



Thornaby Church of England Primary School

Internet Access Policy

Our school's Internet Access Policy is part of the school's ICT Policy and ICT Development Plan and will relate to other policies including those for behaviour and for personal, social and health education including citizenship. The Internet Access Policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

The Importance of the Internet to Learning in Schools

The purpose of Internet access in school 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 pupils. It is an entitlement for pupils who show a responsible and mature approach.

How the use of the Internet Benefits the School

The Government has set targets for ICT use in all schools through the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) initiative. A number of studies and government projects have indicated the benefits to be gained through the appropriate use of the Internet in education.

These benefits include:

- Access to world-wide educational resources including museums and art galleries.
- Inclusion in government initiatives such as NGfL and the Virtual Teacher Centre.
- Information and cultural exchanges between pupils world-wide.
- Cultural, social and leisure use in libraries, youth 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.
- Improved access to technical support.
- Exchange of curriculum and administration data with the LEA and DfEE.

Using the Internet to provide effective learning

Teachers, parents and pupils need to develop good practice in using the Internet as tool for teaching and learning. There is a fine balance between encouraging autonomous learning and maintaining adequate supervision. Systems that ensure Internet use is as safe as possible will enable increased use and the quality of that use is a critical factor. Internet access is provided by NGfl/Easynet via cachepilot using Smoothwall filtering.

- Internet access will be planned to enrich and extend learning activities.
- Access levels will be reviewed to reflect the curriculum requirement.
- Pupils will be given clear objectives for Internet use.
- Staff will select sites that will support the learning outcomes planned for pupils' age and maturity.
- Approved sites will be bookmarked, listed or copied.
- Pupils will be educated in taking responsibility for Internet access.

How pupils will be taught to assess Internet content

Pupils in school are unlikely to see inappropriate content in books due to selection by publishers and teachers. This level of control is not so straightforward with Internet-based materials. Therefore, teaching should be widened to incorporate Internet content issues, for instance the value and credibility of Web materials in relationship to other media. The tendency to use the Web when better information may be obtained from books will need to be challenged.

- Pupils will be taught ways to validate information before accepting that it is necessarily true.
- Pupils will be taught to acknowledge the source of information and observe copyright when using Internet material for their own use.
- Pupils will be made aware that the writer of an e-mail or the author of a Web page might not be the person claimed.
- Pupils will be encouraged to tell a teacher immediately if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.

The management of e-mail

E-mail is an essential means of communication within education. The government is encouraging the ownership of personal e-mail accounts for both teachers and pupils, but care needs to be taken that the implications for the school and for the pupil are appreciated. Once e-mail is available it is difficult to control its content but school e-mail accounts are filtered for unsuitable content and viruses. E-mails containing unsuitable language are sent to the administrator.

- Pupils need to use e-mail as part of the National Curriculum.
- E-mail must only be used in school for educational purposes.
- Pupils will be allowed to access personal e-mail from the school system.
- Pupils may send e-mail as part of planned lessons. This assumes a high level of trust and pupils will be asked to sign the Acceptable Use Statement.
- In-coming e-mail will be regarded as public.
- Received e-mail may be examined.
- The forwarding of chain letters will be banned, as will the use of chat lines.
- Excessive social chat wastes pupils' time and computer resources and will be discouraged.

The management of the school's web site

A Web site can celebrate pupils' work, promote the school and publish resources for projects or homework. Ground rules are important to ensure that the Web site reflects the school's ethos and that information is accurate and well presented. As the school's Web site can be accessed by anyone on the Internet, the security of staff and pupils must be considered carefully. Although common in newspaper reports, the publishing of pupils' names beside photographs that identify individuals is considered inappropriate on Web pages. While any risks might be small, the parents' perception of risk has been taken into account in the devising of this policy.

- The headteacher will delegate editorial responsibility to a member of staff to ensure that content is accurate and quality of presentation is maintained.
- Pupils will be made aware that the quality of their work published on the Web needs to reflect the diversity of the audience.
- All material must be the author's own work, or where permission to reproduce has been obtained, clearly marked with the copyright owner's name.
- The point of contact on the web site should be the school address and telephone number. Home information or individual e-mail identities will not be published.
- Photographs must not identify individual pupils. Group shots or pictures taken over the shoulder will be used in preference to individual "passport" style images.
- Full names will not be used anywhere on the Web site, particularly alongside photographs.
- Written permission from parents will be sought before photographs of pupils are published on the school web site.

The availability of other Internet applications

Many facilities such as Chat, Newsgroups and webcams have great potential for education, for instance pupils exchanging live text, speech or video with a similar class in another location around the country or world, at low cost. However, most applications start without the needs of young users being considered, particularly the area of security.

- Pupils will not be allowed to access public chat rooms.
- Newsgroups are only available to staff.
- New facilities will be thoroughly tested before pupils are given access.

The authorisation of Internet access

In school, all staff and all pupils will be granted access to the Internet as a blanket requirement, with a single written record made by the headteacher to this effect. Parental permission will be required before children can access the Internet and e-mail.

- Internet access is a necessary part of statutory curriculum. It is an entitlement for a pupil that is based upon responsible use.
- At Key Stage 1, the majority of the access to the Internet will be by teacher or adult demonstration. However, there are situations when children have supervised access to specific approved on-line materials.
- At Key Stage 2, Internet access will be granted to a whole class as part of the scheme of work, after a suitable education in the responsible use of the Internet.
- Parents will be informed that pupils will be provided with supervised Internet access.
- Parents will be asked to sign and return a permission form.
- Pupils must also, along with parents/carers, sign the letter sent home. This will be an indication by the parents and pupils that they have discussed, understand and accept the implications of the use of the Internet in school and at home.
- A record will be maintained of all staff and pupils, on a whole class basis, with Internet access.

The assessment of risk when using the Internet in school

The school will address the issue that it is difficult to remove completely the risk that pupils might access unsuitable materials via the school system. In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available via the Internet is unsuitable for pupils. The school will supervise pupils and take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material, including the use of filtering software, Smoothwall, by Easynet, the school's internet service provider. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of information available via the Internet, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a terminal. Neither the school nor Stockton Borough Council can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences thereof.

- The use of computer systems without permission or for purposes not agreed by the school could constitute a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990.
- Methods to identify, assess and minimise risks will be 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.

Ensuring safe Internet access

The Internet is a communications medium that is freely available to any person wishing to send e-mail or publish a Web site on almost any topic. Access to appropriate information should be encouraged but Internet access must be safe for all members of the school community from youngest pupil to teacher and administrative staff. Pupils will generally need protected access to the Internet. The technical strategies being developed to restrict access to inappropriate material fall into several overlapping types (sometimes all referred to as filtering): **Blocking strategies** remove access to a list of unsuitable sites or newsgroups. Maintenance of the blocking list is a major task, as new sites appear every day. **Filtering** examines the content of web pages or e-mail messages for unsuitable words. Blocking and/or filtering, as previously stated, is performed by the Internet service provider (ISP), Easynet.

- Pupils will be informed that Internet use will be supervised and monitored.
- The school will work in partnership with parents, the LEA, DfEE and the Internet Service Provider, to ensure systems to protect pupils are reviewed and improved.
- Senior staff will ensure that occasional checks are made to ensure that the filtering methods selected are effective in practice.

- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content will be reported to the Internet Service Provider via the authority's ICT consultant.
- Any material that the school suspects is illegal will be referred to the Internet Watch Foundation.
- Where minority languages are involved, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the processes to protect pupils are adequate.
- Children will be directed, by their teachers, to specific sites.
- When searching for information, children will use www.squirrelnet.com, the safe search for kids filter from Google which is the home page when children access the Internet.

The maintenance of security of the ICT systems

The Internet is connection to the outside world that could compromise system performance or threaten security.

- Security strategies will be discussed with the LEA.
- The authority is regularly reviewing the schools' networks to ensure that the system has the capacity to take increased traffic caused by Internet use.
- The security of the whole system will be reviewed with regard to threats to security from Internet access.
- Personal data should not be sent over the Internet from school.
- Virus protection will be installed and updated regularly.
- Use of e-mail to send attachments will be monitored closely.

The complaints procedure regarding Internet use

Prompt action will be required if a complaint is made. The facts of the case will need to be established, for instance whether the issue has arisen through Internet use inside or outside school. Transgressions of the rules could include minor as well as the potentially serious consequences and a range of sanctions will be devised, linked to the school's behaviour policy.

- Responsibility for handling incidents will be given to a senior member of staff.
- Pupils and parents will be informed of the complaints procedures.
- Parents and pupils will need to work in partnership with staff to resolve issues.
- As with drugs issues, there may be occasions when the police must be contacted. Early contact will be made to establish the legal position and discuss strategies.
- Sanctions available include interview/counselling by teachers and, if appropriate, informing parents or carers.

- A pupil may have e-mail, Internet or computer access denied for a period of time depending on the nature of the incident.
- Denial of access could include all school work held on the system.

Staff and pupil consultation about the Internet

It is very important that staff feel prepared for Internet use and consider that the school Internet Access Policy is appropriate. Staff should be given opportunities to discuss the issues and develop appropriate teaching strategies. It would be unreasonable if staff, particularly supply staff, were asked to take charge of an Internet activity without training. Reassurance and discussion may be required.

- Rules for Internet access will be posted near computer systems.
- The Internet Access Policy will be available on the school's learning platform, and its importance explained.
- Parents' attention will be drawn to the Policy in newsletters, the school brochure and on the school Web site.
- The children will be taught responsible Internet use, covering both school and home use.

Enlisting parental support for the use of the Internet

Internet use in pupils' homes is increasing rapidly, encouraged by offers of free software and access on magazine covers. Unless parents are aware of the dangers, pupils may have unrestricted access to the Internet. The school may be able to help parents plan appropriate, supervised use of the Internet at home.

- A careful balance between informing and alarming parents will be maintained.
- Demonstrations and practical ICT sessions for parents may 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.
- A stock of relevant leaflets from organisations such as BECTa, PIN, and NCH Action for Children will be maintained.

Internet use in the community

Internet use in the local community is common. In addition to the home, access may be available at the local library, youth club, adult education centre, gym or supermarket. The school may wish to contact their community colleagues in order to advise pupils regarding membership, booking procedures, availability, and possible costs. Each organisation is developing its own approach and pupils may find variations in the rules and even unrestricted access to the Internet. Although policies may differ in detail, community partners adhere to the same laws as schools with respect to content, copyright and misuse.

- In libraries, parents/carers of children under 18 years of age will generally be required to sign an acceptable use policy on behalf of the child.
- In libraries, adult users will also need to sign the acceptable use policy.
- In libraries, children under 8 years of age must be accompanied by an adult when accessing the Internet, due to the Children's Act.
- Rules for Internet access will be posted near computer systems, or will be available on request. Rules are there to protect legitimate use.
- Visits, demonstrations and practical ICT sessions for schools may be organised to encourage a partnership approach.
- Suitable educational, vocational and leisure use is encouraged in community facilities.

Thornaby Church of England Primary School
ACCEPTABLE INTERNET USE STATEMENT FOR ALL SCHOOL STAFF

The computer system is owned by the school and is made available to pupils to further their education and to 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 its computer system or to monitor any Internet sites visited.

- Access should only be made via the authorised account and password that should not be made available to any other person.
- The security of the ICT system must not be compromised whether owned by the school, by Stockton Borough Council or any other organisation or individual.
- Sites and materials accessed must be appropriate to work in school. Users will recognise materials that are inappropriate and should expect to have their access removed.
- Users are responsible for all e-mail sent and for contacts made that may result in e-mail being received.
- The same professional levels of language and content should be applied as for letters or other media, particularly as e-mail is often forwarded.
- Posting anonymous messages and forwarding chain letters is forbidden.
- Copyright of materials and intellectual property rights must be respected.
- All internet use should be appropriate to staff professional activity or to students' education. However please note that:-
 - Legitimate private interests may be followed, providing school use is not compromised.
 - Use for personal financial gain, gambling, political purposes or advertising is forbidden.
 - Closed discussion groups can be useful but the use of public chat rooms is not allowed.

Members of staff are reminded that they should not deliberately seek out inappropriate/offensive materials on the Internet and that they are subject to the LEA's recommended disciplinary procedures should they do so.

Staff should sign a copy of this Acceptable Internet Use Statement and return it to the Headteacher.

Full name	post
Signed	date
Approved	date

Thornaby Church of England Primary School

Rules for Responsible Internet Use

The school has installed computers and Internet access to help our learning.

These rules will keep everyone safe and help us be fair to others.

- **I will use only my own login and password, which I will keep secret.**
- **I will not access other people's files.**
- **I will use the computers only for schoolwork and homework.**
- **I will not bring ICT equipment and software into school without permission.**
- **I will ask permission from a member of staff before using the Internet.**
- **I will only e-mail people I know, or my teacher has approved.**
- **The messages I send will be polite and sensible.**
- **I will not give my home address or phone number, or arrange to meet someone, unless my parent, carer or teacher has given permission.**
- **To help protect other pupils and myself, I will tell a teacher if I see anything I am unhappy with or I receive a message I do not like.**
- **I understand that the school can check my computer files and the Internet sites I visit.**

Letter to parents

Dear Parents

Responsible Use of the Internet

As part of pupils' curriculum enhancement and the development of ICT skills, Thornaby Church of England Primary School provides supervised access to the Internet, including e-mail.

Although there have been concerns about pupils having access to undesirable materials, we are taking positive steps to deal with this risk in school. Our school Internet access provider, NGfI/Easynet, operates a filtering system called Smoothwall that restricts access to inappropriate materials. This may not be the case at home. To help you in this respect we enclose a sheet with sources of information about safe Internet access.

Whilst every endeavour is made to ensure that suitable restrictions are placed on the ability of children to access inappropriate materials, Stockton Borough Council cannot be held responsible for the nature or content of materials accessed through the Internet. The Council will not be liable under any circumstances for any damages arising from your child's use of the Internet facilities.

I enclose a copy of the Rules for Responsible Internet Use that we operate at Thornaby Church of England Primary School.

Should you wish to discuss any aspect of Internet use please telephone me to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Permission for Internet Access

Parent/carer's permission	Pupil's agreement
I give permission for access to the Internet on the terms set out in the above letter.	I agree to follow the Rules for Responsible Internet Use.
Signed Print name Date	Signed Print name Date

Safe Internet Access

The Internet is a communications medium that is freely available to any person wishing to send e-mail or publish a Web site on almost any topic. Access to appropriate information should be encouraged, but Internet access must be safe for our children. Children will generally need protected access to the Internet.

- Use "Parental Control", where available, to limit children's access to the Internet.
- Supervise and monitor children's use of the Internet.
- If you discover unsuitable material, report the content to your Internet Service Provider.
- Refer any material that you suspect is illegal to the Internet Watch Foundation.
- Children should be encouraged to tell parents immediately if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Children should be made aware that the writer of an e-mail or the author of a Web page might not be the person claimed.
- Ensure that children do not give their address or telephone number to anyone over the Internet.
- Make sure that children do not arrange to meet anyone that they communicate with.
- Leaflets are available from organisations such as BECTa, PIN and NCH Action for Children.

Revised: February 2012

To be reviewed February 2014

Reviewed February 2014

To be reviewed February 2016

Reviewed February 2016

To be reviewed February 2018