Meopham School
Responsible Internet Use Policy

RESPONSIBLE INTERNET USE POLICY

Why have the Internet?

The purpose of Internet access in schools is to raise educational standards, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management information and business administration systems.

Access to the Internet is a necessary tool for staff and entitlement for students who show a responsible and mature approach. It should be noted that the use of a computer system without permission or for a purpose not agreed by the school could constitute a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 2018.

The appropriate use of the Internet in the educational setting enables:

- Access to worldwide educational resources including museums and art galleries.
- Inclusion in government initiatives
- Information and cultural exchanges between students worldwide.
- News and current events.
- Cultural, social and leisure use in libraries, clubs and at home.
- Discussion with experts in many fields for pupils and staff.
- Staff professional development – access to educational materials and good curriculum practice.
- Communication with the advisory and support services, professional associations and colleagues.
- Exchange of curriculum and administration data with the LEA and DfEE.

Risk Assessment

In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some materials available via the Internet are unsuitable for pupils. The school will supervise pupils and take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material. 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 terminal. Neither the school nor KCC can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences thereof.

- Methods to quantify and minimise the risk are regularly reviewed.
- Staff, parents, governors and advisers will work to establish agreement that every reasonable measure is being taken.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the Policy is implemented effectively.

Access

- Internet access and digital learning is a necessary part of planned lessons. It is an entitlement for pupils based on responsible use.
- Pupils will be provided with supervised Internet access.

Maintenance

- The IT co-ordinator/network manager will ensure that the system has the capacity to take increased traffic caused by Internet use.
- The school has invested in a suitable filter.
- The security of the whole system will be reviewed with regard to threats to security from Internet access.
- Personal data will NOT be sent over the Internet.
- Virus protection will be installed and updated regularly.
- Use of email to send attachments such as system utilities will be reviewed.
- Security strategies will be discussed with the LEA.

Curriculum Use and Evaluation

- Internet access will be planned to enrich and extend learning activities as an integrated aspect of the curriculum. Sub timetables have been produced that allocate different year groups to the Internet suites.
- Pupils will be given clear objectives for Internet use.
- Pupils will be taught how to use the Google Suite and remote learning.
- Pupils will be provided with lists of relevant and suitable Websites.
- Pupils will be educated in taking responsibility for Internet access.
- Pupils will be informed that checks can be made on files held on the system.
- Pupils using the Internet will be supervised appropriately.
- Internet access will be purchased from a supplier that provides a service designed for pupils. This will include filtering appropriate to the age of pupils.
- The school will work with the LEA and the Internet Service Provider to ensure systems to protect pupils are reviewed and improved.

Personal, Social and Ethical Development

- Pupils will be taught to validate information before accepting it as true, an important aspect of higher levels of subject teaching.
- When copying materials from the Web, pupils will observe copyright.
- Pupils will be made aware that the writer of an email or the author of a Web page may not be the person claimed.
- Pupils will be encouraged to tell a teacher immediately if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Email

- Every pupil and staff member has their own Google email address.
- Pupils in all years will have one IT lesson dedicated to the explanation of Google email and its acceptable use.
- Email is provided on the understanding that its primary function is to aid pupils in their work.
- Occasional use of the system to send personal emails is not prohibited, on the understanding that the school reserves the right to access ALL emails sent from and received by the school network. No email is to be considered private.
- Pupils who abuse the email system in any way will have their email accounts disabled. If appropriate, any abusive material will be printed and a copy sent to parents.

Website Publishing

- The Network Manager is responsible for overseeing the physical uploading of the web site. The content of the website will be provided by the relevant departments.
- The website will comply with the school's guidelines for publications.
- Pupils will be taught to publish for a wide range of audiences, which might include governors, parents or young children.
- All material must be the author's own work, credit other work included and state clearly the author's identity or status.
- Photographs of identifiable individual pupils will not be published on the Website or school social media. Group photographs should not have a name list attached.

Safe practice

- Staff will check that the sites selected for pupil use are appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils.
- Senior staff will monitor the effectiveness of Internet access strategies.
- Access levels will be reviewed as pupils' Internet use expands and their ability to retrieve information develops.
- Senior staff will ensure that occasional checks are made on files to monitor compliance with the school's Internet Access Policy.
- A range of fully tested, approved sites will be copied to the school Internet.
- If staff or sixth form students require non-filtered Internet access, a separate system has been provided in the Sixth Form office.

Complaints

- Responsibility for handling incidents will be given to a senior member of staff.
- Pupils and parents will be informed of the procedure.
- Parents and pupils will need to work in partnership with staff to resolve any issue.

- As with any safeguarding issues, there may be occasions when the police must be contacted. Early contact will be made to establish the legal position and discuss strategies.
- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content will be reported to the Internet Service Provider.
- Sanctions available include interview by head of year and, if appropriate, informing parents or carers.
- A pupil will have the Internet or computer access denied for a period.

How will staff, pupils and parents be kept informed?

- Rules for Internet access will be posted near computer systems. The Rules for Responsible Internet Use could be printed as posters
- All staff, including teachers, supply staff, teaching assistants and support staff, will be provided with the Internet Access Policy, and its importance explained.
- Parents' attention will be drawn to the Policy in Newsletters, MCAS and on the school website.

Parental Support

- A careful balance between informing and alarming parents will be maintained.
- Demonstrations and practical IT sessions for parents will be organised to encourage a partnership approach.
- Joint home/school guidelines on issues such as safe Internet use will be established.
- Suitable educational and leisure activities that make responsible use of the Internet will be developed with parents.

There follows the Responsible Internet Use Statement, which all users are required to complete.

Responsible Internet Use Statement

For Staff and All Students

The computer system is owned by the school, and may be used by students to further their education and by staff to enhance their professional activities including teaching, research, administration and management. The school's Internet Access Policy has been drawn up to protect all parties – the pupils, the staff and the school.

The school reserves the right to examine or delete any files that may be held on either the computer network or the Google Drive and to monitor any Internet sites visited.

Staff and students requesting Internet access should sign a copy of this Responsible Internet Use Statement and return it to the IT Manager for approval.

- All Internet activity should be appropriate to staff professional activity or the student's education.
- Access should only be made via the authorised account and password, which should not be made available to any other person.
- Activity that threatens the integrity of the school ICT systems, or activity that attacks or corrupts other systems, is forbidden.
- Users are responsible for all email sent and for contacts made that may result in email being received.
- Use for personal financial gain, gambling, political purposes or advertising is forbidden.
- Copyright of materials must be respected.
- Posting anonymous messages and forwarding chain letters is forbidden.
- As email can be forwarded or inadvertently sent to the wrong person, the same professional levels of language and content should be applied as for letters or other media.
- Use of the network to access inappropriate materials such as pornographic, racist or offensive material is forbidden.