

E-Safety - SCHOOL & NURSERY

Overview

Social Networking Sites (SNS), Blogs (Web Logs) and World Wide Web (WWW) Personal Web Sites (PWS) must be considered as documents that are published within the public domain. Such sites allow the free sharing of information and opinions. While they have their place in private life, they may cause problems within a school or nursery community on several levels.

Information placed on these sites may be useful, entertaining, and providing a medium for friends to share experiences, photographs, messages and generally to stay in touch. On the other hand, entries may breach privacy conventions or regulations, may be considered to be 'cyber bullying'; they may be defamatory, obscene, libellous or just inappropriate.

Information published on the WWW, including that in SNS and Blogs should be considered to be permanently published. It is almost impossible to remove information once it has appeared - even when it seems to have been taken down.

**It is not expected that children at The Villa will be accessing SNS.
The use of SNS by pupils while at school is prohibited.**

Employees: Staff, Volunteers, Students, etc.

Information and opinions that refer directly or indirectly to The Villa, its administration, its pupils or its members of staff must not be posted unless officially sanctioned by the Proprietor, Head Teacher or Nursery Manager. It is inappropriate to discuss issues relating to pupils or other staff on an SNS. Accessing SNS on school and nursery resources is prohibited. Staff who use SNS outside of work must be aware of the potential adverse consequences of their actions.

Staff must realise that posting material (including text, video, audio or images) which damages the reputation of The Villa, their colleagues, or causes concern about their suitability to work with children will be taken very seriously, and could lead to allegations of unsuitability or gross misconduct.

Cyber Bullying, Peer Pressure, Spam

It is unacceptable to engage in bullying, spamming, illegal behaviour, malicious blogging or similar antisocial behaviours. Staff who engage in antisocial behaviours on a social networking or blogging site that has ramifications within this establishment's community (such as bullying a colleague or pupil) will be subject to

The Villa's Code of Practice regarding such behaviour, even though the infringement has occurred outside the establishment.

Staff are advised never to post provocative pictures of themselves or anyone else, and must be sure that any images they provide do not reveal additional information regarding identity without prior consent by the subject.

Staff are reminded to always check the background of a photograph

Staff are advised to use only blogging provider sites with clearly stated terms of use, and make sure they can protect the actual blogs (not just the User Accounts) with passwords. However, it is prudent to presume that anyone can see it. Staff should exercise their judgment before giving out personal details, such as home or mobile phone numbers or private email addresses, to parents of children who attend The Villa.

Employees need to be aware that the public nature of blogs and social networking sites means that anyone can read your comments; including your employer, a prospective employer, or a person who is seeking information about your personality, political or religious views.

Staff-Pupil Relations

We hold a particular and special position in society and are expected to uphold moral and ethical codes of behaviour, often to a greater degree than any other profession or vocation.

Staff should, as a rule, not have external friendships (i.e. personal relationships) with current pupils beyond that which is normal for the staff/student relationship. A personal relationship on a Social Networking Site would exceed the accepted bounds of such a relationship, and might leave the member of staff open to allegations of improper conduct.

Staff should also be aware of interaction with the parents of current pupils; in that comments or opinions may be construed in ways not envisaged, which may lead to unforeseen social or legal complications (see Legal Liability below).

Friendships (personal relationships) with ex-pupils are a matter for the individual member of staff, but it is prudent to consider the ramifications of personal relationships with ex-pupils who have younger siblings or friends still at The Villa, where private or personal information could be passed on to third parties.

Your Colleagues and Your Position

Be thoughtful and accurate in your posts, and be respectful of how other members of The Villa community may be affected. All current employees can be viewed as representatives of The Villa, which can add significance to your public reflections on a wide variety of topics.

Legal Liability

When individuals choose to 'go public' with opinions via a blog, SNS or a personal web site, they are legally responsible for their commentary. Individuals can be held personally liable for any commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libellous. Employees should exercise caution with regard to exaggeration, colourful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterisations. The summary position is that you blog (or post on the blogs of others) at your own risk. Outside parties can pursue legal action against you for postings.

Privileged Information

It is forbidden for employees to divulge, post or publish any confidential, proprietary, or privileged information pertaining to The Villa, its staff, its pupils, its policies, finance or procedures. This information may not appear in a blog, on a personal web site or on a social networking site.

Personal Web Sites

If you have a personal web site, and the pupils or members of the wider community of The Villa are aware of it, care should be taken to ensure it is suitable for general viewing by pupils and parents. Ensure that there is no inappropriate content or links to sites that are inappropriate.

If you have a personal web site that does not conform to the expectations above, you must ensure that it is not publicised within The Villa community. It might be prudent to ensure no personal identification is available at such a site that might lead back to you, and hence The Villa.