

Highwoods Academy

Social Media Code of Conduct for Parents



Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. E-safety and social media conduct
3. Online messaging
4. Monitoring and review

Appendices

- a) Parent Declaration Form
- b) Acceptable Use of Social Media Letter to Parents

Statement of intent

Highwoods Academy understands the benefits of using social media; however if misused, the school community can be negatively affected, such as by damaging the school's reputation. This code of conduct sets out clear procedures for how we expect parents to conduct themselves on social media, Facebook, Twitter etc. and when using messenger apps, such as WhatsApp.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Defamation Act 2013
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (as amended)
- General Data Protection Regulations May 2018

2. e-safety and social media conduct

2.1. **Highwoods Academy** expects parents to behave in a civilised nature online and will not tolerate any of the following behaviour online:

- Posting defamatory 'statuses' about fellow parents, pupils, the school or its employees;
- Complaining about the school's values and methods on social media

2.2. The Empowering Minds Academy Trust has a **Complaints Procedures Policy** in place, to avoid parents broadcasting grievances online. See website www.highwoods.doncaster.sch.uk

2.3. Parents will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking and their conduct online.

2.4. Breaches of this code of conduct will be taken seriously by the school and, in the event of illegal, defamatory, or discriminatory content, breaches could lead to prosecution.

2.5. Parents will not attempt to 'friend' or 'follow' any member of staff on social media.

2.6. Parents are instructed not post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this code of conduct.

2.7. **Highwoods Academy** retains the right to request any damaging material to be removed from social media websites.

3. Online messaging

3.1. Highwoods Academy expects parents to use messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, for purposes beneficial to themselves and the school, and will not accept any of the following behaviour:

- Sending abusive messages to fellow parents
- Sending abusive messages about members of staff, parents or the school
- Sending abusive messages to members of staff

3.2. The school appreciates the simplicity and ease of instant messaging online; keeping in contact outside of school can benefit the school community by keeping the school community closer.

3.3. Should any problems arise from contact over messaging apps, the school will act quickly by contacting parents directly, to stop any issues continuing.

3.4. **Highwoods Academy** can request a meeting with parents if any misconduct, such as sending abusive messages or posting defamatory statuses, occurs online.

3.5. The school's complaints procedure will be followed as normal if any members of the parent teacher association or governing body cause any discrepancies through their conduct whilst using online messaging.

3.6. The **headteacher** can, with the permission of the parent, view messages sent between members of the parental body in order to deal with problems quickly and effectively.

3.7. The **headteacher** can request that 'group chats' are closed down should any problems continue between parents or parental bodies.

4. Monitoring and review

4.1. The headteacher will review this code of conduct on an annual basis and will communicate any changes to all teachers and parents.

4.2. All parents will be required to read this code of conduct and sign the agreement form should any changes be made.



Parent Declaration Form

Please complete and return to school

I _____, parent of
_____, declare that I have received, read and
understand the terms and conditions of this code of conduct.

I understand my obligations under this code of conduct and agree to comply fully with them whilst my child
is a pupil at **Highwoods Academy**.

The school will not tolerate any of the following:

- **Sending abusive messages to parents or teachers**
- **Sending abusive messages about parents and teachers**
- **Posting defamatory 'statuses' about other parents, pupils, teachers or the school**
- **Using social media to complain or post any grievances about the school's values and methods**

Signed: _____ Parent

Date: _____