



ICT, Technology and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy

Home-School Tutoring UK is committed to promoting awareness of the benefits and dangers involved in use of ICT, Technology and Social Media. Whilst ICT, the internet and related technologies have immense benefits improper use of the internet, including social networking sites, or email could bring the Home-School Tutoring UK into disrepute and may lead to legal claims against individuals.

Key principles and processes

Internet/Email/Devices

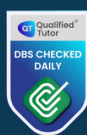
- Any emails including information or data relating to a pupil or a teacher must be anonymised (by initials) in the subject header. Highly sensitive information must be sent password protected or via encrypted email (such as Egress Switch) or otherwise shared by telephone call.
- Information identifying pupils/tutees should not be printed from emails unless absolutely necessary. If printed this information must be kept securely and no one else should see or gain access to this data in any form – paper or electronic (unless permission has been given to share it).
- Devices you use for work must be password protected and the password changed regularly. The device should also be protected with a good anti-virus software to prevent data breaches.
- If a tutor needs to make contact with a pupil (e.g. sending work) this should always be via a parent/carer or with agreement from the parent/carer could be a joint email to parent/carer and pupil. Contact must not be solely made with a pupil/tutee.
- Tutors/Area Advisors are responsible for the email you send and for any contacts you make that might result in inappropriate emails being received. Please check the email address of people you are sending emails to.

Use of photographs, video and digital images

- In some circumstances tutors/Area Advisors may want to use photos, videos or digital images of pupils or their work for professional reasons. Written consent from the parent/carer must always be sought and agreed ahead of time and the reasons stated. Parent/carers have the right to say no and not give their consent. Images of pupils or tutees should not be stored on personal devices and should be removed after 5 working days.

Mobile Phones

- Professional tone to be used in all phone calls made and text messages sent.
- Parents/carers must be copied into all contact with pupils via mobile phones if contact is needed (group messages). Best practice is for communication to be solely via parents/carers. When working on behalf of a school with tutees the schools social media and ICT procedures and policies should be followed explicitly.





Direct contact should not be made with pupils at all unless permission is given by the contracting school as generally all communication with pupils at schools is via parents/carers.

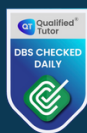
Social Media

Social Media is used increasingly across society and is recognised as a hugely valuable communication tool. However, the open nature of the internet means that social networking sites can leave professionals (such as teachers and other professionals working in education, such as tutors) vulnerable if they fail to observe a few simple precautions. This policy is designed to protect Home-School Tutoring tutors from potential harm or from becoming victims of radicalisation, extremism and malicious, upsetting or inadvisable contact.

- Tutor members must not make contact through any personal ICT or social media with any pupil or tutee, whether a tutee with Home-School Tutoring UK or at any other school, unless the pupil* is your own family member OR an existing close family friend (e.g. your Godchild). Home-School Tutoring does not expect tutors to discontinue contact with their own family members or significant family friends via personal social media.

**'pupil' is defined as any young person aged 18 or under in a school or college. Or, any young person who has been a tutee (or a pupil a tutor has met in another school in their professional capacity) who is no longer in a school or a sixth form up until they reach the age of 18*

- Tutors working in schools must not to have social media contact with any pupils' family members (parents/carers) This is in-line with the NASUWT teachers' union and other unions which say that teachers should never under any circumstances accept Facebook friend requests from parents of a pupil. This is especially important when working with pupils in schools. However, professional boundaries in tuition are just as important and so tutors are advised to think carefully before becoming 'friends' with parents on social media sites. This blurs the boundary of a professional relationship with clients. The exception to this is where a tutor has a professional tuition Facebook page or other business or professional Social Media account.
- Tutors must decline 'friend requests', from pupils in all cases (whether private clients or tutees via a school), they may receive in their personal social media accounts including LinkedIn. Pupils/parents will be informed that this will be the case. **(Pupil(s) as defined above.)*
- On leaving Home-School Tutoring as a tutor, tutors must not contact pupils* by means of personal social media sites. Similarly, tutors must not contact pupils* from their former schools by means of personal social media. **(Pupil(s) as defined above.)*





- Photographs, videos or any other types of image of pupils and their families or images depicting other tutors must not be published on personal webspace or social media sites.
- Tutors must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations, other tutors or schools in any way.
- Tutors are advised to set the privacy levels of their personal social media sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. The exception to this is if a tutor has a professional social media site or in the case of Area Advisors Home-School Tutoring social media sites. Tutors should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online.
- Please read: [social-media-guide-for-teachers.pdf \(careerteachers.co.uk\)](https://careerteachers.co.uk/social-media-guide-for-teachers.pdf) for some useful advice about social media and your role as a teacher/tutor.

BREACHES OF THE POLICY

- Any breach of this policy may be investigated and may lead to action being taken including reporting tutors to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) or to the police if appropriate.

If you are in doubt about any of the above, please seek advice from your Area Advisor or from Annalise Price-Thomas at Home-School Tutoring Head Office (annalise@homeschooltutoring.co.uk)

Policy Reviewed: September 2024 (Annalise Price-Thomas, Designated Safeguarding Lead for Home-School Tutoring UK)

Next Review: September 2025

