



Internet Safety Policy

Direct Access to the internet is not generally necessary but computers may be used for approved games. When access is required e.g. for homework, then the following policy must be followed.

Growing up in a high-tech Internet age undoubtedly has its benefits, but as children gain a greater handle on technology it is natural to worry about the nature of the content. Children now use computers on a daily basis, and as a result have considerable skill in using the various tools on offer via the computer. It is therefore important that all staff are extremely vigilant when children are using computers so that they are not exposed to inappropriate content, and they are able to use the internet in a safe environment. Schools will have 'firewalls/filters' **but these are not always infallible.**

Children will only be allowed to access the internet at the Club if their parent or carer has given written permission.

A copy of the **SMART** guidelines will be printed and kept next to the computer. The guidelines will be explained to any children wishing to access the Internet:

- **Safe:** Keep safe by not giving out personal information – such as name, email, phone number, address, or school name – to people who you don't trust online.
- **Meeting:** Never agree to meet anyone you have only met online unless your parent or carer is with you.
- **Accepting:** Do not accept emails or instant messages, or open files, images or texts from people you don't know. They can contain viruses or nasty messages.
- **Reliable:** Not all the information found on the Internet is reliable and people you meet online won't always be telling the truth.
- **Tell:** Tell a member of staff or your parents if someone or something you encounter online makes you feel uncomfortable.

The use of computers will always be supervised and in communal areas with the screen visible to adults. Children must be told which websites they can use – they **MUST NOT** be allowed to tell staff which websites they use ‘in school’ or ‘at home’.

If a child encounters something inappropriate on the internet, the manager will be informed, and the incident will be noted on an **Incident Record** in the child’s file. The child’s parent/carer will be asked to sign the **Incident Record**.

We have put in place the following safeguards:

- A risk assessment has been undertaken.
- The computer is located so that the screen can easily be seen from the rest of the room.
- Staff will supervise the use of the Internet.
- The computer has an up-to-date virus checker and firewall installed.
- Google Safe Search Filtering is turned on; children are encouraged to use a child-safe search tool.
- The computer’s browser history is regularly checked to monitor which sites are being accessed and all staff and children are informed of this fact.

Experts agree that children should have a break from the screen every thirty minutes – this rule should be adhered to within the Club.

It should also be remembered that it is not necessary for children to have access to computers every day.

IMPORTANT RULE

ALWAYS SUPERVISE CHILDREN WHEN USING COMPUTERS – THIS INCLUDES ‘HOMEWORK RESEARCH’. CHILDREN HAVE CONSIDERABLE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE USE OF COMPUTERS; SOME BEING MORE CAPABLE THAN THE ADULT THEY ARE WITH. THE INTERNET IS A POWERFUL TOOL.....NOT ALWAYS FOR GOOD!

Reviewed August 2024