

NORTHILL C OF E VA LOWER SCHOOL

Internet Access Policy

This policy outlines our purpose in providing e-mail facilities and access to the internet at Northill C of E VA Lower School and explains how the school is seeking to avoid the potential problems that unrestricted internet access could give rise to.

Internet access in school

Teachers and pupils will have access to web sites world-wide (including museums and art galleries) offering resources, news and current events. All staff (including teachers, supply staff and classroom assistants) and any other adults involved in supervising children accessing the internet, will be made aware of the School Internet Access Policy. Our school Internet Access Policy will be available for parents and others to read on demand.

Ensuring Internet Access is Appropriate and Safe

In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available on the internet is unsuitable for pupils. The school will take every practical measure to ensure that children do not encounter upsetting, offensive or otherwise inappropriate material on the internet. The following key measures have been adopted to help ensure that our pupils are not exposed to unsuitable material:

- Our internet access is purchased from Bedfordshire County Council which provides a service designed for pupils including a "firewall" filtering system intended to prevent access to material inappropriate for children
- 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 the sites pre-selected for pupil use are appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils
- Staff will be particularly vigilant when pupils are undertaking their own search and will check that the children are following the agreed search plan
- Pupils will be taught to use e-mail and the internet responsibly in order to reduce the risk to themselves and others
- Our Rules for Responsible Internet Use will be posted near computer systems
- All staff will ensure that the policy is implemented effectively
- Methods to quantify and minimise the risk of pupils being exposed to inappropriate material will be reviewed in consultation with colleagues from other schools and advice from the LEA, our Internet Service provider and the DfEE.

It is the experience of other schools that the above measures have been highly effective. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of information available via the internet, it is not possible to guarantee that particular types of material will never appear on a computer screen. *Neither the school nor Bedfordshire County Council can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences thereof.* A most important element of our Rules on Responsible Internet Use is that pupils will be taught to tell a teacher **immediately** if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.

If there is an incident in which a pupil is exposed to offensive or upsetting material the school will wish to respond to the situation quickly and on a number of levels. Responsibility for handling incidents involving children will be taken by the Headteacher, the Child Protection Officer and the pupil's class teacher. All the teaching staff will be made aware of the incident in *Pupil Awareness* at a Staff Meeting if appropriate.

- If one or more pupils discover (view) inappropriate material our first priority will be to give them appropriate support. The pupil's parents/carers will be informed and given an explanation of the course of action the school has taken. The school aims to work with parents/carers and pupils to resolve any issue
- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites the ICT co-ordinator will be informed. The ICT co-ordinator will report the URL (address) and content to the Internet Service Provider and the

LEA; if it is thought that the material is illegal, after consultation with the ISP and LEA, the site will be referred to the Internet Watch Foundation and the police.

Pupils are expected to play their part in reducing the risk of viewing inappropriate material by obeying the Rules of Responsible Internet Use which have been designed to help protect them from exposure to internet sites carrying offensive material. If pupils abuse the privileges of access to the internet or use of e-mail facilities by failing to follow the rules they have been taught or failing to follow the agreed search plan when given the privilege of undertaking their own internet search, then sanctions consistent with our School Behaviour Policy will be applied. This may involve informing the parents/carers. Teachers may also consider whether access to the internet may be denied for a period.

Maintaining the Security of the School ICT Network

We are aware that connection to the internet significantly increases the risk that a computer or a computer network may be infected by a virus or accessed by unauthorised persons. The ICT technician will up date virus protection regularly.

Using the Internet to Enhance Learning

Pupils will learn how to use a web browser. Older pupils will be taught to use suitable web search engines. Staff and pupils will begin to use the internet to find and evaluate information. Access to the internet will become a planned part of the curriculum and will be integrated into the class schemes of work. As in other areas of their work, we recognise that pupils learn most effectively when they are given clear objectives for internet use. Different ways of accessing information from the internet will be used depending upon the nature of the material being accessed and the age of the pupils:

- Access to the internet may be by teacher (or sometimes other adult) demonstration
- Pupils may access teacher-prepared materials, rather than the open internet
- Pupils may be given a suitable web page or a single web site to access
- Pupils may be provided with lists of relevant and suitable web sites which they may access
- Older, more experienced, pupils may be allowed to undertake their own internet search having agreed a search plan with their teacher, pupils will be expected to observe the Rules of Responsible Internet use and will be informed that checks can and will be made on files held on the system and the sites they access.

Pupils accessing the Internet will normally be supervised by an adult. They will only be allowed to use the internet once they have been taught the Rules of Responsible Internet Use and the reasons for these rules. Teachers will endeavour to ensure that these rules remain uppermost in the children's minds as they monitor the children using the internet.

Using Information From The Internet

We believe that, in order to use information from the internet effectively, it is important for pupils to develop an understanding of the nature of the internet and the information available on it. In particular, they should know that, unlike the school library for example, most of the information on the internet is intended for adult audience, much of the information on the internet is not properly audited/edited and most of it is copyright.

- Pupils will be taught to expect a wider range of content, both in level and in audience, than is found in the school library or on TV
- Teachers will ensure that pupils are aware of the need to validate information whenever possible before accepting it as true, and understand that this is even more important when considering information from the internet (as a non-moderated medium)
- When copying materials from the Web, pupils will be taught to observe copyright
- Pupils will be made aware that the writer of an e-mail or the author of a web page may not be the person claimed

Using E-Mail

Pupils will learn how to use an e-mail application and be taught e-mail conventions. Staff and pupils will begin to use e-mail to communicate with others, to request information and to share information. It is important that communications with persons and organisations are properly

managed to ensure appropriate educational use and that the good name of the school is maintained. Therefore:

- Pupils will only be allowed to use e-mail once they have been taught the Rules of Responsible Internet Use and the reasons for these rules
- Teachers will endeavour to ensure that these rules remain uppermost in the children's minds as they monitor children using e-mail
- Pupils may send e-mail as part of planned lessons but will not be given individual e-mail accounts at present
- In-coming e-mail to pupils will not be regarded as private and may be read by staff
- Children will have the e-mail messages they compose checked by a member of staff before sending them
- The forwarding of chain letters will not be permitted
- Pupils will not be permitted to use e-mail at school to arrange to meet someone outside school hours

Internet Access and Home/School Links

Parents will be informed in our school prospectus that pupils are provided with supervised internet access as part of their lessons. We will keep parents in touch with future ICT developments by letter and newsletter.

As noted above, it is not possible to be certain of the originator or an e-mail message, and for this reason the school is unable to accept an e-mail as parental authorisation of pupil absence.

Signed of behalf of the Governing Body

Ian Malcolm
Chair of Governors

Date:

Internet Rules

- **Please ask before using the internet.**
- **Do not use the internet without an adult in the room.**
- **If anything comes on the screen that you know is wrong, tell an adult. You will not be told off. We do need to know.**