

ANGUS COUNCIL EDUCATION AND LIFELONG
LEARNING DIRECTORATE

THE USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES

POLICY GUIDELINES

October 2022



Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION.....	3
2 USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS	3
2.1 Security Policy	3
3 INTERNET	3
4 GLOW AND E-MAIL	4
5 USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA	4
5.1 Social Media.....	4
5.2 Professional Conduct, Privacy and Security.....	5
5.3.....	6
Newly Qualified Teachers	6
6 ONLINE BULLYING AND MINIMISING RISK	6
6.1 Misuse of Social Media by Parents/Carers or other persons	7
7 USE OF YOUTUBE AND OTHER VIDEO STREAMING/VIDEO HOSTING WEBSITES	7
8 USE OF PERSONAL DEVICES	8
8.1 Taking Personal Devices to School	8
8.2 Misuse of Mobile Phones or Similar Devices	8
9 USE OF CAMERAS VIDEO CAMERAS AND VIDEO CONFERENCING	9
9.1 Class/School Performances and Other Events.....	9
9.2.....	10
Use of Video Conferencing	10
10 FURTHER ADVICE	10
10.1 Contact Information	10
10.2 References to other Council or National Policies.....	10

1 INTRODUCTION

Digital learning and teaching is fully embedded into the Scottish curriculum. The importance of new technologies has become even clearer in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Learners and school staff adapted quickly to embrace remote learning. While in-school learning has resumed, progress will continue to be made. The increased use of digital resources presents challenges in terms of ensuring safe and appropriate use.

2 USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

The scope of this policy incorporates a wide variety of items including software, applications, devices, social media platforms, e-mail and the Internet. All of these items enable users to access, create, interact with and exchange information online. They are an integral part of learning in the classroom and at home. Angus Council has a duty to protect all children, young people and staff using these technologies during the school day.

2.1 Security Policy

Employees are bound by the terms of the Council's [IT Security Policy](#) and associated documents.

3 INTERNET

Use of the internet provides important educational benefits for children and young people. Internet use in classrooms should be well planned, task orientated and take place within a regulated and managed environment. Access to the internet should take place using:

A council-provided device, making use of the school network and content-filtering functionality.

Using a personal device on the council's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) network, which also has integrated content-filtering.

All schools are required to promote internet safety and provide guidance to enable learners to make safe choices about the content they access online.

Schools have access to guidance through a Digital Learning portal, and this includes exemplars of acceptable use agreements to be used with learners.

Angus Council is not responsible for any content viewed by children and young people on devices which are not managed by the Council. Any learner who is observed accessing inappropriate content on a personal device will have the item confiscated and placed at the school office for collection at the end of the day. Parents and carers will be informed.

Parents and carers are required to provide consent to the Use of Images and Mobile Devices when completing the online application forms for Angus schools. They are also asked to commit to sharing the Being Safe on the Internet information with their children in an age and stage appropriate way. Consent is retained in the PPR and remains valid for the time the child spends at the school to which they have applied.

4 GLOW AND E-MAIL

All staff and learners are provided with GLOW accounts for their individual use. Access to GLOW is controlled by username and password. There is a minimum security standard for GLOW passwords and guidance can be found [online](#). Login details should not be shared. Access to GLOW provides all learners and staff with an email address for their individual use. Employees should refer to the Council's [Email Usage Policy](#) for guidance on appropriate use of email. Acceptable use agreements are in place for learners.

All professional correspondence by staff must take place using the GLOW email addresses provided. Emails may be subject to freedom of information requests.

Members of staff should not exchange private email addresses with learners, parents or carers.

Guidance on the safe storage of information within GLOW can be found [online](#).

5 USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

5.1 Social Media

Facebook is accessible to anyone using a device on the corporate or school network. Schools are not currently permitted to operate individual Facebook pages.

Parent Councils may choose to operate pages (or Facebook groups) for specific schools. These must be administered by parent/carer representatives and not school staff. Angus Council is not responsible for content on these externally managed pages.

All schools can request a Twitter account to be set up for the school. Please refer to [PAB61](#) for guidance on how to do this. Approval must be requested from the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning before an account can be established.

Excepting those specified above, schools are not permitted to operate, host or publish on any other social media platform.

5.2 Professional Conduct, Privacy and Security

All Angus Council employees must comply with social media guidance set out in [Personnel Advisory Bulletin No 61](#).

In addition to the Council's Code of Conduct and related policies, all teachers must abide by the [GTC Scotland: Code of Professionalism and Conduct \(COPAC\)](#).

All school staff must also ensure conduct and behaviours online comply with the Council's Code of Conduct for all employees. Communications with learners, parents and carers, and other employees should maintain a formal, courteous and professional tone. Appropriate professional boundaries should be maintained.

All staff should be aware of their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Training regarding data protection **must** be completed annually by all employees on Always Learning.

Any sharing of information about children and young people, parents and carers, or colleagues should be in accordance with the Council's established policies. Professional matters must not be discussed online using social media or other platforms, nor should employees use online platforms to criticise the Council, colleagues or others within the school community.

All employees must ensure they have appropriate privacy settings for personal social media accounts and should have a general awareness of who may be able to see information they post online in a personal capacity. Even if content cannot be shared directly within a platform, it may be captured and re-produced using screenshots or photographs.

Unless absolutely unavoidable in an emergency situation, any electronic communication with parents / carers and children and young people should be via professional tools such as GLOW Email, Groupcall Messenger, Seesaw and

similar apps. Personal mobiles, email accounts or social media accounts must not be used.

School employees should not make or accept friend requests on social media from children, young people and parents and carers. The limited exception to this is when an employee already has a personal friendship or family relationship with an individual. In these cases, links are made at the employee's own risk.

Screens of devices should be locked whenever not in use. Personal mobile devices should be protected by PIN or password as appropriate.

5.3 Newly Qualified Teachers

Teachers entering the Angus Probationer Teacher Induction Programme are required to audit and re-evaluate any personal online information. Specific input is provided at their first induction training day.

6 ONLINE BULLYING AND MINIMISING RISK

Online Bullying can take many forms including but not limited to harassment, discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, sex, or disability. Any member of staff who is the victim of online 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 a member of staff 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, using the Angus Council Child Protection guidelines as appropriate.

Pupils using electronic communication and social media sites out with 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.

Angus Council was delighted to be the first local authority working in partnership with Respectme and NSPCC Scotland on the Angus 'Think before you type' campaign. A Youth Advisory Group of 16 young people from across Angus secondary schools led our local campaign to address online bullying. Following a survey and focus groups of young people, parents/carers, and school staff, these

young people presented their recommendations to our Children and Learning Committee, and then at a special Reception at the Scottish Parliament. Since then, members of the Youth Advisory Group have been involved in the NSPCC report, judged NSPCC's internal awards and contributed to the national toolkit.



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

A parent/carer or other person may place, or intend to place inappropriate comments about the school, pupils or members of school staff on social media websites such as Facebook or Twitter.

Where Head Teachers become aware of this, they should seek advice from the relevant Education & Lifelong Learning Service Leader, and from the Legal & Democratic Service in the first instance.

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

YouTube is accessible using the council network and personal devices on the BYOD network.

Staff should view video clips in their entirety prior to using them in class. Consideration should also be given to activating [Restricted Mode](#) settings on YouTube to limit the risk of inappropriate items being viewed.

The same precautions should be used when using any other video streaming or hosting websites.

Staff should be aware of the 'Terms of Use' of websites such as YouTube to ensure proposed usage is compliant.

The Council is not responsible for video content viewed on devices it does not manage.

8 USE OF PERSONAL DEVICES

Angus Council has enabled a 'Bring Your Own Device' network to allow staff, children and young people to use their own laptops, tablets or mobile phones for educational reasons.

Separate guidance is available to support schools with the use of the BYOD network.

8.1 Taking Personal Devices to School

Angus Council is not responsible for any loss or accidental damage to personal devices which are brought into school. This applies to children and young people and employees. Allegations of deliberate damage or theft will be investigated with support by the school.

Children and young people are not permitted to read messages or answer telephone calls during class time. Emergency situations should be reported to the school office, who will arrange to inform children and young people as appropriate.

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 2018 Guidelines are followed and that **no** personal data relating to staff or pupils is stored/held on an unencrypted device

Staff using mobile devices inappropriately may face disciplinary action.

8.2 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.

Inappropriate use of a mobile phone or personal device by a learner may result in confiscation.

All confiscations of this type will be recorded on SEEMiS in Latest Pastoral Notes.

Schools should establish procedures to manage the confiscation of devices, including identifying a safe storage location.

For employees, inappropriate use of devices may result in disciplinary action.

Anyone in possession of a personal device found to have inappropriate content will be asked to remove it. This includes removing from social media, YouTube and other platforms.

Where appropriate, the Council's Child Protection Procedures should be reviewed.

Serious breaches of guidance may result in referral to Police Scotland. Head Teachers should liaise with the appropriate Service Leader in the first instance.

9 USE OF CAMERAS VIDEO CAMERAS AND VIDEO CONFERRING

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.

As noted in section 2, consent for the use of photographs and videos must be provided/withheld as part of the application process for all children and young people. The consent form covers the use of content for:

The School Handbook and other printed publications.

General school activities (including explicit consent for use on websites or social media).

Participation in video conferencing.

Storage in SEEMiS.

Most schools now have access to devices with built-in camera tools. When using devices in classrooms, teachers should be monitoring screens as far as possible. Consideration should be given to table layout to ensure screen visibility. Schools should also establish appropriate parameters for the use of cameras on devices, and ensure all staff and learners are aware of the expectations. Any images captured on devices which are not required for educational purposes should be deleted.

9.1 Class/School Performances and Other Events

School performances and events may be recorded / photographed for personal use only. Anyone wishing to do so must have explicit consent from the head teacher.

We strongly recommend that recordings or photographs from performances are not shared online as other individuals may be identifiable.

School staff may make and keep a 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](#).)

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).

9.2 Use of Video Conferencing

Learners and staff have access to video-conferencing tools from within the GLOW Network. Use of these tools should be in accordance with this [guidance](#).

10 FURTHER ADVICE

10.1 Contact Information

Anyone seeking additional information or advice should contact the Digital Learning Team in the first instance (dlo@angusschools.org.uk)

10.2 References to other Council or National Policies

[GTC Scotland guidelines for teachers on the use of electronic communication and social media](#)

[EIS Guidance](#)

[The Computer Misuse Act 1990](#)

[National Action Plan – Internet Safety](#)

[Defamation Act 1996](#)

[Data Protection Act 2018](#)

[Angus Council E-mail Usage Policy](#)

[Communications Act 2003](#)

[Safe and Well \(2005\)](#); (Scottish Government publication)

[CEOPS](#)

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/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/online-contact-and-staying-safe/><https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/ISRU-News/games-and-mobile/mobile-devices-and-the-law/><https://sites.google.com/an.glow.scot/angusdigilearn-keeping-safe/home>