



## **Ribston Hall High School**

### **ICT Acceptable Use Policy**

Date of Policy: October 2023

Person(s) responsible: Headteacher

Date of next review: October 2026

#### **Statement of intent**

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2. General policy and code of practice
3. Internet policy and code of practice
4. Email policy and code of practice
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Whilst our school promotes the use of technology and understands the positive effects it can have on enhancing pupils' learning and community engagement, we must also ensure that technology is used appropriately. Any misuse of technology will not be taken lightly and will be reported to the headteacher in order for any necessary further action to be taken.

This acceptable use policy is designed to outline staff responsibilities when using technology, whether this is via personal devices or school devices, or on/off the school premises, and applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, supply staff and contractors using school ICT facilities.
- 1.2. The school acceptable use policy is divided into the following three sections.
  - General policy and code of practice
  - Internet policy and code of practice

- Email policy and code of practice

1.3. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school’s Data Protection Policy (including Schools records guidance), Privacy Statement and Safeguarding policy.

## 2. General policy and code of practice

2.1. The school has well-developed and advanced ICT systems, which it intends for you to benefit from.

2.2. This policy sets out the rules that you must comply with to ensure that the system works effectively for everyone.

### Privacy

2.3. The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 require all personal and special category data to be processed with the utmost credibility, integrity and accuracy. This applies to all data the school stores on its network regarding staff, students and other natural persons it deals with whilst carrying out its functions.

2.4. The school will only process data in line with its lawful basis to uphold the rights of both students and staff and other third parties.

2.5. In order to protect students' safety and wellbeing, and to protect the school from any third party claims or legal action against it, the school may view any data, information or material on the school’s ICT systems (whether contained in an email, on the network, notebooks or laptops) and in certain circumstances, disclose that data, information or material to third parties, such as the police or social services. The school’s Privacy Statement details the lawful basis under which the school is lawfully allowed to do so.

2.6. The school disclaimer that automatically appears at the end of each of your emails notifies the recipient that any email correspondence between you may be monitored. You must not remove this disclaimer. You should bring to the attention of any person who wishes or intends to send you an email that the school may monitor the content of their email.

### Code of practice

The school’s philosophy	In using ICT, you will follow the school’s ethos and consider the work and feelings of others. You must not use the system in a way that might cause annoyance or loss of service to other users.
Times of access	The network is available during term time. Out of term time the network will be subject to maintenance downtime and so may not be available for brief periods.

User ID and password and logging on	<p>You will be given your own user ID and password. You must keep these private and not tell or show anyone what they are.</p> <p>Your password must be a mix of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contain at least eight characters</li> <li>• A mixture of lower case and capital letters</li> <li>• At least one number</li> </ul> <p>If you forget or accidentally disclose your password to anyone else, you must report it immediately to a member of the ICT support staff.</p> <p>You must not use another person's account or allow another person to use your account. The facilities are allocated to you on a personal basis and you are responsible for the use of the machine when you are logged on. The school's system records and senior ICT staff monitor your use of the system.</p> <p>Use of the school's facilities by a third party using your user name or password will be attributable to you, and you will be held accountable for the misuse.</p>
Printing	<p>Please try to minimise the amount of printing that you do, using electronic means of sharing or viewing documents where possible. This keeps costs down and reduces our environmental impact.</p> <p>Printing in school is logged and monitored and is charged to the appropriate curriculum/pastoral or admin area.</p>
Logging off	<p>You must log off from the computer you are using at the end of each of your sessions and wait for the standard login screen to reappear before leaving.</p> <p>This signals to the system that you are no longer using the service; it ensures security and frees up resources for others to use.</p> <p>If you are leaving a computer unattended for a short period of time you should lock your computer using the start menu or shortcut key 'Windows key (flag) + L'</p>
Access to information not normally available	<p>You must not use the system or the internet to find or use facilities or flaws in the system that might give access to information or areas of the network not normally available.</p> <p>You must not attempt to install software to explore or harm the system. Use of hacking tools, e.g. 'loggers', 'sniffers' or 'evidence elimination software', is expressly forbidden.</p>
Connections to the system	<p>You must not connect any hardware which may be detrimental to the school's network.</p>

Connections to the computer	<p>You should use the keyboard, mouse and any headphones provided. You must not adjust or alter any settings or switches without first obtaining the written permission of a member of the ICT staff.</p> <p>You must never attempt to use any of the connectors on the back of any desktop computer.</p> <p>You may use USB memory sticks, or other portable storage media where a port is provided on the front of the computers. The security and backup of data stored on such devices is your responsibility.</p> <p>You are not permitted to connect anything else to the computer without first getting the permission of a member of the ICT staff.</p>
Virus	<p>If you suspect that your computer has a virus, you must report it to a member of the ICT staff immediately.</p>
Installation of software, files or media	<p>You must not install or attempt to install software of any kind to network drives or local hard drives of networked computers.</p> <p>You must not alter or re-configure software on any part of the school's system.</p>
File space	<p>You must manage your own file space by deleting old data rigorously and by deleting emails that you no longer require.</p> <p>If you believe that you have a real need for additional space, please discuss this with a senior member of the ICT support staff.</p>
Transferring files	<p>You may transfer files to and from your network home directories using removable devices.</p> <p>When transferring files to and from your network home directories, you must not import or export any material unless the owner of that material expressly permits you to do so.</p> <p>Care should be taken regarding personal or sensitive information. If copied or moved from the school network it should be transferred and stored in encrypted form.</p>
Reporting faults and malfunctions	<p>You must report any faults or malfunctions in writing to the ICT support staff, including full details and all error messages, as soon as possible.</p>

Food and drink	<p>You must not eat or drink, or bring food or drink, including sweets and chewing gum, into the ICT rooms.</p> <p>You must always maintain a clean and quiet working environment.</p>
Copying and plagiarising	<p>You must not plagiarise or copy any material which does not belong to you.</p>
Backup and storage	<p>All data stored on the school network is backed up and retained for disaster recovery purposes. This back-up is updated on a rolling basis.</p> <p>It is your responsibility to keep back-up copies, e.g. on a CD or memory stick, of anything removed from the network.</p> <p>Any data containing personal and special category data must not be stored on unencrypted media and paper back-ups must be stored in a secure lockable location.</p>

### 3. Internet policy and code of practice

- 3.1. The school can provide access to the internet from desktop PCs via the computer network and through a variety of electronic devices connected wirelessly to the network.
- 3.2. Whenever accessing the internet using the school's or personal equipment you must observe the code of practice below.
- 3.3. This policy and code of practice is designed to reduce and control the risk of offences being committed, liabilities being incurred, staff or other students being offended and the school's facilities and information being damaged.
- 3.4. Any breach of this policy and the code of practice will be treated extremely seriously, and it may result in disciplinary or legal action or expulsion.
- 3.5. The school may take steps, including legal action where appropriate, to recover from an individual any expenses or liabilities the school incurs because of the breach of this policy and code of practice.

#### Why is internet access available?

- 3.6. The internet is a large and very useful source of information. Numerous websites and services, both official and unofficial, provide information or links to information which would be useful for educational purposes.

## Why is a code of practice necessary?

There are four main issues:

- Although the internet is often described as 'free', there is a significant cost to the school for using it. This cost includes telephone line charges, subscription costs (which may depend on how much a service is used) and the computer hardware and software needed to support internet access.
- Although there is much useful information on the internet, there is a great deal more material which is misleading or irrelevant. Using the internet effectively requires training and self-discipline. Training is available on request from ICT staff.
- Unfortunately, the internet carries a great deal of unsuitable and offensive material. It is important for legal reasons, reasons of principle, and to protect to protect the staff and students who access the internet, that it is properly managed. Accessing certain websites and services, and viewing, copying or changing certain material, could amount to a criminal offence and give rise to legal liabilities.
- There is a danger of importing viruses on to the school's network, or passing viruses to a third party, via material downloaded from or received via the internet, or brought into the school on disks or other storage media.

## Code of practice

Use of the internet	<p>The Internet should not normally be used for private or leisure purposes; it is provided primarily for education or business use. You may use the internet for other purposes provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Such use is occasional and reasonable;</li><li>• Such use does not interfere in any way with your duties; and •</li></ul> <p>You always follow the code of practice.</p>
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Inappropriate material	<p>You must not use the internet to access any newsgroups, links, listservers, web pages or other areas of cyberspace that could be offensive because of pornographic, indecent, racist, violent, illegal, illicit, or other inappropriate content. "Inappropriate" in this context includes material which is unsuitable for viewing by students.</p> <p>You are responsible for rejecting any links to such material which may appear inadvertently during research.</p> <p>If you encounter any material which could be regarded as offensive you must leave that website or service immediately and not make any copy of that material. If you encounter any difficulty in leaving a website or service, you must inform the ICT support staff immediately.</p>
Misuse, abuse and access restrictions	<p>You must not misuse or abuse any website or service or attempt to bypass any access controls or restrictions on any website or service.</p>
Monitoring	<p>The internet access system used by the school maintains a record which identifies who uses the facilities and the use that you make of them.</p> <p>The information collected includes which website and services you visit, how long you remain there and which material you view. This information will be analysed and retained, and it may be used in disciplinary and legal proceedings.</p>
Giving out information	<p>You must not give any information concerning the school, its students or parents, or any member of staff when accessing any website or service. This prohibition covers the giving of names of any of these people – the only exception being the use of the school's name and your name when accessing a service which the school subscribes to.</p>
Personal safety	<p>You should take care with who you correspond with.</p> <p>You should not disclose where you are or arrange meetings with strangers you have got in contact with over the internet.</p>
Hardware and software	<p>You must not make any changes to any of the school's hardware or software. This prohibition also covers changes to any of the browser settings.</p> <p>The settings put in place by the school are an important part of the school security arrangements and making any changes, however innocuous they might seem, could allow hackers and computer viruses to access or damage the school's systems.</p>

Copyright	<p>You should assume that all material on the internet is protected by copyright and must be treated appropriately and in accordance with the owner's rights.</p> <p>You must not copy, download or plagiarise material on the internet unless the owner of the website expressly permits you to do so.</p>
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#### 4. Email policy and code of practice

- 4.1. The school's computer system enables members of the school to communicate by email with any individual or organisation with email facilities throughout the world.
- 4.2. For the reason outlined above, it is essential that a written policy and code of practice exists, which sets out the rules and principles for use of email by all.
- 4.3. Any breach of this policy and code of practice will be treated seriously and it may result in disciplinary or legal action or expulsion.
- 4.4. The school may take steps, including legal action where appropriate, to recover from an individual any expenses or liabilities the school incurs because of the breach of this policy and code of practice.

#### Code of practice

Purpose	<p>You should only use the school's email system for work related emails.</p> <p>You are only permitted to send a reasonable number of emails.</p>
Trust's disclaimer	<p>The school's email disclaimer is automatically attached to all outgoing emails and you must not cancel or disapply it.</p>
Monitoring	<p>Copies of all incoming and outgoing emails, together with details of their duration and destinations are stored centrally (in electronic form).</p> <p>The frequency and content of incoming and outgoing external emails are checked to determine whether the email system is being used in accordance with this policy and code of practice.</p> <p>The headteacher, senior staff and technical staff are entitled to have readonly access to your emails.</p>



Security	<p>As with anything else sent over the internet, emails are not completely secure. There is no proof of receipt, emails can be 'lost', they can suffer from computer failure and a determined 'hacker' could intercept, read and possibly alter the contents.</p> <p>As with other methods of written communication, you must make a judgment about the potential damage if the communication is lost or intercepted. Never send bank account information, including passwords, by email.</p>
Program files and nonbusiness documents	<p>You must not introduce program files or non-business documents from external sources on to the school's network.</p> <p>This might happen by opening an email attachment or by downloading a file from a website. Although virus detection software is installed, it can never be guaranteed 100 percent successful, so introducing nonessential software is an unacceptable risk for the school.</p> <p>If you have any reason for suspecting that a virus may have entered the school's system, you must contact the ICT support staff immediately.</p>
Quality	<p>Emails constitute records of the school and are subject to the same rules, care and checks as other written communications sent by the school. Emails will be checked under the same scrutiny as other written communications.</p> <p>Staff members should consider the following when sending emails: •</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether it is appropriate for material to be sent to third parties</li> <li>• The emails sent and received may have to be disclosed in legal proceedings</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The emails sent and received maybe have to be disclosed as part of fulfilling an SAR</li> <li>• Whether any authorisation is required before sending</li> <li>• Printed copies of emails should be retained in the same way as other correspondence, e.g. letter</li> <li>• The confidentiality between sender and recipient</li> <li>• Transmitting the work of other people, without their permission, may infringe copyright laws.</li> <li>• The sending and storing messages or attachments containing statements which could be construed as abusive, libelous, harassment may result in disciplinary or legal action being taken.</li> <li>• Sending or storing messages or attachments containing statements which could be construed as improper, abusive, harassing the recipient, libelous, malicious, threatening or contravening discrimination legislation or detrimental to the is a disciplinary offence and may also be a legal offence.</li> </ul>
Inappropriate emails or attachments	<p>You must not use email to access or send offensive material, chain messages or list-servers or for the purposes of bullying or plagiarising work.</p> <p>You must not send personal or inappropriate information by email about yourself, other members of staff, students or other members of the school community.</p> <p>If you receive any inappropriate emails or attachments you must report them to technical staff.</p>
Viruses	<p>If you suspect that an email has a virus attached to it, you must inform the technical staff immediately.</p>
Spam	<p>You must not send spam (sending the same message to multiple email addresses) without the permission of senior staff.</p>
Storage	<p>You are advised to regularly delete material you no longer require and to archive material that you wish to keep. For further information please see our School's Records guidance.</p>
Message size	<p>Staff are limited to sending messages with attachments which are up to 10Mb in size. If you wish to distribute files within the school, you can do so by using shared areas.</p>

Confidential Emails	<p>Where possible, CPOMS should be used to record or share any safeguarding concerns or logs rather than using E-mail. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy for more information.</p> <p>You must ensure that if confidential emails have to be sent, they are always suitably protected. You should be aware of the potential for an unauthorised third party to be privy to the content of the email. External confidential Email (send to addresses outside of the school) should be encrypted (using a service like Egress Switch) to protect the content of such messages.</p> <p>Confidential emails should be deleted when no longer required.</p>
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## 5. Email policy – advice to staff

5.1. Staff should remind themselves of the ICT Acceptable Use Policy which relates to the monitoring, security and quality of emails. In addition, staff should be guided by the following good practice:

- Staff should check their emails daily and respond, as appropriate, within a reasonable period if the email is directly addressed to them.
- Staff should avoid spam, as outlined in this policy.
- Staff should avoid using the email system as a message board and thus avoid sending trivial global messages.
- Whilst accepting the convenience of the staff distribution list, staff should try to restrict its use to important or urgent matters.
- Staff should send emails to the minimum number of recipients.
- Staff are advised to create their own distribution lists, as convenient and appropriate.
- Staff should always include a subject line.
- Staff are advised to keep old emails for the minimum time necessary.

## 6. Further guidelines

- Remember – emails remain a written record and can be forwarded to others or printed for formal use.
- As a rule of thumb, staff should be well advised to only write what they would say face to face and should avoid the temptation to respond to an incident or message by email in an uncharacteristic and potentially aggressive fashion.
- Remember, “tone” can be misinterpreted on the printed page and once it is sent it could end up in the public domain forever. Email lacks the other cues and clues that convey the sense in which what you say is to be taken, and you can easily convey the wrong impression.

- Remember that sending emails from your school account is similar to sending a letter on school letterhead, so don't say anything that might bring discredit or embarrassment to yourself or the school.
- Linked with this and given the popularity and simplicity for recording both visual and audio material, staff are advised to remember the possibility of being recorded in all that they say or do.

## **7. Electronic Communication with Students**

- 7.1. Email communications sent to all students, or to a large group of students through a standard distribution list, should therefore be restricted to matters which might be considered to be formal communications from Ribston Hall High School about a particular matter.
- 7.2. Email communications sent to all students must be approved by a member of the senior staff team.
- 7.3. Communication should only be sent through Ribston Hall High School's email systems.
- 7.4. SMS should NOT be used for formal or personal communication to students. Written communications and student emails are the methods of formal communication.

## **8. Social Media**

Staff members are strongly encouraged not to identify themselves as staff members of Ribston Hall High School in their personal social media platforms. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with Ribston Hall High School and to safeguard the privacy of staff members. This does not include professional networking sites.

- 8.1 Staff should not have contact through any social medium with any current student from Ribston Hall High School or any other school. Staff are advised not to communicate on social media platforms with recent ex-students within the remit of our data retention policy, except via professional networking sites for professional reasons.
- 8.2 Staff should decline 'friend requests' from students they receive in their personal social media accounts.
- 8.3 Information staff members have access to as part of their employment, including personal information about students and their family members, colleagues and other parties must not be discussed on their personal social media platforms.
- 8.4 Photographs, videos, or any images of pupils or students should not be published on personal social media platforms.

8.5 Caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be 'friends' in personal social networking sites. Social networking sites blur the line between work and personal lives, and it may be difficult to maintain professional relationships.

8.6 Any misuse or abuse of social media must be reported to the Head Teacher as soon as noticed, especially when concerning a pupil, parent/guardian, or employee.

8.7 Staff are strongly advised to carefully consider the impact of sharing personal opinions within their personal social media accounts that could cause offence to fellow staff members or potentially bring the School into disrepute.

## **9. Legal implications**

Staff should be aware that there are a number of legal implications associated with the inappropriate use of social media. Liability can arise under the laws of:

- Defamation
- Copyright
- Discrimination
- Contract
- Human Rights
- Protection from harassment
- Criminal Justice
- Data Protection

For further information or to clarify any of the points raised in this policy please speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Please sign below to confirm you have read and understood the school ICT Acceptable Use Policy:

**Signed:**

**Name:**

**Date:**