and to make staff think more carefully about the emails they are sending.
2. During the curfew, staff can draft emails and replies, but these must not be sent until **7.00am** the following day.
3. Further, staff should not email at weekends. The weekend curfew is in effect between **7.00pm Friday and 7.00am Monday**.
4. In terms of replies to both staff and parents, we expect that any emails are responded to within a 48 hour time period. It is highly inappropriate to chase someone up for a response to an email before 48 hours have elapsed.
5. If a response is required urgently, it may be best to consider another form of contact rather than an email.
6. Staff are not expected to monitor their email accounts during the school holidays. The expectation of replying within 48 hours is not therefore in place during the holidays.
7. The school policy is to avoid using personal devices at home for emails. It may be unavoidable in some circumstances, when you may have to login on your personal computer. But we advise all staff to refrain from having work emails on their mobile phones/tablets or signed in on their personal computers. This is to ease the pressure on staff to and to consider work life balance.
8. Staff are not expected to check emails when off sick or on leave.



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C) How to send emails:

1. Only reply to the original sender do not send replies to the CC address and only reply to all when necessary (Only send to staff that need to read the email).
2. Write a specific title in the subject line never leave it blank
3. Use appropriate language in emails and never send a message you would not want to be shown to others including members of staff, students and or parents.
4. Beware of sending emails when angry or upset take care with your tone and don't use capitals as they are construed as 'shouting'.
5. Never send emails that are offensive, threatening, defamatory or illegal. Emails have been used successfully as evidence in libel cases.
6. Child Protection issues should not be reported via email.
7. Emails should be used to instruct or share information, not to enter in debate
8. Check the email trail content is appropriate and relevant.
9. The length of emails should be kept to a minimum – if the information needs to be longer it could be sent in an attachment.
10. Be aware of copyright and libel issues e.g. when sending scanned text, pictures or information downloaded from the internet.
11. Emails should be responded to within 48 hours even if the response is brief and promises a later reply.
12. An email can be contractually binding.
13. For GDPR reasons, avoid using a child's name in the email subject.

D) Suggestions:

1. File your emails in inbox folders so they are easier to find.
2. Change the subject line to one which is memorable for you
3. Only send whole school emails when absolutely necessary.
4. Set up signature on your emails to save time.
5. Lost property is managed in student reception so please do not email about lost property.
6. Use an out of office notification when you are away.
7. Do not set email alerts on your phone to avoid checking them too frequently.

E) Before sending emails consider:

1. The maintenance of the highest professional standards.
2. Whether email is the correct medium for communication. Sensitive information should be sent by post or via a secure transfer system.
3. The content and design, consider level of formality.
4. To whom should the email be sent, consider expected communication style.
5. Only copy in people who have an immediate need for the information.
6. The length of the email, avoid long detailed emails.
7. Time required for the recipient to respond. Always read and reflect upon your email before sending.

F) Security

1. Staff are responsible for the security of their computer, and for protecting any information or data used and/or stored on it.



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2. Do not to leave a mailbox open and unattended, always keep it password protected. The account holder/s needs to strive to keep their passwords confidential; to prevent other users from accessing and sending emails from their account. Users may need to make their passwords known in the event of absence.
3. Staff should be responsible for changing passwords on an agreed schedule to maintain security. Emails will only be monitored by the Headteacher in very exceptional circumstances.
4. Absent staff are aware that their email account may be opened by another member of staff.

G) Policy

1. This must be followed by all users of Colton Hills email system.
2. If there is evidence to suggest that users have not followed this policy it may result in an investigation leading to loss of email facilities or additional disciplinary actions.
3. Staff should become 'responsible communicators' i.e. they should check their emails at the start of each day as they currently would their pigeon trays.
4. Ensure your email account is kept secure by changing your email password regularly and not giving it to anyone. Users must only use email for business purposes in work time.
5. Personal use in your own time is acceptable but, in line with the internet filtering policy, use in core time is not permitted, unless in exceptional circumstances you have prior agreement with your line manager.
6. Any agreed personal use must not make significant demands on IT resources. Therefore, transferring or storing large attachments such as images, audio and video clips are not permitted.
7. Any personal or business use for illegal, threatening, offensive, obscene, pornographic or libellous purposes is strictly prohibited.
8. Never use your work email address when posting comments on public bulletin boards or chat rooms unless directly related to your work.
9. If you receive an email that is obviously spam or of an adult nature, do not open it, rather delete it immediately.
10. Never participate in chain emails where you are asked to forward an email to a number of others.
11. In legal terms, under the Telecommunications Regulations 2000, sending an email is as binding as sending a signed letter. Therefore, do not express personal views or information by email, because as an employer, Colton Hills could be held vicariously liable for the opinions and views expressed.
12. This also applies to comments posted on public discussion boards if you use the school email address or state the opinions in a work capacity.

H) Email Disclaimer to be included on all emails:

The information in the e-mail is confidential and intended solely for the person to whom it is addressed. If this message is not addressed to you, please be aware that you have no authorisation to read the rest of this e-mail, to copy it or furnish it to any person other than the addressee. If you are not the intended recipient of this e-mail, please bring this to the attention of the sender and destroy the original message. Colton Hills School does not guarantee that the e-mail is free of viruses, interceptions or interference.



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