



Students' access to the internet

The school encourages use by students of the rich information resources available on the internet, together with the development of appropriate skills to analyse and evaluate such resources. These skills are fundamental to our modern society.

On-line services significantly alter the information landscape for schools by opening classrooms to a broader array of resources. In the past, teaching and library materials could usually be carefully chosen. All such materials would be chosen to be consistent with national policies, supporting and enriching the curriculum while taking into account the varied teaching needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of the students. Internet access, because it may lead to any publicly available site in the world, will open classrooms to electronic information resources which have not been selected by teachers as appropriate for use by students.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. The school expects that staff will begin to investigate possibilities and blend use of such information as appropriate within the curriculum and that staff will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of such resources. Staff will consult the IT Co-ordinator for advice on content, training and appropriate teaching levels consistent with the school's IT programme of study.

Unmonitored and unregulated student use of telecommunications and electronic information resources is not advised and so independent use will only be permitted upon submission of permission and agreement forms by parents or carers of students and by students themselves.

Access to on-line resources will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with people throughout the world. The school believes that the benefits to students from access to information resources and increased opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. But ultimately, parents and carers of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the school supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for independent access.

The school's IT Co-ordinator will prepare appropriate procedures for implementing this policy and for reviewing and evaluating its effect on teaching and learning.



School Procedures

Resource Development

In order to match electronic resources as closely as possible to the national and school curriculum, teachers need to review and evaluate resources in order to offer "home pages" and menus of materials that are appropriate to the age range and ability of the group being taught. The teaching staff will provide appropriate guidance to students as they make use of telecommunications and electronic information resources to conduct research and other studies. All students will be informed by staff of their rights and responsibilities as users, before their first use, either as an individual user or as a member of a class or group.

As much as possible, the school's chosen information provider has organised information resources in ways that point students to those that have been reviewed and evaluated prior to use. While students may be able to move beyond those resources to others that have not been evaluated by staff, they shall be provided with guidelines and lists of resources particularly suited to the learning objectives. Students may pursue electronic research independent of staff supervision only if they have been granted parental permission and have submitted all required forms. Permission is not transferable and may not be shared.

School Rules

The school has developed a set of guidelines for internet use by students. These rules will be made available to all students, and kept under constant review.

All members of staff are responsible for explaining the rules and their implications. All members of staff need to be aware of possible misuses of on-line access and their responsibilities towards students.



Student guidelines for Internet use

General

Students are responsible for good behaviour on the Internet just as they are in a classroom or a school corridor. General school rules apply.

The Internet is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Parents' or carers' permission is required. Remember that access is a privilege, not a right and that access requires responsibility.

Individual users of the Internet are responsible for their behaviour and communications over the network. It is presumed that users will comply with school standards and will honour the agreements they have signed.

Computer storage areas and memory sticks can and will be subject to inspection. Staff may review files and communications to ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on servers or memory sticks would always be private.

During school, teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear responsibility for such guidance as they must also exercise with information sources such as television, mobile phones, movies, radio and other potentially offensive media.

The following are not permitted:

1. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
2. Using obscene language
3. Harassing, insulting or attacking others on our school network or any other networks
4. Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks or any equipment in the classroom
5. Violating copyright laws
6. Using others' usernames or passwords
7. Trespassing in others' folders, work or files
8. Intentionally wasting limited resources
9. Accessing inappropriate websites or materials
10. Sharing inappropriate materials

Sanctions

1. Violations of the above rules will result in a temporary or permanent ban on Internet use.
2. Additional disciplinary action may be added in line with existing practice on inappropriate language or behaviour.
3. When applicable, police or Local Authorities may be involved.