

Internet Access & Use Policy



Black Firs School

This policy outlines our purpose in providing access to the internet and e-mailing facilities at Black Firs Primary 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

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

Teachers and children will have access to websites 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 MAT & Borough support services, professional associations and colleagues; exchange curriculum and administration data with Cheshire East and DfE; receive up-to-date information and participate in government initiatives.

In the longer term the internet may also be used to enhance 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 School 'Rules for Responsible Internet Use', and will have its importance explained to them.

Parents' attention will be drawn to the Policy by ParentMail in the first instance and, thereafter, on School website & prospectus. Our School 'Internet Access & Use Policy' will be available for parents and others to read on demand.

Ensuring internet access is appropriate and safe

The internet is a communications medium and is freely available to any person wishing to send e-mail or publish a website. In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available on the internet is unsuitable for children. Children 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 children are not exposed to unsuitable material:

- our internet access is protected by Smoothwall filtering software which includes a "firewall" 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 (usually the class teacher) at all times;
- staff will check that the sites pre-selected for child use are appropriate to the age and maturity of children;
- staff will be particularly vigilant when children are undertaking their own search and will check that the children are following the agreed search plan;
- children 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' policy will be posted near computer systems.

- the Computing coordinator and Head-teacher will monitor the effectiveness of internet access strategies;
- the Computing coordinator will ensure that occasional checks are made on files to monitor compliance with the school's 'Internet Access & Use Policy';
- the Head-teacher will ensure that the policy is implemented effectively;
- methods to quantify and minimise the risk of children 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 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 School nor TLA can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences thereof.*

A most important element of our 'Rules for Responsible Internet Use' is that children 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 child 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 **MC** (Head-teacher) and **AM** (Computing Coordinator) in consultation with the child's class teacher. All the teaching staff will be made aware of the incident at a Staff Meeting if appropriate.

- If one or more children discover (view) inappropriate material our first priority will be to give them appropriate support. The child's parents/carers will be informed and explained the course of action the school has taken. The school aims to work with parents/carers and children to resolve any issue;
- If staff or children discover unsuitable sites, the Computing coordinator will be informed. The Computing coordinator will report the URL (address) and content to the Head-teacher; if it is thought that the material is illegal, after consultation with the ISP and Borough, the site will be referred to the Internet Watch Foundation and the police.

Children are expected to play their part in reducing the risk of viewing inappropriate material by obeying the 'Rules for Responsible Internet Use' which have been designed to help protect them from exposure to internet sites carrying offensive material. If children abuse the privileges of access to the internet or use of e-mail & Teams account 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 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 Head-teacher will up-date virus protection regularly, will keep up-to-date with IT news developments and work with the Borough 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

Children will learn how to use a web browser and will be taught to use suitable web search engines. Staff and children 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.

As in other areas of their work, we recognise that children 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 children:

- access to the internet may be by teacher (or sometimes other-adult) demonstration;
- children may access teacher-prepared materials, rather than the open internet;
- children may be given a suitable web page or a single website to access;
- children may be provided with lists of relevant and suitable websites which they may access;
- children may be allowed to undertake their own internet search having agreed a search plan with their teacher; children will be expected to observe the 'Rules for 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.

Children 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 for 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 children 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 bookshelves 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.

- children will be taught to expect a wider range of content, both in level and in audience, than is found on the school bookshelves or on TV;
- teachers will ensure that children 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, children will be taught to observe copyright;
- children 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

Children will learn how to use an e-mail application and be taught e-mail conventions. Staff and children 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:

- children will only be allowed to use e-mail once they have been taught the 'Rules for 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;
- children may send e-mail as part of planned lessons;
- in-coming e-mail to children 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;
- children will not be permitted to use e-mail at school to arrange to meet someone outside school hours.

Black Firs Primary School Website

Our school website is intended to:

- provide accurate, up-to-date information about our school;
- enable children to publish work to a high standard, for a very wide audience including children, parents, staff, governors, members of the local community and others;
- celebrate good work;
- provide children with the opportunity to publish their work on the internet;

- promote School.

It may be used to publish resources for projects or homework.

All classes may provide work for publication on the school website. Class teachers will be responsible for ensuring that the content of the children's work is accurate and the quality of presentation is maintained. All material must be the author's own work, crediting other work included and stating clearly that author's identity and/or status. The Head-teacher, Computing Coordinator and Class Teachers are responsible for up-loading pages to the school website, ensuring that the links work and are up-to-date, and that the site meets the requirements of the site host.

The point of contact on the website will be the school address, telephone number and e-mail address. We do not publish children's full names or photographs that identify individuals on our web pages. Home information or individual e-mail identities will not be published. Staff will be identified by their title and surname unless they request otherwise. Permission will be sought from other individuals before they are referred to by name on any pages we publish on our website.

School website address: www.black-firs.co.uk

Internet access and home / school links

Parents will be informed in our school prospectus that children 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.

Internet use in children's homes has rapidly increased and some parents may be grateful for any advice/guidance that school can offer – especially with regard to safe access for children. The Head-teacher and Computing coordinator are willing to offer advice and suggest alternative sources of advice on the understanding that neither he/she, the school nor TLA can be held responsible for the consequences of such advice. Further:

- school guidelines on issues such as safe internet use will be made available to parents together with internet sites providing information for parents about safe access for children.