



ST. OSWALD'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

INTERNET & MEDIA ACCESS & SAFETY Policy

This policy outlines our purpose in providing e-mail facilities and access to the internet at St. Oswald's and explains how school is seeking to avoid the potential problems that unrestricted internet access could give rise to. It also covers e-safety within school.

Internet access in school

Providing access to the internet in school will raise educational standards and support the professional work of staff.

Teachers and pupils will have access to web sites world-wide (including museums and art galleries) offering educational resources, news and current events. There will be opportunities for discussion with experts in many fields and to communicate and exchange information with students and others world-wide.

In addition, staff will have the opportunity to access educational materials and good curriculum practice, to communicate with the advisory and support services, professional associations and colleagues; exchange curriculum and administration data with the LA and DfE; receive up-to-date information and participate in government initiatives such as NGfL and the Virtual Teacher Centre.

In the longer term the internet may also be used to enhance the school's management information and business administration systems.

Staff, including supply staff, will not be expected to take charge of an internet activity without training. Staff should be given opportunities to discuss the issues and develop good teaching strategies. All staff (including teachers, supply staff and classroom assistants) and any other adults involved in supervising children accessing the internet, will be provided with the School Internet Access Policy, and will have its importance explained to them.

Parents' attention will be drawn to the Policy by letter in the first instance and, thereafter, in our school prospectus. Our school Internet Access Policy will be available for parents and others to read on demand, including access to the policy via the school website.

Ensuring internet access is appropriate and safe

The internet is an ever-changing communications medium and is freely available to any person wishing to send e-mail or publish a web site. In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available on the internet is unsuitable for pupils. Pupils in school are unlikely to see inappropriate content in books due to selection by publisher and teacher and 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 NEWCASTLE CITY 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 computer suite/classroom, during lesson time and will be supervised by an adult (usually the class teacher/teaching assistant) at all times;
- 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.
- the Computing co-ordinator will monitor the effectiveness of internet access strategies;

- the Computing co-ordinator/Class Teachers will ensure that occasional checks are made on files to monitor compliance with the school's Internet Access Policy;
- the headteacher 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 advise from the LA, our Internet Service Provider and the DfE.

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 LOCAL COUNCIL can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences thereof.*

A most important element of our Rules of 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 Head Teacher and Computing Co-ordinator in consultation 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 Computing co-ordinator will be informed. The Computing 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 Computing 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 Technician will up-date virus protection regularly, will keep up-to-date with Computing news developments and work with the LA and Internet Service Provider to ensure system security strategies to protect the integrity of the network are reviewed regularly and improved as and when necessary.

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 that will enrich and extend learning activities and will be integrated into the class schemes of work. All children will be treated as individuals and their needs catered for on that basis, allowing all to access our inclusive education in school.

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;
- every effort will be made to ensure that children have provision made for them on an individual basis, any children who require specialist equipment to access the same work as their peers will have work tailored to their needs.
- 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 be supervised by an adult, normally their teacher, at all times. 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 an 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. Pupils will use the secure internet site Purple Mash to perform e-mail tasks safely.

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;
- 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.
- Pupils use of e-mail in Purple Mash will be monitored by school administrators, including Computing coordinator.

- Pupils encountering any problems on the Purple Mash site must inform the Computing coordinator immediately, who will inform the Headteacher and any other relevant parties.

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 Computing developments by letter and newsletter.

Internet use in pupils' homes is rapidly increasing and some parents may be grateful for any advice/guidance that school can offer – especially with regard to safe access for children. The Computing co-ordinator is willing to offer advice and suggest alternative sources of advice on the understanding that neither he/she, the school nor the LA can be held responsible for the consequences of such advice.

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

Children are made aware of appropriate usage of web based sites and their tools, those violating those agreements are to have access restricted or disallowed depending on the terms. Children are made aware that this site is monitored on a regular basis. Any child who feels unhappy as a result of using this site because of others should report any concerns to an adult, a Computing member of staff and Head teacher must be informed of any bullying issues arising from internet usage.

Mobile phones and wearable technology

Responsibility for mobile phones and wearable technology:

School accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones or wearable technology. It is the responsibility of parents and pupils to ensure mobile phones and other devices are properly insured.

Children and staff are not permitted to wear technology such as the 'Apple watch' and other wearable devices which can send and receive pictures, videos, texts and messages.

Our strong advice is that pupils should not bring wearable technology

devices to school. If a child brings in or is found to have wearable technology then this will be treated in the same manner as having a mobile phone within school.

Phones and wearable technology must not be used for any purpose (eg phoning, texting, surfing the internet, taking photos, checking the time (in cases of phones), taking videos etc) between the hours of 8:30 am and 3:05 pm. Phones and wearable technology must always be switched off before entering the school gates (not on silent mode) and given to the class teacher once inside school. These will be returned to the child at the end of the school day.

If a pupil breaches these rules the phone will be confiscated and given in to the main office. It will be returned to the pupil on receipt of a letter from parents. Phones must not be taken into examinations.

Pupils are not permitted to use camera phones to take pictures within the school, on school trips and at school events

If a pupil uses a phone to bully another eg. to send threatening and/or abusive texts, the phone will be confiscated and the parents/ guardians informed of the matter, it will be then dealt with by the headteacher.

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