

**A school policy for
Responsible Use of the
Internet and email**

References

ITCAS Web site www.kirklees-ednet.org.uk/itcas/support
Discussion document on use of Internet
Word version of this document
Instructions to modify Internet Explorer

Kent NGfL Website
Latest version of the Kent policy www.kent.gov.uk/ngfl/policy.html

Connecting Schools: Networking People
www.ngfl.gov.uk/reference/publications/connecting
DfEE / BECTa April 1998 Tel. 0845 6022260 (free order line)

Preventing the Misuse of Computers in Schools
British Computer Society www.bcs.org.uk/news/misuse.htm

Association for Co-ordinators and Teachers of IT (ACITT)
Acceptable Use Policy for UK Schools www.acitt.org.uk/aup.html

Parents' Information Network (PIN)
Leaflets www.pinlift.org.uk

NCH Action for Children
A Parents' Guide www.ncha.fc.org.uk

Home Computers and Children www.becta.org.uk/projects/censor
BECTa leaflet Tel: 01203 416994

Censorship Issues www.becta.org.uk/projects/censor/
BECTa

Internet Watch Foundation www.iwf.org.uk
Reporting illegal Internet material Tel: 0845 600 8844

NAACE/British Computer Society www.bcs.org.uk/iap.html

Acknowledgements

This materials were produced by ITCAS and we acknowledge the contribution of the Kent NGfL Team.

Responsible Use of the Internet and email Policy

Government policy is to connect all schools to the Internet and by 2002, an objective that has already been achieved in Kirklees and to provide all pupils with their own email address. The Internet and email can be used by students of all ages, by teachers and by managers. Through the development of the National Grid for Learning it is intended to ensure that the Internet and e-mail will become a useful educational resource for schools, students and teachers. Home Internet and email use is also increasing and it is becoming an important part of learning and communication during leisure time.

However, the Internet is managed by a worldwide collaboration of independent agencies and currently serves mainly an adult audience. Without appropriate measures, access to unsuitable materials is possible and security of the computer systems could be compromised.

This Responsible Use of the Internet and email Policy has been agreed to ensure that Internet and email use supports the school's educational aims and that the school's responsibilities to students and parents are met.

This Responsible Use of the Internet and email Policy is included as part of the school's ICT policy and relates to other policies, in particular that for behaviour and for personal, social and health education (PSHE).

This Responsible Use of the Internet and email Policy has been created after full consultation with staff and governors and will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

Creation date :

Review date :

Produced by :

.....

.....

1. The Purpose of Internet and email access :

We are providing Internet and email access in order to :

- Raise educational standards
- Support curriculum development in all subjects
- Support the professional work of staff as its use is now considered an essential professional tool
- Enhance the school's management information and business administration systems
- Enable electronic communication and the exchange of curriculum and administration data with the LEA, the examination boards and others

2. The educational benefits of using the Internet and email include :

- Access to world-wide educational resources and information including museums, art galleries, research data, news and current events
- Information and cultural exchanges between students world-wide
- Discussion with experts in many fields for students and staff
- Access to educational materials and good curriculum practice including the Virtual Teachers Centre to support staff professional development
- Communication with advisory and support services, professional associations and colleagues
- Increasing cultural, social and leisure activities in libraries, clubs and at home
- Exchanging information between different bodies, e.g. LEA & DfEE
- Providing a means of communication between staff & pupils, parents & others in the community
- Obtaining a range of technical support
- Encouraging electronic literacy

3. The Internet and email can provide an effective medium for learning where :

- Internet and email access is planned to enrich and extend learning activities as an integrated aspect of the curriculum
- Students are given clear objectives for Internet and email use
- Students are provided with lists of relevant and suitable Web sites & links to e-pals
- Students are educated to take responsibility for Internet and email access
- Students will be made aware that the writer of an e-mail or the author of a web page may not be the person they claim to be and are taught to validate information before accepting it as true, an important aspect of higher levels of subject teaching
- Students are taught to observe copyright when copying materials from the web & to acknowledge their sources of information
- Access is reviewed to ensure it still meets curriculum needs

- Students are taught to expect a wider range of content, both in level and in audience, than is found in the school library or on TV
- The whole staff have been given opportunities to discuss the issues around developing good teaching strategies

4. Access to the Internet and email :

In school Internet access is regarded as a necessary part of the statutory curriculum and access to the Internet and email will only be authorised on the basis of educational need.

Teachers will need to develop good practice in the use of Internet and email as a tool for teaching & learning

In Primary School :

- Internet and email access will be part of a planned activity
- At Key Stage 1, access to the Internet and email will be with direct teacher or adult supervision. Pupils will only access teacher-prepared materials, or researched sites and selected e-pals
- At Key Stage 2, Internet and email access will be granted to a whole class or group as part of the scheme of work, after a suitable introduction to the Rules for Responsible Internet and email use and will always be supervised by an adult
- Parents will be informed that pupils will be provided with supervised Internet and email access where it is important to their education and will be asked to sign and return an agreement form (see appendix for example letter)

5. The school will take all steps to ensure that Internet and email access is appropriate and safe :

In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available via the Internet and email is unsuitable for students. The school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that such material is inaccessible. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of information available via the Internet and email, it is not possible to guarantee that particular types of material will never appear on a terminal. However neither the school nor the LEA can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences thereof.

6. Responsibilities of the school :

- Staff, parents, governors and advisers will work to establish agreement that every reasonable measure is being taken to protect pupils

- The Headteacher will ensure that the policy is implemented effectively
- Policy and procedures will be reviewed as students' Internet and email use expands and their ability to retrieve information develops
- The school will ensure that occasional checks are made on files to monitor compliance with the school's Responsible Use Policy and students will be informed that such checks are made
- The school will ensure that students are always supervised when using the Internet and email
- All machines with Internet and email capability are accommodated in public areas and that their use is frequently monitored
- The school will check that the sites selected for student use are appropriate to the age and maturity of students
- Where applicable a range of fully tested, approved sites will be copied to the school intranet
- The school will only use an Internet and email service provider with a proxy server to filter the material available to students or will take measures to ensure similar protection is installed on the school's computer system (e.g. Cyber patrol)
- The school will ensure that students cannot disable the proxy server or interfere with protection software
- The school will ensure that virus protection is installed and updated regularly
- Any material that the school suspects is illegal will be referred to the Internet and email Watch Foundation (see References)
- The school will ensure systems to protect students are reviewed and improved regularly
- Rules for the use of the Internet and email are posted near all computers and clearly visible

7. Responsibilities of staff and students :

- If staff or students discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content will be reported to the Internet Service Provider
- Students will be encouraged to tell a teacher immediately if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable
- Students will not be given access to Chat lines or unrestricted access to Newsgroups
- Students will be informed that checks can be made on files held on the system
- Students using the Internet and email will be supervised appropriately
- Students will agree to sign the Responsible Use of the Internet and email Agreement
- Students will be encouraged to take collective responsibility for acceptable use of the Internet and email in school
- Students should obtain permission before downloading software from the Internet

8. The management of e-mail in school :

- Email is regarded as an essential means of communication and schools should take appropriate steps to monitor its use and content
- Communication using e-mail will be organised to ensure it is for appropriate educational use and not for private or personal messages
- The language and content of e-mails should be of an appropriate level expected of any written work and should ensure that the good name of the school is maintained
- The forwarding of chain letters and anonymous letters is banned
- Staff and students should be aware that all e-mail on the school system is regarded as public and as such will be monitored and may be printed out and posted on public notice boards
- In most Primary Schools pupils will only be given e-mail access for educational activities through a group account e.g. as a class
- Where students are given individual e-mail accounts these are only granted where a high level of trust can be assumed for its responsible use
- E-mail messages on school business (e.g. arranging a work placement) must be approved before sending and should be regarded as having been sent on headed notepaper
- E-mail and the Internet should not be used to order materials or undertake any activity which incurs a cost to the school
- Staff and students should be made aware of the potential for virus infection through the sending of files attached to e-mails
- Excessive personal use should be considered time wasting

9. Publishing material on the schools web site :

- The school will maintain editorial responsibility for any school initiated web site to ensure that content is accurate and quality of presentation is maintained
- The school will maintain the integrity of the school web site by ensuring that responsibility for uploading material is never handed over to students and that password are protected
- The web site will comply with the school's guidelines for publications
- Students will be taught to publish for a wide range of audiences which might include governors, parents or younger children
- All material must be the author's own work, should credit any other work included, state clearly the author's identity or status and not break copyright
- The point of contact on the web site will be the school address, e-mail and telephone number. Home information or individuals' e-mail addresses will not be published
- Photographs of identifiable individual students will not be published on the web site. Group photographs should not have a name list attached. Identities of students must be protected at all times and parents may be consulted about publishing work from pupils

10. Procedure for dealing with complaints and breaches of conduct :

- Any complaints or breaches of conduct will be dealt with promptly
- Responsibility for handling incidents will be given to a senior member of staff
- Students and parents will be informed of the procedure
- Parents and students will need to work in partnership with staff to resolve any issues arising
- The facts of the case will need to be established, for instance to ascertain whether the issue has arisen through home Internet and email use or through contacts outside school
- As with drugs issues, there may be occasions when the police must be contacted. Early contact will be made to establish the legal position and discuss strategies
- Sanctions for irresponsible use will be linked to the school's Behaviour Policy and will consist of the following actions depending on circumstances:
 - verbal warning
 - interview by head
 - letter home to inform parent or carer
 - temporary withdrawal of Internet and e-mail privileges
 - permanent withdrawal of computer access
 - exclusion from school
 - referral to police

11. Informing staff, students and parents :

- Rules for Internet and email access will be posted near computers with Internet access (see appendix)
- All staff including teachers, supply staff, classroom assistants and support staff will be involved in developing and reviewing the Responsible Use of the Internet and email policy
- All staff supervising Internet and email use will be given appropriate training
- Parents' attention will be drawn to the Policy in newsletters, the school brochure, the school web site, leaflets and information from relevant organisations
- Demonstrations and practical IT sessions for parents may be organised to encourage a partnership approach
- Parents and students will sign a Responsible Use of the Internet and email agreement
- A module on responsible Internet and email use will be included in the PSHE programme, covering both school and home use

12. Security of School systems

- Security strategies will be considered by the ICT co-ordinator and reviewed regularly
- Care will be taken when transmitting personal data over the Internet
- Virus protection will be installed and updated regularly
- School will publish its policy on the use of floppy discs by students
- School will publish its policy on the use of attachments with emails

Appendices

Sample Documents

Letter for Parents

Dear Parents

Responsible Use of the Internet and email

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

Pupils will be able to exchange electronic mail with partner schools and research information from museums, libraries, news providers and suitable web sites as part of their programme of learning.

Although there have been concerns about pupils having access to undesirable materials, we are taking positive steps to deal with that possibility. We have purchased our Internet and email access from an educational supplier that operates a filtering system which restricts access to inappropriate materials and is continually updating its database of known offensive sites. All our screens are in public view and, as stated above, access will be supervised.

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

I enclose a copy of the Responsible Use of the Internet and email agreement that we operate at our school, which your child is being asked to sign. Could you sign and return this letter to show your agreement to your child using the Internet and e-mail.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Pupil name.....

I have read the Responsible Use of the Internet and email agreement and give permission for my child to use the Internet and e-mail in School.

Signed.....(parent /carer)

Date.....

Primary School

Responsible Use of the Internet and email statement

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

- I will not change or create any passwords or login procedures on the computers
- I will not interfere with or knowingly change any settings in the computer
- I will not install or delete any software on the schools computer
- I will not bring in floppy disks or CD ROMs from outside school unless I have been given permission
- I will not access or change other people's work files
- I will only use the computers for school work and homework
- I will ask permission from a member of staff before using the Internet and email
- I will only e-mail people my teacher has approved
- The messages I send will be polite and responsible
- I will never give my home address, telephone number or photograph or arrange to meet someone I have contacted on the Internet or by e-mail
- I will report to an adult any unpleasant material or messages sent to me
- I understand that the school may check my computer files and may look at the Internet sites I visit
- I understand that if I do not follow these rules I will not be allowed to use the Internet and email or any of the school's computers

Pupil name.....

Signed.....

