



Personal use of Social Media

Students and members of the wider school community should not identify themselves as members of Ridgeway Academy in their personal web-space, unless specifically linked to an approved job role within the school community where it serves a purpose to professionally market the school. This is to prevent information being linked with the school and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, pupils and parents and the wider school community.

Students should not have contact through any personal social medium with any member of staff, whether from Ridgeway Academy or any other school, other than those mediums approved by the Senior Leadership Team or the Admissions and Marketing Department, unless the staff concerned are family members.

If students and members of the wider school community wish to communicate with staff they should only do so through official school sites created for this purpose.

Information that students and members of the wider community have access to as part of their involvement with Ridgeway Academy, including personal information, should not be discussed on their personal web space.

Photographs, videos or any other types of image of students and their families or images depicting staff members, clothing with school logos or images identifying school premises should not be published on personal or public web space without prior permission from the school.

We advise that school email addresses should not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff, students, parents and the wider school community should not edit open access online encyclopedias such as *Wikipedia* in a personal capacity. The source of the correction will be recorded and Ridgeway Academy reserves the right to amend these details for their sole purpose.

All staff, parents, students and members of the wider community are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. All staff, parents, students and members of the wider community should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online.

Students and the wider school community should not post images or videos from school events on any public social media site. Images or videos taken at school events, when such permission has been granted by the school, are for the sole and private use of that individual and their use must be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The school accepts that some sites may be used for professional purposes to highlight a personal profile with summarised details, e.g. LinkedIn. The school would advise that care is taken to maintain an up to date profile and a high level of presentation on such sites if

Ridgeway Academy is listed.

Inappropriate use of social networking sites by parents

Although social networking sites may appear to be the quickest and easiest ways to express frustrations or concerns, it is rarely appropriate to do so. Other channels, such as private and confidential discussion are most appropriate.

The school considers the following examples to be inappropriate uses of social networking sites.

- Making allegations about pupils at the School/cyber bullying;
- Making complaints about the School/staff at the School;
- Posting negative/offensive comments about specific pupils/staff at the School;
- Posting racist comments;
- Posting comments which threaten violence.

The School will always try to deal with concerns raised by parents in a professional and appropriate manner and understands that parents may not always realise when they have used social networking sites inappropriately. Therefore, as a first step, the School will usually discuss the matter with the parent to try and resolve the matter and to ask that the relevant information be removed from the social networking site in question. If the parent refuses to do this and continues to use social networking sites in a manner the School considers inappropriate, the School will consider taking the following action:

- Take legal advice and/or legal action where the information posted is defamatory in anyway or if the circumstance warrant this;
- Set out the School's concerns to you in writing, giving you a warning and requesting that the material in question is removed;
- Contact the Police where the school feels it appropriate – for example, if it considers crime (such as harassment) has been committed; or in cases where the posting has a racial or homophobic element, is considered to be grossly obscene or is threatening violence;
- Take other legal action against the individual.