St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

"To be a happy learning community based on Christian values, which enable all children to reach their full potential."

Internet and email Policy

Rational

The purpose of Internet access in school is to contribute to learning and to the raising of educational standards for all concerned, to support continued professional development of all staff and to enhance the schools' management of information and business administration systems. Access to the Internet is a necessary tool for the whole school community, all staff and pupils. The curriculum emphasises that it is an entitlement for pupils using computers and the Internet to be able to demonstrate a responsible mature approach.

Aims

- To ensure, as much as is possible, that the access to the internet is safe.
- Pupils will need to be aware that there is no regulatory authority body for the Internet. Anyone anywhere can publish material. It is not censured for opinion, bias or validity of information,
- To ensure, as much as possible, that the system is secure.
- E-mail is an important means of communication within education and the wider world. The capacity to use e-mail is an important means of communication in society; pupils should learn to effectively use it as they do with other forms of written communication. E-mail can inspire otherwise reluctant writers to concentrate on their spelling and grammar in order to send messages to their peers. It can help pupils make the transition between schools and for pupils who must study away from school or college (at home or in hospital, for example) e-mail can enable direct access to teachers, peers and familiar content. Learners can also take part in various intellectual projects, on-line discussions and live text based conversations and debates (although unsupervised 'chat rooms' will be avoided). E-mail extends communication beyond the school, into the home, the workplace and the community. We use a monitored and controlled form of email to safely teach how to use this tool wisely.

Principles of practice

- Access to the Internet is required to fulfil the requirements of our curriculum.
- When using the Internet pupils will be supervised at all times. This may include supervision by teachers or support staff of computers in a public place where the screen is visible, to random checking on computer records of sites visited. Pupils will be made aware that checks will be made by automatic logging of files (such as temporary Internet files, 'history' or 'cache') on computers. Alerting pupils to the fact that teachers can and do track the sites that pupils visit has been proven to be highly effective.
- Staff will pre-select sites which will support the learning outcomes planned for the pupils' appropriate to their age and maturity.
- Pupils will be allowed to use the Internet to search for information and resources to meet their learning objectives in a manner appropriate to their age and ability.
- If Staff and/or pupils discover unsuitable material, the URL (Uniform Resource Locator-address) and the content will be reported without delay to the Internet Service Provider by the ICT SMT representative.
- The school will work closely with parents, the LA, DfE and the Internet service provider to ensure systems to protect pupils are reviewed and continuously improved. Due to the process involved in publishing information on the Internet, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a computer screen, however we do use a robust filtering system in line with all schools in the Local Authority. Neither the school, South Gloucestershire LA or the Internet Service Provider can accept liability for the materials accessed, nor/ any consequences thereof, although all reasonable action is taken to prevent this.
- Pupils will be taught methods to validate by cross-referencing, information from the Internet.
- Pupils will be taught how to carry out structured searches of the Internet.
- Pupils will be taught how to include a list of acknowledged sources of information that they have used for research purposes.

- Pupils will be instructed to tell a member of staff immediately if they find material that makes them feel uncomfortable and to use our Horace to freeze the screen.
- Pupils will be taught how to use e-mail to communicate with people they know and, within restricted circumstances, those they do not.
- Virus protection is installed and updated regularly on all computer systems.
- Personal memory may not be brought into school without specific permission and a virus check. Use of e-mail by pupils to send attachments will be allowed only when authorised by a member of the teaching staff.
- Responsible and appropriate use of email within the school must be encouraged appropriate to the schools' Personal, Social and Health Education, and Discipline policies. (For example, anything that would be unacceptable if found on a written note between pupils is equally unacceptable on an e-mail).
- Messages sent from a school computer or using the school domain name should be regarded in the same way as messages written on school headed paper and are therefore subject to checking by a senior member of staff.
- Use of chat rooms is not allowed from school computers.
- E-mail sent from school computers is liable to random checks. Inappropriate use will lead to removal of the pupil's entitlement to use the equipment.
- Addition to the facilities will be thoroughly tested before they are introduced to widespread use.
- Our Web site will follow the principles established for all documents published by the school.
- All material must be the author's own work, or permission to reproduce be obtained before publication. Copyright owner's names must be clearly displayed. The copyright laws apply to the web.
- Full names will not be given on the Web site, including on pupils' work.
- The Head Teacher / IT Coordinator has editorial responsibility and is charged with the responsibility to ensure content is accurate, follows security guidelines and quality of presentation is maintained.