

Go on tweet, it's good for you!

Using Twitter as a departmental information tool can offer lots of benefits to Technology teachers, whole departments and their pupils. Here we analyse five of those benefits and how they can help you at school.

1) Networking with other schools across the country

There are now an increasing number of schools from both the local authority and independent sector with their own department Twitter pages. Follow their pages and take the opportunity to build partnership links. It is amazing how posts from other schools can inspire your own work and lead to collegiate discussion.

2) Information for parents/guardians

Twitter is an effective method of communication with parents who also possess accounts. Communicate deadlines for class work, department showcase event details or even supported study/homework information. Building parental support and involvement in the department and utilising this different method of information sharing can be extremely rewarding.

3) Showcase your pupils' work

If your pupils create great folios, models or CAD work, show it off (but don't publish live exam material or assessment work!) Moving on from the days where good work was pinned on the classroom wall, pupils receive a massive boost in self-confidence when their efforts are featured in a picture posted online.

Before you post a photo of a pupil you must check for any permission required and it is advisable to agree a policy with your Head Teacher. Some schools post photos with pupils, some schools do not. Be aware of your school/local authority policy and ensure you adhere to it.

4) Find out information from other educational organisations

School or STEM competitions, CPD events, machine and equipment details and even curriculum updates are all posted regularly on Twitter by various educational organisations. If knowledge is power then prepare to be fully energised! (And check out our Twitter page @SSERCtechnology.)

5) Teach safe online posting to your pupils

Some department accounts are posted on only by staff, but there are others where a staff and pupil working group or extracurricular STEM club participate in what is posted. Showing pupils how to tweet positive messages about something they are passionate about, and how to avoid negative social media pit falls or trolling is an essential lesson in the modern classroom and digital age.

Here are just a few of the active Scottish Technical department Twitter pages who use the medium effectively.

