Acceptable use of Technology Policy

St Mary's CE (A) Primary School

2017-2018

The importance of the internet and technology to access it in schools

The purpose of Internet access in school is to raise standards of attainment and achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management and information (MIS) systems. Access to the Internet is a vital tool for staff and pupils. It is therefore a requirement as part of safeguarding and data protection for children and staff to always take responsible and mature approach.

How the use of Technology Benefits the School

A number of studies and government projects have indicated the benefits to be gained through the appropriate use of the Internet in education.
These benefits include:
- Access to world-wide educational resources including museums and art galleries.
- The ability to share pupil information between educational establishments.
- Inclusion in government initiatives such as the BGfL and NGfL.
- Information and cultural exchanges between pupils world-wide.
- Discussion with experts in many fields for pupils and staff.
- Staff professional development - access to educational materials and good curriculum practice.
- Communication with the advisory and support services, professional associations and colleagues.
- Improved access to technical support.
- Exchange of curriculum and administration data with the LA, DfE and other organisations.

Using the Technology to provide effective learning

Teachers, parents and pupils need to develop good practice in using the Internet as tool for teaching and learning. There is a fine balance between encouraging autonomous learning and maintaining adequate supervision. Systems that ensure Internet use is as safe as possible will enable increased use and the quality of that use is a critical factor.
- Internet access will be planned to enrich and extend learning activities.
- Access levels will be reviewed to reflect the curriculum requirement.
- Pupils will be given clear objectives for Internet use.
- Staff will select sites that will support the learning outcomes planned for pupils' age and maturity.
- Approved sites will be bookmarked, listed or copied to the school network.
- Pupils will be educated in taking responsibility for Internet access.

How pupils will be taught to assess Internet content and use technology

Pupils in school are unlikely to see inappropriate content in books due to selection by publishers and teachers. This level of control is not so straightforward with Internet-based materials. Therefore, teaching should be widened to incorporate Internet content issues, for instance the value and credibility of Web materials in relationship to other media. The tendency to use the Web when better information may be obtained from books will need to be challenged.

- Pupils will be taught ways to validate information before accepting that it is necessarily true.
- Pupils will be taught to acknowledge the source of information and observe copyright when using Internet material for their own use.
- Pupils will be made aware that the writer of an e-mail or the author of a Web page might not be the person claimed.
- Pupils will be encouraged to tell a teacher immediately if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.

The management of e-mail

E-mail is an essential means of communication within education. The government is encouraging the ownership of personal e-mail accounts for both teachers and pupils, but care needs to be taken that the implications for the school and for the pupil are appreciated. Once e-mail is available it is difficult to control its content, nevertheless e-mail content should not be considered private. Software to restrict incoming and outgoing e-mail to a list of approved establishments is being considered as the filtering of e-mail for unsuitable content and viruses is now possible.
- E-mail must only be used in school for educational purposes.
- The forwarding of chain/spam or viral materials will be banned, as will the use of instant messaging or chat rooms.
- Chat programs will not be allowed.

The management of the school's web site

A Web site can celebrate pupils' work, promote the school and publish resources. Ground rules are important to ensure that the Web site reflects the school's ethos and that information is accurate and well presented. As the school's Web site can be accessed by anyone on the Internet, the security of staff and pupils must be considered carefully. While any risks might be small, the parents' perception of risk has been taken into account in the devising of this policy.
- The Head Teacher/SLT will delegate editorial responsibility to members of staff to ensure that content is accurate and quality of presentation is maintained.
- All material must be the author's own work, or where permission to reproduce has been obtained, clearly marked with the copyright owner's name.
- The point of contact on the web site should be the school address and telephone number. Home information or individual e-mail identities **will not** be published.
- Photographs must not identify individual pupils.
- Full names will not be used anywhere on the Web site, particularly alongside photographs.
- Written permission from parents will be sought before photographs or pupils work are published on the school web site.

The availability of other Internet applications

The Internet is the underlying technology, but new applications are being developed to use this ability to communicate, such as Chat, Newsgroups and webcams. Many of these facilities have great potential for education, for instance pupils exchanging live text, speech or video with a similar class in another location around the country or world, at low cost. However, most new applications start without the needs of young users being considered, particularly the area of security.
- Pupils will not be allowed to access public chat rooms/instant messaging.
- Pupils will not be allowed to access newsgroups.
- New facilities will be thoroughly tested before pupils are given access.

The authorisation of Internet access

In school, all staff and all pupils will be granted access to the Internet.
- Internet access is a necessary part of statutory curriculum. It is an entitlement for pupils as long as it is used responsibly.
- Internet access will be granted to a whole class as part of the scheme of work, after a suitable education in the responsible use of the Internet.
- Parents will be informed that pupils will be provided with supervised Internet access.

The assessment of risk when using the Internet in school

The school will address the issue that it is difficult to remove completely the risk that pupils might access unsuitable materials via the school system. In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available via the Internet is unsuitable for pupils. The school will supervise pupils and take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material, including the use of strict filtering software. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of information available via the Internet, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a school machine. Neither the school nor Stoke on Trent Local Authority can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences thereof.
- The use of computer systems without permission or for purposes not agreed by the school could constitute a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990.
- Methods to identify, assess and minimise risks will be reviewed regularly.
- Staff, parents and governors will work to establish agreement that every reasonable measure is being taken.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that the policy is implemented effectively.

Ensuring safe Internet access

The Internet is a communications medium that is freely available to any person wishing to send e-mail or publish a Web site on almost any topic. Access to appropriate information should be encouraged but Internet access must be safe for all members of the school community from youngest pupil to teacher and administrative staff
The technical strategies being developed to restrict access to inappropriate material fall into two overlapping types (sometimes all referred to as filtering):
Blocking strategies remove access to a list of unsuitable sites or newsgroups.
Filtering examines the content of web pages or e-mail messages for unsuitable words. Blocking and/or filtering.
- Pupils will be informed that Internet use will be supervised and monitored.
- The school will work in partnership with parents and the LA to ensure systems to protect pupils are reviewed and improved.
- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content will be reported to the SLT and then to ICT technician so that the site can be blocked.
- Any material that the school suspects is illegal will also be referred to the SLT.

The maintenance of security of the ICT systems

The Internet is a new connection to the outside world that could compromise system performance or threaten security.

- Security strategies will be put in place in line with LA procedures.
- The security of the whole system will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- Virus protection and monitoring software will be installed and updated regularly on all machines.
- Use of e-mail to send and receive attachments will be monitored.

The complaints procedure regarding Internet use

Prompt action is taken if a complaint is made or inappropriate use flagged. Transgressions of the rules could include minor as well as the potentially serious consequences and a range of sanctions will be devised.

- Responsibility for handling incidents will be given to the SLT.
- Pupils and parents will be informed that computer use is monitored.
- Sanctions follow the school behaviour policy and can include banning children from using computers for a period of time.

Enlisting parental support for the use of the Internet

Internet use in pupils' homes is increasing rapidly. Unless parents are aware of the dangers, pupils may have unrestricted access to the Internet. The school may be able to help parents plan appropriate, supervised use of the Internet at home.

- A careful balance between informing and alarming parents will be maintained.
- Joint home/school guidelines on issues such as safe Internet use will be established.

ACCEPTABLE INTERNET USE STATEMENT FOR ALL SCHOOL STAFF

The computer systems are owned by the school and made available to pupils to further their education and to staff to enhance their professional activities including teaching, research, administration and management.
The school reserves the right to examine or delete any files that may be held on its computer systems or to monitor any Internet sites visited.

- Access should only be made via the authorised account and password that should not be made available to any other person.
- 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 all e-mail sent and for contacts made that may result in e-mail being received.
- The same professional levels of language and content should be applied as for letters or other media, particularly as e-mail is often forwarded.
- Posting anonymous messages and forwarding chain/spam or viral emails is forbidden.
- Copyright of materials and intellectual property rights must be respected.
- All Internet use should be appropriate to staff professional activity or to children's' education. However please note that:-

- Use for personal financial gain, gambling, political purposes or advertising is forbidden.
- Closed discussion groups can be useful but the use of public chat rooms is not allowed.

Members of staff are reminded that they should not deliberately seek out inappropriate / offensive materials on the Internet and that they are subject to the LA's recommended disciplinary procedures should they do so.

Staff should sign a copy of this Acceptable Internet Use Statement and return it to the ICT Leader.

Full name _____ post _____

Signed _____ date _____