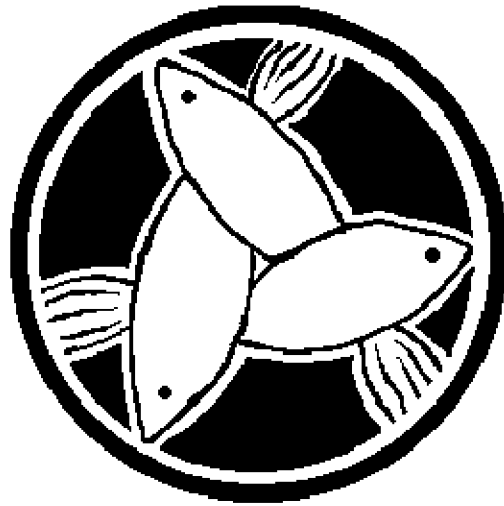


St Mary's Catholic High School
Specialist Languages and Humanities
College



INTERNET ACCESS & EMAIL POLICY

Introduction

The Government has set ambitious targets for the development of on-line learning materials and the accessibility of these materials by learners. Indeed the curriculum expects pupils to learn how to locate, retrieve and exchange information using ICT. In addition, staff will have the ability to access educational materials and good practice; exchange curriculum and administrative data with the LA and DfES and receive up to date information. The development of a local broadband network is intended to facilitate teaching and learning using ICT.

This Internet Access & Email policy relates to all users of the school network – pupils, teachers and other staff.

This Policy is strongly recommended as a *minimum* standard

What should teachers and parents be aware of?

The Internet is a reflection of the people who make up our society. It is not controlled by any particular organisation and the standard or source of information cannot always be guaranteed. Individual's rights to freedom of speech and freedom of choice must be observed, but balanced against the rights of younger users. Users will wish to guard against the possibility of hacking and computer viruses as incidents of this are now unfortunately very common.

While educators and parents need to exercise caution in the Internet access they allow to pupils, they should not be deterred from using it. Its educational benefits outweigh any possible dangers. Schools have always helped learners to engage with society, based on clear support and guidance, and use of the Internet should be no exception.

As with television and video, parents, carers and educators should and where possible preview material or provide supervision, as well as having a more general strategy in place for ensuring children's safe use of the Internet.

A Sensible Approach Involves:

- Siting computers where everyone can see what is on the screen or using appropriate software to assist with this task.
- Taking an interest in the Internet and regularly discussing what young people see and use.
- Being aware of what research projects children are carrying out on the Internet.
- Monitoring on-line time and being aware of excessive hours spent on the Internet.
- Educating children to use the Internet in a sensible and responsible manner.

- Encouraging learners to be critical users of the Internet; is the information true? How do you know?
- Warning children that there are unsuitable sites on the Internet and discussing the issues involved.
- Warning children that people may try to contact them in an inappropriate way and discussing the issues involved.
- Setting up a reporting system so that students know what to do if they find upsetting material.
- Requiring all learners to sign a code of conduct and sending copies to parents for them to sign and return.
- Making it clear what the penalties are for misuse of the Internet.
- Ensuring that learners are aware that they must not respond to abusive messages.

Website Evaluation Techniques

Website evaluation techniques can also have an important role to play. Children should be encouraged to ask questions about web sites such as:

- **Authority** – Who has written the information? What is the authority/expertise of the author? Are there contact details for the author? Who is the publisher of the site?
- **Purpose** - What are the aims of the site? Does it achieve its aims?
- **Audience** - Who is the site aimed at?
- **Relevance** - Is the site relevant to me?
- **Objectivity** - Is the information offered as fact or opinion? Is the information overtly or covertly biased?
- **Accuracy** - Can the accuracy of the information be checked?
- **Currency** - When was the information written? When was the site last updated?
- **Format** - Does the site contain information in the format I want?
- **Links** - Does the site give me advice/ideas/their choices?

INTERNET ACCESS & EMAIL POLICY

School Name: St Mary's Catholic School

The Yorkshire and Humberside Grid for Learning

Access to high quality learning materials is becoming an increasingly important and necessary tool for staff and pupils. The development of the Yorkshire and Humberside Grid for Learning is an important priority for the education service and is intended to:

- help raise educational standards
- to support the professional work of staff
- to enhance the school's management information and business administration systems
- Speed up communication.

Our use of the Grid for Learning

We intend:

- access to the Grid for learning to be available to all staff and pupils
- the Grid for learning to provide a safe environment where pupils and staff may share appropriate learning resources
- the Grid to provide for content creation without the need for advanced IT skills
- participation in approved forums and chat facilities to be available
- the Grid to provide easy access to professional information
- The Grid to provide access to quality learning content which has been either downloaded from reviewed/censored Internet sites or supplied from educational providers/publishers.

Using the Internet to support teaching and learning

Commentary

The Internet offers remarkable opportunities for teaching and learning. It can be used to:

- find up-to-date information for projects
- communicate with people from different countries and cultures using email
- get global news as it happens and read newspapers from other countries
- attend live events such as lessons, lectures and debates on the Internet
- find support on aspects of special educational needs such as dyslexia
- View works of art in 'virtual' galleries.

Working with the Internet can help pupils develop research and information skills, an important aspect of their education, but it also raises issues about the way children, and indeed adults, deal with this new form of access to information.

Pupils need to:

- know how to find what they want quickly and easily
- be able to manage the amount of information they find and develop the skills to select the bits they need, not just print out or copy great chunks of other people's work
- Be discerning about the information they find because anyone can publish material on the Internet - there is no guarantee that the information you find is true or accurate, so children need to be encouraged to question what they find and verify it against other sources.

This Internet Access Policy relates to all users of the Grid for learning network – pupils, teachers, and other staff.

This policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of changes in technology and legislation.

Our use of the Internet

The Internet itself is a relatively new means of communication and is freely available to any individual wishing to use email or access materials or to publish their own. Some materials available on the Internet will however be unsuitable for pupils and the following measures have been taken to help ensure that pupils are not exposed to unsuitable materials.

Consent will be required from parents/carer's before access to the Internet and email is allowed to any child. In addition, staff and secondary school

children will be required to sign an Acceptable Internet and Email Use Agreement before accesses are granted (see Appendices attached).

- Our Internet access is purchased from NE Lincs council as part of a package which provides high speed access to a local grid for learning.
- Access to the Internet is gained via the Councils intranet and this school uses appropriate web filtering of materials provided by cyber patrol software. Children using the Internet will normally be working in the classroom, during lesson time and will be supervised by an adult.
- Staff will check that sites preselected for pupils use are appropriate to need, age and maturity of pupils.
- The School ICT Co-ordinator will monitor the effectiveness of Internet access strategies and make checks as necessary to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Pupils will be educated in taking responsibility for the information they access whilst connected to the Internet.
- Pupils will be informed that checks can be made on the information they are accessing and holding on the system.
- Pupils will be made aware that the writer of an email or author of a web page may not be the person they say they are.
- Pupils will be encouraged to tell a member of staff immediately should they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Access levels will be reviewed as pupils Internet use expands and their ability to retrieve information develops.
- Virus protection will be installed and updated regularly.
- A record of all staff and pupils who have Internet access will be maintained; staff and pupils who no longer require access will be removed from the record.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the policy is implemented effectively.
- The Yorkshire and Humberside Grid for Learning Internet and email facilities are provided for school related work only. Private use is not permitted.
- The Yorkshire and Humberside Grid for Learning Internet and email facilities may not be used for:
 - (a) Transmitting, retrieving or storing any communications of a discriminatory or harassing nature or materials that are offensive, obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit. Or,
 - (b) Deliberately propagating viruses, Trojan horses etc. or,
 - (c) Attempting to disable, defeat or circumvent any system intended to protect the privacy or security of another user.
- Internet users must not use or transmit abusive, profane or offensive language on or through the network's Internet and email systems. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action being taken.
- Email users must never send abusive, sexist, racist or defamatory messages.
- To help prevent access to undesirable sites, access to the Internet will be filtered using educationally based software.
- In addition to undesirable sites, other web mail provider's chat and news groups outside of the Netmedia or council domain will be blocked.

- Accessing unauthorised sites is not permitted.
- All usage of the Internet will be monitored, logged and retained.
- Email contents will be constantly monitored by Netmedia (where used) who will report any suspected misuse to school staff accordingly.
- No user may knowingly use the Yorkshire and Humberside Grid for Learning Internet and email facilities to:
 - (a) Download or distribute pirated software or data, or
 - (b) Download, copy or transmit the works of others without their permission as this may infringe copyright.

Virus Protection

- The Yorkshire and Humberside Grid for Learning facilities include virus scanning software which is designed to intercept any viruses in email attachments and files downloaded from the Internet.
- In addition to the above resident virus scanning software must be installed on appropriate school equipment to prevent the introduction of viruses to the network from this source.

Email

Commentary

Email systems can be set up and administered in a variety of ways. For example, a school email system could be designed so that no pupil is able to send and receive external email. At the other end of the spectrum, pupils could be provided with full email access and they would then be able to send and receive email from any active email address anywhere in the world.

In reality most schools are likely to require a system that falls somewhere between the two. Such an approach recognises the benefits of information exchange between schools but within a recognised community and framework. Schools also wish to reduce the risk of unsolicited attention put on individual pupils from individuals outside the school and, as with any classroom activity, staff will continue to assess the potential risks of using email as a part of the teaching and learning process.

Our use of email

This school has adopted the Council's preferred solution and thus purchases services from Netmedia. Netmedia's email application is simple yet powerful. It is integrated with other applications such as discussion groups and file sharing to transform it into a powerful learning and teaching tool.

To safeguard our pupils:

- All pupils aged 11-16 have their own email accounts.
- Pupils will need to be aware that others may read messages received or sent.
- Pupils will be encouraged to report any unpleasant material or messages sent, the report will be confidential and would help to protect other pupils.
- Administrative staff/teachers/governors will use individual email addresses that clearly identify their name and school.
- Subject to approval procedures and the Headteacher's permission, parents/guardians may be able to join their children's school domain at Netmedia.
- All email sent outside the Netmedia domain **MUST** include a disclaimer. The Netmedia disclaimer is shown below:

The information in this message including any attachments may be confidential or privileged and is for the use of the named recipient only. If you are not the named recipient you may not copy, distribute, or deliver this message to anyone or take any action in reliance on it. If you receive this message in error please contact the sender immediately and delete it from your system.

Scanned by Sophos Puremessage

School Web Site

Commentary

The school web site provides an important mechanism for communicating with parents, governors and the wider community. It is also a useful tool for providing samples of pupils work.

Our school Web Site:

- Pupils work will appear in an appropriate context and may not be copied without written permission.
- Any personal or contact information for pupils will not be made available on the school web site.
- Photographs of pupils are not encouraged however if a school feels these are necessary prior consent from parents is essential.
- The Headteacher will delegate editorial responsibility to ensure that the content is accurate and quality of presentation is maintained.
- Pupils will be taught to publish for a wide range of audiences that might include Governors, parents and young children.
- The school website is intended to promote the school and celebrate the work of pupils and staff.
- All material must be the author's own work, or where permission to reproduce has been obtained it is clearly marked with the copyright owner's name.

Data Protection

The Data Protection Act came into force on 1 March 2000, and from 24 October 2001 covers the processing of paper records. The Act is not optional every school must comply with the provisions of the Act; the school is also responsible if a person suffers harm or damage due to the infringement of the Act.

School websites are an important link to the community, and a means of promoting school activities and events. This however also means that information on the website has the capacity of being passed outside of the LA and as such stringent rules apply.

In accordance with the Act, this school will:

- Obtain the consent of parents prior to publishing any child's information on a web page.
- Only publish photographs of children with prior consent of parents.
- Seek advice from the Council when required.

Updated Feb 2008

School Name St Mary's Catholic School
Acceptable Internet and Email Use Agreement

For Staff

The computer system is owned by the school and is made available to students to further their education and to staff to enhance their professional activities including teaching, research, administration and management. The school's Internet Access Policy has been drawn up to protect all parties - the students, the staff and the school.

The school reserves the right to examine or delete any files that may be held on its computer system or to monitor any Internet sites visited.

- Access must only be made via the authorised account and password, which **must not** intentionally or unintentionally be made available to any other person.
- All Internet use should be appropriate to staff professional activity or student's education.
- Activity that threatens the integrity of the school ICT systems, or that attacks or corrupts other systems, is forbidden.
- Sites and materials accessed must be appropriate to work in school. Users will recognise materials that are inappropriate and should expect to have their access removed.
- Users are responsible for email they send and for contacts made that may result in email being received.
- The same professional levels of language and content should be applied as for letters or other media, particularly as email is often forwarded.
- Posting anonymous messages and forwarding chain letters is forbidden.
- Copyright of materials and intellectual property rights must be respected.
- Use for personal financial gain, gambling, political purposes or advertising is forbidden.

Staff and students requesting Internet access must sign a copy of this and return it to the ICT Co-ordinator for approval before access will be granted.

I have received and read a copy of the schools Internet and Email policy and agree to abide by it. I understand my accesses will be monitored.

Full name Form/post

Signed Date

Access granted Date

School Name St Mary's Catholic School

Rules for Responsible Internet Use Students

The school has installed computers and Internet access to help our learning. These rules will keep everyone safe and help us be fair to others.

- I will ask permission from a member of staff before using the Internet.**
- I will use only my own User area and password, which I will keep secret.**
- I will not access other people's files.**
- I will only use the computers for school work and homework.**
- I will not bring floppy disks/Pen drives/MP3 players into school unless I have permission.**
- I will only email people within Netmedia.**
- The messages I send will be polite and sensible.**
- I will not give my home address or phone number, or arrange to meet anyone.**
- To help protect other pupils and myself, I will tell a teacher if I see anything I am unhappy with or I receive messages I do not like.**
- I understand that the school will check my computer files and will monitor the Internet sites I visit.**

Display this page as a poster near computers and provide parents and pupils with a copy of these rules

Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parents

Responsible Use of the Internet

As part of pupils' curriculum enhancement and the development of ICT skills, School is providing supervised access to the Internet including email.

Although there have been concerns about pupils having access to undesirable materials, we are taking positive steps to deal with this risk in school. The Council operates a filtering system that restricts access to inappropriate materials. Whilst every endeavour is made to ensure that suitable restrictions are placed on the ability of children to access inappropriate materials, the Council cannot be held responsible for the nature or content of materials accessed through the Internet.

I enclose a copy of the Policy and the Rules for Responsible Internet Use that we operate atSchool. We also have a number of leaflets from national bodies that explain issues further.

Should you wish to discuss any aspect of Internet use (or to see a lesson in operation) please telephone me to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Permission for Internet and Email Use

Parent/carer's permission

I give permission for access to the Internet on the terms set out in the policy and agreement enclosed.

Signed:

Print name:

Date: