

Internet Safety Policy

Introduction

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is now an essential resource to support learning and teaching, as well as playing an important role in the everyday lives of children, young people and adults. It covers a wide range of resources including both web-based and mobile learning. It is also important to recognise the constant and fast paced evolution of ICT within our society as a whole. Currently the internet technologies children and young people are using include:

- Websites
- Learning Platforms and Virtual Learning Environments
- E-mail and Instant Messaging
- Chat Rooms and Social Networking
- Blogs and Wikis
- Podcasting
- Video Broadcasting
- Music Downloading
- Gaming
- Mobile/ Smart phones with text, video and/ or web functionality
- Other mobile devices with web functionality

Whilst exciting and beneficial both in and out of the context of education, much ICT, particularly web-based resources, are not consistently policed. All users need to be aware of the range of risks associated with the use of these Internet technologies.

At this School, we are aware of the great educational advantages that internet access offers, but we also understand the responsibility to educate our children about e-safety issues, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies, in and beyond the context of the classroom.

In addition, the School holds personal data on children, staff and other people and we are aware of our responsibilities to maintain and process such data sensitively and securely.

Everybody in the School has a shared responsibility to secure any sensitive information used in their day to day professional duties and even staff not directly involved in data handling are made aware of the risks and threats and how to minimise them.

This Policy is designed to apply to all technologies provided by the school (such as PCs and laptops), and technologies owned by children and staff, but brought onto school premises (such as laptops, mobile phones, camera phones, and portable media players). E-Safety encompasses Internet technologies and electronic communications such as mobile phones. It highlights the need to educate children about the benefits and risks of using technology and provides safeguards and awareness for users to enable them to control their online experience.

The School's coordinator in respect of this Policy is the School Director, who will be responsible in the first instance for dealing with all queries, issues and problems relating to e-safety.

Aim of Policy:

This Policy aims to protect the interests and safety of the whole school community in relation to use of the internet and associated technology. It is linked to the following School policies: Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Use of computers and internet use:

All usage by children of computer systems in the setting will be strictly time-limited.

The School will keep a record of all staff and children who are granted internet access. The record will be kept up-to-date, for instance a member of staff may leave or a pupil's access be withdrawn.

The School's office computers will have access to the internet, and internet access provided for children in our primary classroom will be limited and designed expressly for use by the children and will include filtering appropriate to the age range of children in the setting.

Children will be taught what Internet use is acceptable and what is not and given clear objectives for Internet use. The free use of search engines is not permitted except under staff guidance and supervision at all times.

Internet access will be planned to enrich and extend learning activities. Access levels will be reviewed to reflect the curriculum requirements and age of children.

Staff will guide children in on-line activities that will support the learning outcomes planned for the children's age and maturity. Children will not be permitted to download files from the internet; this will be carried out by staff, if appropriate.

Children will be educated in the effective use of the Internet in research, including the skills of knowledge location, retrieval and evaluation. Current guidance on the use of wireless technology with children will be adhered to at all times.

The School will ensure that the use of Internet derived materials by staff and children complies with copyright law.

Children will be taught to be critically aware of the materials they read and shown how

to validate information before accepting its accuracy. Any child finding themselves uncomfortable or upset by anything they discover on the internet will be asked to report it immediately to a teacher.

Children will have no access to chat rooms or newsgroups. Children and parents will be advised that the use of social network spaces outside School is inappropriate for primary- aged children.

Children will be taught to acknowledge the source of information used and to respect copyright when using Internet material in their own work.

E-mail:

Children may only use and send emails under the guidance and supervision of a teacher and may only use approved e-mail accounts on the School system.

Children must immediately tell a teacher if they receive offensive e-mail.

Children must not reveal personal details of themselves or others in e-mail communication, or arrange to meet anyone without specific permission.

E-mails sent by staff to an external organisation should be written carefully and authorised before sending, in the same way as a letter written on School headed paper.

The forwarding of chain letters is not permitted.

Information system security:

All of the computers used for School business are password protected.

School ICT systems capacity and security will be reviewed regularly by the School Director. Virus protection will be updated regularly.

Published content and the School website:

The contact details on the Web site will be the school address, e-mail and telephone number. Staff or children's personal information will not be published.

The School will ensure that content is accurate and appropriate.

Publishing children's images and work:

Photographs that include children will be selected carefully and will not be used except with parental consent.

Children' full names will not be used anywhere on the website, particularly in association with photographs.

Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of children are published on the school Web site.

Children's work can only be published with the permission of the pupil and parents.

Managing filtering:

The School will work with the Internet Service Provider to ensure systems to protect children are reviewed and improved.

If staff or children discover an unsuitable site, it must be reported to the Bursar.

The Bursar will ensure that regular checks are made to ensure that the filtering methods selected are appropriate, effective and reasonable.

Any material that the School believes is illegal must be reported to appropriate agencies.

Managing emerging technologies:

Emerging technologies will be examined for educational benefit and a risk assessment will be carried out before use in School is allowed.

Mobile phones will not be used anywhere on the School premises.

Assessing risks:

The School will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of Internet content, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a school computer. The School does not accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences of Internet access.

The School will review ICT provision regularly to establish if this Policy is adequate and that its implementation is effective.

Methods to identify, assess and minimise risks will be reviewed regularly.

Handling e-safety complaints:

Complaints of Internet misuse will be dealt with in accordance with our Complaints Policy. Any complaint about staff misuse must be referred to the Principal.

Complaints of a child protection nature must be dealt with in accordance with our Child Safeguarding and Protection procedures.

The School will work with parents and children, in partnership with staff, to resolve any issues. Internet issues will be handled sensitively, and parents will be advised accordingly.

Communicating the E-safety Policy:

E-safety rules will be discussed with all children granted access to the internet on a regular basis.

Children will be informed that network and Internet use will be supervised and monitored. Staff will be aware that Internet traffic can be monitored and traced to the individual user. Discretion and professional conduct are essential.

Staff training in safe and responsible Internet use will be provided as required.

Reference copies of all School policies, including this one, will be made available to all staff and parents at each of our premises and copies will be supplied on request.

Review of Policy:

This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

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