

**ANGUS COUNCIL
PEOPLE DIRECTORATE**

**THE USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS,
SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES**

POLICY GUIDELINES

September 2013
(updated October 2015)



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1 INTRODUCTION

As an ever increasing range of new technologies are embedded in our day to day lives, numerous opportunities exist to incorporate these into classrooms to enhance teaching and learning opportunities. These new technologies not only provide access to materials and resources, but have the potential to create connections with classrooms and communities around the world in ways that have never been available in the past. Although this opens up a huge range of possibilities, it also presents a number of challenges related to boundaries between teachers and pupils.

2 USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Online communications incorporate a variety of software, applications (including those running on mobile devices), e-mail and the Internet. All of these enable users to interact, create, access and exchange information online, and are an integral part of day to day learning in the classroom. Angus Council has a duty to protect all children using online communications during the school day.

2.1 Internet

Significant educational benefits for pupils working in all curricular areas can be gained through use of the Internet. This can involve access to world-wide information, the development of skills for learning, life and work and the promotion of key skills in literacy and numeracy. Internet use in all classrooms needs to be well planned, task orientated and take place within a regulated and managed environment. Staff should manage the use of equipment used to search the Internet. This can only be achieved by allowing pupils to undertake Internet searches as part of a structured lesson.

Internet safety is promoted in all Angus schools. Schools need to recognise the importance of ensuring effective communication and developing effective partnerships with key stakeholders, including children, young people, staff, parents and appropriate agencies in promoting safe use of the Internet.

All staff should be highly aware that unmediated Internet access has the potential to place pupils and indeed staff themselves in embarrassing, inappropriate and even dangerous situations.

Internet safety depends on staff, schools, parents and, where appropriate, the pupils themselves taking responsibility for the use of Internet and associated communication technologies. The balance between education for responsible use, regulation and technical solutions, needs to be assessed carefully. Pupils should be provided with guidance, reinforced by procedures and appropriate rules, which are prominently displayed. This information will help them make responsible decisions.

Clear locally agreed strategies to help ensure responsible and appropriate [be safe on the Internet](#) behaviours have been formulated. They are based on limiting access, developing responsibility and on guiding pupils towards educational activities. The effectiveness of these strategies should be monitored regularly within schools and all staff, parents and pupils should remain vigilant.

A parent/carer consent form ([Appendix C](#), The Use of Images and Mobile Devices) will be issued, along with the [be safe on the Internet](#) information, to all parents/carers when a pupil joins an Angus school. This consent form will remain valid for the period of time the pupil attends an Angus school and will expire after this time.

2.2 E-mail

All staff and pupils are provided with school e-mail accounts and mailboxes for their individual use. There is clear guidance for staff to ensure a high level of security with their online communications. [Angus Council's Internet and E-mail policy](#) framework outlines this fully.

At no time should a member of staff exchange private e-mail addresses with pupils.

All staff and those pupils in Primary 4 – Secondary 6 are issued with a generic password which they have to change to a unique personal network password. Clear guidance is given to these individuals to ensure full understanding of the need for confidentiality relating to unique personal network passwords. Every classroom should display a poster outlining the key principles for safe use of the Internet which includes password protection.

The younger pupils in Angus schools and pre-school classes are issued with generic passwords which are maintained until they reach Primary 4.

3 USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Technology has become ever-present in our lives and is used as an increasingly essential tool in the classroom. From e-mail to text and from blogging to tweets, these new technologies have opened up a wide range of possibilities to support pupils in their learning and adults in their teaching.

The ability to communicate in real time with others and access networks across the world provides a wealth of opportunities for teachers. It also presents challenge and due attention must be paid to ensure clarity of boundaries between teachers and pupils. Clear guidance is given to all Angus Council staff as part of its Corporate Policy Personnel Advisory Bulletin No 61, Use of Social Media.

3.1 Facebook and Twitter

Facebook accounts are not yet encouraged for individual schools. However, it is possible to view and post comments on non-school related Facebook pages created by other organisations from within schools and educational establishments.

All schools can request a Twitter account to be set up for the school. This can be accessed through the Personnel Advisory Bulletin No 61, Use of Social Media document. The document contains a link to a 'Business Case for Social Media Account' template. This completed pro forma should be submitted to the school's nominated senior manager within the People Directorate for initial approval. It should then be forwarded to the Council's Public Relations Manager for final approval.

3.2 Professional Conduct and Vulnerability

All teachers must abide by the GTC Scotland: Code of Professionalism and Conduct (COPAC) <http://www.gtcs.org.uk/standards/copac.aspx>

In any communication with pupils, staff must ensure they maintain a formal, courteous and professional tone and maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Staff should also ensure that they operate online in a way which will not call their professional integrity or intentions into question.

All staff should be aware of the security settings of the technology being used and have knowledge of those able to access any information posted. Staff **must not** discuss pupils, colleagues, parents or carers online or criticise their employer or others within the school community.

It is recognised that teachers can be vulnerable to unintended misuse of electronic communication and social media. The potential for innocent actions to be misconstrued due to the casual dialogue encouraged by the use of texting and social media should not be underestimated. To minimise the risks associated with this, teachers should never share information with pupils in any environment, electronic or otherwise, that would not be deemed appropriate to share within the school setting.

3.3 Privacy and Security

To help maintain a level of security with their online communications it is advised that staff only use official channels of communication when discussing work related matters e.g. National Education Intranet "Glow" and Council provided e-mail addresses.

At no time should a member of staff exchange private text, phone numbers, personal e-mail addresses or photographs with pupils. They should also avoid any 'friend' requests to or from pupils within social media sites. If these requests come from parents, then staff should use their own discretion in response to

these. However, it may be more prudent to decline these invitations and remind parents of more formal channels which they can use to discuss their children's education.

All staff are required to maintain adequate security settings on their data. They should regularly review their privacy settings particularly in regard to photographs. These settings should prohibit others from tagging them in any photographs or updates without their permission and also ask others to remove any undesirable content related to them.

All electronic communication devices used by staff should be protected with a PIN, especially when in school, to protect access to content and prevent potential misuse.

3.4 Newly Qualified Teachers

Teachers entering the Angus Probationer Teacher Induction Programme are required to audit and re-evaluate any personal online information. They should be made aware of this on the first induction training day. They should also be made aware that potential employers and pupils may try to access online social media profiles.

3.5 Cyber Bullying and Minimising Risk

Cyber Bullying can take many forms including harassment, discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, sex, or disability. Any member of staff who is the victim of cyber bullying or is uncomfortable with comments, photos or posts made by pupils or colleagues of or about them or the school should bring the matter to the attention of their Head Teacher. Care should be taken to avoid making defamatory remarks about another person as this could result in legal action.

If any staff member is made aware of inappropriate use of electronic communication or social networking by a pupil or concerning a pupil they should report the matter to their line manager using the agreed procedures in place in each school.

Pupils using electronic communication and social media sites outwith school should be made aware of the implications of uploading any inappropriate text or images of staff or other individuals to sites such as YouTube or Facebook. Staff should report such matters to their line manager using the agreed procedures in place in school.

Staff should alert pupils to and encourage them to use appropriate and safe online behaviour (see Angus Council's [Be Safe on the Internet](#) leaflet for further guidance).

3.6 Misuse of Social Media by Parents/Carers or other persons

If any parent/carer or other person has placed or intends to place inappropriate comments about the school, other pupils or members of school staff on social media websites such as Facebook or Twitter, the school should communicate immediately with parents/carers ([Appendix A](#)). The individual should be contacted directly by the Head Teacher and asked to remove the comment immediately. He/she should also be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the issues. If the parent/carer or other person refuses to remove/withdraw the comments from the Social Media site, the Head Teacher should issue a further letter ([Appendix B](#)). If no action is taken as a result of this, the matter should be referred to the school's nominated senior manager within the People Directorate.

4 USE OF YOUTUBE AND OTHER VIDEO STREAMING/VIDEO HOSTING WEBSITES

Many excellent educational resources are now being hosted on YouTube, a video streaming website. These short video clips are successfully used in the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence to enhance learning and teaching across all curriculum areas. All staff have full access to YouTube from any school PC, Laptop or Netbook.

Pupils **should not** be given direct access to YouTube.

4.1 YouTube

The Angus Council [E-mail and Internet Policy](#) rules will apply to all staff using these resources and it is the responsibility of individual staff to ensure the use of the YouTube website is appropriate.

Where video clips are used to enhance a lesson, staff should have viewed it in its entirety prior to the start of any lesson to verify the clip is of suitable quality and appropriate content for the class.

When showing a video clip to a class, the video window should be set to full screen mode to avoid other content e.g. adverts appearing on screen.

YouTube has been added to the list of approved websites in the web filtering software and all usage is recorded.

5 USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND SIMILAR MOBILE DEVICES

During the school day the use of mobile phones or similar mobile devices will not normally be permitted on the school campus. However, the potential of current and emerging technologies in contributing to the delivery and support of the curriculum is recognised. Mobile devices have the capability to capture images, record video clips, access the internet, playback MP3/MP4 files, allow blogging, Bluetooth connectivity, record audio and act as a calculator.

At certain times during the school day, teachers and learners may want to utilise these functions to aid learning and teaching. Learners may have the opportunity to use Council procured or personal mobile devices in the classroom. The use of personal mobile devices by pupils in the classroom will be under **express permission** of the teacher.

Mobile devices are generally not secure and should not under any circumstances be used to store or transmit school work or records which contains personal information relating to any pupil or member of staff.

5.1 Taking Mobile Phones or similar Mobile Devices to Schools

It is recognised that many pupils will wish to take their mobile phones or other mobile devices to school with them, and that this will be supported by many parents. Parents should not contact pupils directly on their mobile phones during school hours. Any emergency contact with a child during the school day should be made through the school office.

It is also recognised that the use of a mobile phone, iPad, tablet PC, MP3 player or similar device outwith the classroom could be assessed as a Health and Safety risk, particularly in corridors and social areas.

Pupils must be made aware that no images or school work should be transferred using 'Bluetooth' or uploaded into a social media site such as YouTube or Facebook unless as part of a teacher-led lesson. Staff and pupils should be made aware that school work should be stored only on data storage facilities provided by or approved by the Council.

Mobile phones and other devices must be switched off during examinations. Mobile phones are **strictly prohibited and must not** under any circumstances be taken into SQA examinations (see SQA website for more details).

Staff wishing to bring personal mobile phones and tablet devices to school are required to be aware of the following conditions:

- Angus Council will accept **no** responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile devices brought into schools which are owned by staff
- Staff who use mobile devices must ensure that the Data Protection Act 1998 Guidelines are followed and that **no** personal data relating to staff or pupils is stored/held on an unencrypted device
- Staff using mobile devices irresponsibly to cause harm directly or indirectly to another person or the reputation of the school may face disciplinary action
- Staff attempting to use mobile devices to access inappropriate materials/websites via the corporate network may face disciplinary action

5.2 Misuse of Mobile Phones or Similar Devices

All staff and pupils should be made aware that the misuse of a mobile phone/device is an offence under the Communications Act 2003, if it involves a call or message that is grossly offensive or is of an indecent, obscene or menacing character, and, the distribution of certain pornography is an offence under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.

Any pupil who contravenes the school's policy on the use of mobile phones and devices should expect to have her/his mobile phone (or similar device) confiscated. If it is necessary for the school to confiscate a pupil's mobile phone or other device, then it will be the responsibility of that pupil to wait until the end of the school day to approach the member of staff designated by the Head Teacher to obtain the return of the phone. All confiscations of this type will be logged by the school. Schools shall ensure that they have a procedure in place to ensure that confiscated phones or other devices are kept securely and returned to the rightful owner. Parents/carers will be informed if the confiscation is to be for more than one day.

If any pupil has to have his/her mobile phone or other device confiscated on more than two occasions in any one month period, then that pupil and her/his parents/carers will be asked to desist from taking a mobile phone or other device to school normally for a period of 2 weeks or such other period of time which the Head Teacher deems appropriate. Other sanctions may also be appropriate, in the context of each school's Discipline Policy/Behaviour Management Policy. If a pupil and her/his parent/carer refuse to comply with this request, the Head Teacher (or nominated depute) may have no option but to exclude the pupil temporarily pending an acceptable resolution.

5.3 Inappropriate Text or Images

Where there is inappropriate text or images found on a mobile phone or other mobile device and the text or image is uploaded on sites such as YouTube or Facebook, the pupil or staff member should be asked to immediately remove these.

If there is a concern that text or image(s) stored on a mobile phone or other mobile device, may be inflammatory, inappropriate or illegal then the Head Teacher should confiscate the phone/device. The [Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures](#) should be reviewed and contact made with the school's nominated senior manager within the People Directorate. Under advisement, the Head Teacher should contact Tayside Police.

Each school should formulate its own policy based on the above guidance. There should be consultation with the School Staff Consultative Group and where appropriate parents/carers and pupils. Once agreed the policy should be shared with pupils, staff, parents and carers.

6 USE OF CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV)

Where CCTV is used in a school an agreed code of practice must be adhered to. This includes:

- carefully planning the siting of cameras
- arrangements for access to and disclosure of images
- monitoring compliance and security arrangements.

The requirements of this code can be found at [CCTV Code of Practice](#).

7 USE OF CAMERAS, VIDEO CAMERAS AND WEBCAMS

During the school day the use of photographic equipment such as videos or still image cameras will not normally be permitted anywhere on the school campus unless as a part of a teacher-led lesson.

All parents and carers are required to complete a consent pro forma ([Appendix C](#)) enabling permission for school staff to take still images and video recordings of their children. This consent form also seeks permission to allow images and videos to be used in publications for educational purposes.

Images of children or young people (up to the age of 18) must not appear in any publication or website without explicit parental consent in writing.

It should be noted that once a parent/carers has given consent, this will be valid for the period of time the pupil is on the school roll.

7.1 Educational Use

Schools are increasingly using still image cameras and video in learning and teaching and to share information with parents. For example, photographic evidence of a child's achievement may be stored in pupil learning logs or folios or a pupil's personal talk to the class can be video recorded and given to parents. Where schools use technology in this way, parents must be asked for consent (as above).

7.2 Class/School Performances and Other Events

It is important that school performances and other events such as sports days should be enjoyable and worthwhile. Pupils and staff will have worked hard to prepare for the production or event and it is important the experience is not disrupted by movement in the audience, flashes etc. Similarly some parents/carers and relatives may also wish to keep a record of the performance.

Under the **Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988** an individual **is permitted** to take photographs and make a video record of such a performance or event for their own **personal use**.

*However, we would **recommend** you refrain from uploading any images and/or video clips into personal Facebook accounts and/or any other forms of Social Media whatever form these may take. Such photographs and video clips(S) may contain images of other pupils taking part in the performance or sports event for whom permission may not have been granted. If such images were to be uploaded into sites such as Facebook, the images/videos could be accessible by countless 'friends' or others who may be able to access the site(s). Unfortunately, in addition to copyright issues, this may have the undesired consequence of putting certain children at risk, which obviously no-one wishes to happen.*

Moreover, school staff may make and keep a similar recording of the performance or event for the record or for the purposes of formative assessment. (Arrangements for licensing video recordings for other purposes are detailed in the Angus Council Education Admin Manual, Section 2.)

To ensure that neither the performance, the event nor the audience is disrupted or inconvenienced, the use of videos and cameras must be carefully controlled. Accordingly anyone wishing to record all or part of a production (for personal domestic use) must seek permission from the Head Teacher well in advance. The school should ensure a record is maintained of those to whom permission has been granted.

Schools may be able to accommodate such requests by offering seats in the back row (to avoid disrupting other members of the audience) or other appropriate arrangements at other events. Alternatively schools may wish to take advantage of a Limited Availability Product Licence (LAPL) available from the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS), which enables, with limitations, productions etc to be recorded and sold (more information on this facility is available from Schools and Learning).

7.3 School Trips

While it will be possible for individuals to take photographs or make videos on school trips, these should be appropriate in nature. Any images taken should not be shared without the permission of the individual concerned.

7.4 Use of Webcams

The regulations for using webcams are similar to those for CCTV (closed-circuit television). The area in which the webcam is located must be well signposted so that people know about it before they enter that area. This equates to seeking individual consent.

Signage should clearly explain

- why the webcam is there
- what images will be used for, and
- who might look at the pictures

Any educational establishment intending to use a webcam must ensure appropriate signage is in place.

8 FURTHER ADVICE

Anyone seeking additional information/advice should, in the first instance, contact the Education ICT Manager on (01307) 476220.

8.1 References to other Council or National Policies

- PERSONNEL ADVISORY BULLETIN NO 61: USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA (Angus Council)
- [GTC Scotland guidelines for teachers on the use of electronic communication and social media](#)
- [EIS Social networks advice for teaching staff](#)
- [The Computer Misuse Act 1990](#)
- [Scotland's Child Internet Safety Action Plan](#)
- [Defamation Act 1996](#)
- [Data Protection Act 1998](#)
- [Angus Council E-mail and Internet Usage Policy](#)
- [Communications Act 2003](#)
- [Safe and Well \(2005\)](#); (Scottish Government publication)
- <http://ceop.police.uk/Documents/Webcam%20fact%20sheet%202.pdf>
(CEOP stay safe on screen: How to chat on a webcam with confidence)

The following websites give useful information about the safe and responsible use of mobile devices:

- [Guidance on Developing Policies to Promote the Safe and Responsible Use of Mobile Technology in Schools](#)
- <http://highlandesafety.wordpress.com/?s=mobile+phone+safety+advice>
- <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/ISRU-News/young-people/>
- http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_16/control/
- <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/ISRU-News/games-and-mobile/mobile-devices-and-the-law/>

DATE

Dear Parent/Carer

SOCIAL NETWORKING

As you are probably aware, in recent years, there has been a significant growth in the use of social media, including Facebook and Twitter. It is important when using such sites to consider the implications your comments may have on others. It has been brought to my attention that some negative comments have been made on Facebook by some parents/pupils about the school and/or a staff member (*delete as appropriate*).

I would encourage parents who have any concerns about their child's education to approach me directly, rather than make comments through a Social Networking site. Statements made in a public forum such as Facebook can cause upset and harm to others, whether intended or not.

As you are aware, we try hard to work in partnership with our parents for the benefit of the children in our school. I believe that criticism of the school and/or a staff member (*delete as appropriate*) on Facebook is unhelpful and does not follow the guidance outlined in Angus Council's Parental Rights and Responsibilities information:

http://www.angus.gov.uk/info/20276/parent_and_pupil_guidance/576/rights_and_responsibilities_of_pupils_and_parents

I would ask parents who have any concerns about their child's well-being or education to contact me in the first instance.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours faithfully

DATE

Dear Parent/Carer

SOCIAL NETWORKING

As you are probably aware, in recent years, there has been a significant growth in the use of social media, including Facebook and Twitter. It is important when using such sites to consider the implications your comments may have on others. It has been brought to my attention that you have made some inaccurate/malicious/aggressive/threatening comments on Facebook about the school and/or a staff member (*delete as appropriate*).

If you have any concerns about your child's education, I would ask you to approach me directly, rather than make comments through a Social Networking site. Statements made in a public forum such as Facebook can cause upset and harm to others, whether intended or not. I would ask you in the first instance to remove the comments from the public forum as soon as possible. Should you not remove the malicious/aggressive/threatening (*delete as appropriate*) comments, one of my options may be to contact the Strategic Director - People and other agencies.

As you are aware, we try hard to work in partnership with our parents for the benefit of the children in our school. I believe that criticism of the school and/or a staff member (*delete as appropriate*) on Facebook is unhelpful and does not follow the guidance outlined in Angus Council's Parental Rights and Responsibilities information:

http://www.angus.gov.uk/info/20276/parent_and_pupil_guidance/576/rights_and_responsibilities_of_pupils_and_parents

I would ask parents who have any concerns about their child's well-being or education to contact me in the first instance.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours faithfully

ANGUS COUNCIL – PEOPLE DIRECTORATE

USE OF IMAGES AND MOBILE DEVICES (Tablets and Phones)



- Use of pupil images in school literature and website
- Use of personal mobile devices/phones in Angus Schools
- S Q A Regulations

Parent/Carer Consent Form

School Name: _____

Pupil Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Occasionally, we may take photographs of the children at our school. We may use these images in the school's handbook or in other printed publications that we produce, as well as on our website. We may also make video recordings for educational use.

From time to time, our school may be visited by the media who will take photographs or film footage of a visiting dignitary or other high profile event. Pupils may appear in these images which may be used in local newspapers or, in certain circumstances, on television. To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, we need your permission before we can photograph or make any recordings of your child.

As outlined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 an individual parent/carers **is permitted** to take photographs and make a video record of a class/school performance or event for *their own personal use*.

However, we would **recommend** you refrain from uploading any images and/or video clips into personal Facebook accounts and/or any other forms of Social Media whatever form these may take. Such photographs and video clips(s) may contain images of other pupils taking part in the performance or sports event for whom permission may not have been granted. If such images were to be uploaded into sites such as Facebook, the images/videos could be accessible by countless 'friends' or others who may be able to access the site(s). Unfortunately, in addition to copyright issues, this may have the undesired consequence of putting certain children at risk, which obviously no-one wishes to happen.

The widespread ownership of mobile devices among young people requires that the People Directorate, school managers, teachers, pupils, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile devices are used responsibly in school. This consent form is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile devices can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile devices provide (such as increased safety and greater learning opportunities) can continue to be enjoyed by our pupils. To that end, we are allowing pupils to bring their personal mobile devices/mobile phones to school should you agree to this.

Please answer all questions below, then sign and date the form where shown.

*Please circle
your answer*

1	May we use your child's photograph in the school handbook and other printed publications that we produce?	Yes	No
2	May we record your child's image on digital camera/video as part of school activities?	Yes	No
3	May we use your child's image/photograph showing school activities on our website? (It is policy where images are used, names will not be provided)	Yes	No
4	Are you happy for your child or his/her photograph to appear in the media or on websites which have been approved by the school showing school activities?	Yes	No
5	Would you allow your child to take part in video conferencing as part of school activities?	Yes	No
6	May we store your child's photograph on our pupil database? (these photographs are taken by the official school photographer or in some cases by school staff)	Yes	No
8	Are you happy for your child to bring their personal mobile device/phone to school and to use it to enhance their learning if deemed appropriate by the teacher?	Yes	No

PLEASE NOTE that by signing this form you are agreeing to the following:

- the council/school shall accept **no** responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile devices which are owned by pupils brought into school
- pupils who use mobile devices irresponsibly to harm another person could face disciplinary action
- pupils found using a mobile device in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action which may include having their assessment invalidated

Pupil Signature: *

* for pupils over the age of 12 _____ Date: _____

Parent/Carer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (in block capitals): _____

NOTES:

- 1 This form is valid for school education in Angus, or for the period of time your child attends an Angus school. The consent will automatically expire after this time unless revoked by you in writing before then.
- 2 We will not use the personal details or full names (which means first name **and** surname) of any child or adult in a photographic image on video, on our website or in any of our printed publications.
- 3 We will not include personal e-mail, postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers on video, on our website or in printed publications.
- 4 We may use group or class photographs or footage with very general labels, such as "A Science Lesson" at the school.

Please return the completed form to the school as soon as possible