

E-ACT POLICY

PARKWOOD ACADEMY

Email Protocol

Date agreed by Governors	
Date of review	
Responsible officer	Principal / Business Director

Email Protocol

Rationale

Email is a useful and efficient tool when used correctly. However, it is also now seen as the biggest drain on staff time by many businesses. This is due in part to the fact that many people are swamped by 'unnecessary' emails, in part because some staff do not check their inboxes as frequently as they should and also partly because of the upset and distress caused by the use of 'inappropriate' emails (those sent with the design of causing upset and those misinterpreted by the recipient). The majority of businesses now have an **Email Protocol** in order to guide staff in how to maximize their use of the email facility.

1. All emails should carry an appropriate opening and closing. When these are internal it may be less formal ('Hi' or 'Hello' as an opening and signed off with your first name) and in external cases should be more formal ('Dear...' and signed off with your name and title/position in Academy)
2. You should always include a subject line designation; this lets people know what the content of the email relates to and will allow them to prioritise how they read their mail.
3. You should use cc when communicating an issue that directly involves more than one person e.g. lesson observation feedback which requires a copy circulating to the line manager. This function should not be used lightly and should not be viewed as a means of 'gathering support' as this can feel threatening to the recipient
4. The Bcc function should be avoided except in extreme cases (please check with a member of SLT if you are unsure) or if you are the subject of your own Bcc (for example if you are sending an external email and wish to send a copy to your personal email). The recipient of the Bcc should always be expecting your email.
5. All colleagues should check their emails at least twice a day
6. As a matter of courtesy and professionalism colleagues should endeavor to respond to emails (where required) within 24 hours of receipt. In some cases this may require a simple message such as 'I will need to look into this further and will get back to you with more details by Monday.'
7. Emails should be used to communicate facts, figures, details and reminders. There are times when it is better to meet a person face to face or to 'phone them. For example if you require exemplification or in depth details and explanations
8. Email 'tennis' is unacceptable. If 3 emails have been sent between 2 people then the next step must be to meet face to face.

9. Do not respond to emails in anger. Colleagues are requested to use their draft box initially – if you still feel angry when you revisit your email you should either arrange to meet with the person concerned or address your concerns to your line manager.
10. Email does not carry tone of voice. Therefore, please be aware that some types of humour cannot be expressed through this medium and, if you are at all unsure about the 'tone' of your email, ask a colleague/friend/line manager to check it before you send it.
11. As with writing a letter, please use blue or black only. The use of capital letters, underlining and brightly coloured font (especially red) is traditionally perceived as bad mannered.
12. In a similar vein, it is also advisable to use the spell check facility before sending an email.
13. Please be discriminating in your use of the 'All Staff' and 'All Teaching Staff' option when sending an email – this can cause email boxes to become very full, very quickly and is time consuming for many people to clear.
14. Likewise, please be discriminating in your use of the 'Reply to All' option when responding to such emails. Is it necessary for everyone to see your response or is it simply a reply to the sender?
15. Please try to limit the size of your emails to no more than one screen. Your message is more likely to be read properly by the recipient if it short, polite and to the point. Any more detail than this will require a face to face meeting or telephone conversation.
16. Finally, please be aware that in recent times, it has become acceptable for emails to be used as evidence in legal cases (less so in education, but certainly in a number of business cases). If you are at all concerned about the content of an email (your own or somebody else's) or you have another serious concern, you should seek the advice of an appropriate colleague – this may or may not be through email.