



# Chiltern Way Academy

Turning Futures Around

## Email Policy

**Responsibility for this policy (job title): IT Manager**

**Responsibility for its review: CEO**

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# Introduction

Members of staff are required to understand how to style an email in relation to good network etiquette and to teach students to handle email in the same way.

In the context of the Academy, emails should *not* be considered private and staff should assume that anything they write or email could become public. Therefore they must ensure that they are professional, maintaining a clear distinction between their personal and professional lives.

# Objectives and targets

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

# Action plan

## Managing emails

The Academy gives all staff their own email account as a work-based tool. This Academy email account should be the account that is used for *all* Academy business. This is to minimise the risk of receiving unsolicited or malicious emails and avoids the risk of personal contact information being revealed.

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:

Under *no* circumstances should staff contact students, parents / carers or conduct any Academy business using any *personal* email addresses.

Staff must not share their personal email addresses with students and parents /carers.

It is the responsibility of each account holder to keep their password/s secure.

All external emails, including those to parents / carers, should be constructed in the same way as a formal letter written on Academy headed paper (ie use of Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms).

Staff must take care with the content of all email messages, as incorrect or improper statements can give rise to claims for discrimination, harassment, defamation, breach of confidentiality or breach of contract.

Staff must take care with the tone of all email messages. Use appropriate language; never send an email you would not want to be shown to others; beware of sending emails when angry or upset; do not use CAPITALS as this is construed as shouting.

Consider a conversation or telephone call rather than an email, especially if your message is urgent or sensitive.

All emails should be checked carefully before sending.

If any issues /complaints are involved then staff sending emails to parents / carers, external organisations or students are advised to cc their line manager/s and other relevant individuals.

Emails created or received as part of your Academy job will be subject to disclosure in response to a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Email messages are required to be disclosed in legal proceedings or in response to requests from individuals under the Data Protection Act 2018 in the same way as paper documents. Deletion from a user's inbox does not mean that an email cannot be recovered for the purposes of disclosure. All email messages should be treated as potentially retrievable.

Do not make emails visible to students.

The Academy requires a standard disclaimer to be attached to all email correspondence, clarifying that any views expressed are not necessarily those of the Academy – see the appendix. Please note that this disclaimer is automatically added to emails sent externally.

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

Delete all emails of short-term value.

Organise email into folders and carry out frequent house-keeping on 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 Academy email (whether directly, through webmail when away from the office or on non-Academy hardware) all the Academy ICT, e-safety and email policies apply.

Staff must immediately inform their line manager/network manager if they receive an offensive email.

Any suspicious emails should be reported to the network manager and should not be opened.

## **Sending emails**

**The following rules apply:**

- When composing your message to a parent / carer or non-staff member you should always use formal language, as if you were writing a letter on headed paper.
- 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 Academy 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.
- Do not send whole school emails unless essential for Academy business.
- Do not send or forward attachments unnecessarily. Whenever possible, send the location path to the shared drive rather than sending attachments.
- Keep the length of emails to a minimum.
- Always check the email trail / thread is appropriate and relevant.
- If staff send an email in error which contains the personal information of another person, they must inform the ICT Manager and Head of Campus immediately and follow our data breach procedure.

## Receiving emails

### The following rules apply:

- Check your email regularly. However, there is no expectation for staff to check emails outside of working hours.
- Never open attachments from an untrusted source. If unsure, always consult IT support first.
- Do not use the email systems to store attachments. Detach and save business- related work to the appropriate shared drive/folder.
- If appropriate, activate your 'out-of-office' notification when away for extended periods.
- The setting to automatically forward and/or delete emails is not allowed. Individuals are required to 'manage' their accounts.
- If staff receive an email in error, the sender should be informed and the email deleted. If the email contains sensitive or confidential information, the user must not make use of that information or disclose that information.

# 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. Staff should ensure that they have read and are aware of the secure data handling policy.

Where the conclusion is that your Academy 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 address, of any intended recipient of the information.
- Verify (preferably 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 than 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 IT support.
- Provide the encryption key or password by a *separate* contact with the recipient(s) – preferably by telephone.
- Do not identify such information in the subject line of any email.
- Request confirmation of safe receipt.
- When sending an email containing personal or sensitive data, the name of the individual is not to be included in the subject line and the document containing the information must be encrypted.
- To provide additional security you should put 'CONFIDENTIAL' in the subject line and as a header in the email and any attachments to the email.

## Students and email

If students are issued with an email account when joining the Academy, that is active for the time they are studying with us, staff should make students aware of the following when using email:

- Student email users are required to use the appropriate formal language in their messages.
- Students should not reveal any personal details about themselves or others in email communication.

- Students should not use email to arrange to meet anyone.
- Students must ensure that any email attachments they receive are checked for viruses before opening.
- Students must immediately inform a teacher/trusted adult if they receive an offensive email.
- Staff should inform other relevant staff if they become aware of *any* student misuse of emails.

## Monitoring and evaluation

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

## Appendix

### **Email disclaimer text is automatically added to all outgoing emails**

This message contains confidential information and is intended solely for the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you are not the named addressee you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Unauthorised reproduction, disclosure, modification and/or distribution of this e-mail is strictly prohibited. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete this e-mail from your system. E-mail transmission cannot be guaranteed to be secure or error free as information could be intercepted, corrupted, lost, destroyed, arrive late or incomplete, or contain viruses. The sender therefore does not accept liability for any errors or omissions in the contents of this message, which arise as a result of e-mail transmission.

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