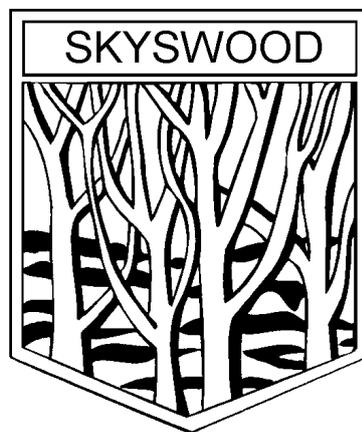# Skyswood Primary & Nursery School

Internet Policy

September 2020

Review Date - September 2022

The statutory curriculum requires pupils to learn how to locate, retrieve and exchange information using IT. In delivering the curriculum, teachers need to plan to integrate the use of communications technology such as web-based resources and e-mail. Computer skills are vital to access life-long learning and employment; indeed IT is now seen as an essential life-skill.

Most technologies present risks as well as benefits. Internet use for work, home, social and leisure activities is expanding in all sectors of society. This brings young people into contact with a wide variety of influences, some of which – as in life generally – may be unsuitable. It is important that schools, libraries and youth clubs, as well as parents, adopt strategies for the safe and responsible use of the Internet.

Core Principles of Internet Safety

The Internet is becoming as commonplace as the telephone or TV and its effective use is an essential life-skill. Unmediated Internet access brings with it the possibility of placing pupils in embarrassing, inappropriate and even dangerous situations. Schools need a policy to help to ensure responsible use and the safety of pupils.

Our Internet Policy is built on the following five core principles:

1. Guided educational use

Significant educational benefits should result from curriculum Internet use, including access to information from around the world and the abilities to communicate widely and to publish easily. Curriculum Internet use should be planned, task-orientated and educational within a regulated and managed environment. Directed and successful Internet use will include specific teaching on Internet safety and support the children in understanding the importance of safe practices when using the Internet.

2. Risk assessment

21st century life presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation from which children and young people need to be protected. At the same time they must learn to recognise and avoid these risks – to become "Internet Wise". Schools need to ensure that they are fully aware of the risks, perform risk assessments and implement a policy for Internet use. Pupils need to know how to cope if they come across inappropriate material.

Parents receive e-Safety updates through newsletters as appropriate, with E-safety evenings organised by the school every two to three years to fully inform parents with regard to Internet safety.

3. Responsibility

Internet safety depends on staff, schools, governors, advisers, parents and, where appropriate, the pupils themselves taking responsibility for the use of Internet and other communication technologies such as phones. The balance between educating pupils to take a responsible approach and the use of regulation and technical solutions must be judged carefully.

4. Regulation

The use of a finite and expensive resource, which brings with it the possibility of misuse, requires regulation. In some cases, access within schools must simply be denied, for instance un-moderated chat rooms present immediate dangers and are not appropriate. Whether we like it or not, social media plays an ever-increasing part in our daily lives. Safe and appropriate use of social media is embedded within our IT curriculum. With regard to Internet use in school, fair rules, clarified by discussion and prominently displayed at the point of access will help pupils make responsible decisions.

5. Appropriate strategies

This document describes strategies to ensure responsible and safe use. They are based on understanding risks, limiting access, developing responsibility and on guiding pupils towards educational activities. Strategies must be selected to suit the school situation and their effectiveness monitored. There are no straightforward or totally effective solutions and staff, parents and the pupils themselves must remain vigilant.

Why Internet use is important

- The purpose of Internet use in school is to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management information and business administration systems.

- Internet use is a part of the statutory curriculum and a necessary tool for staff and pupils.

- Internet access is an entitlement for students who show a responsible and mature approach to its use.

- The Internet is an essential element in 21st century life for education, business and social interaction. The school has a duty to provide students with quality Internet access as part of their learning experience.

How the Internet benefits education

Benefits of using the Internet in education include:
- access to world-wide educational resources;
- educational and cultural exchanges between pupils world-wide;
- cultural, vocational, social and leisure use in libraries, clubs and at home;
- access to experts in many fields for pupils and staff;
- staff professional development through access to national developments, educational materials and good curriculum practice;
- communication with support services, professional associations and colleagues;
- improved access to technical support including remote management of networks;

How the Internet will enhance learning

Internet access is an integral part of the use of ICT to support learning and the management of learning.
- The school Internet access will be designed expressly for pupil use and will include filtering appropriate to the age of pupils.
- Pupils will be taught what Internet use is acceptable and what is not and given clear objectives for Internet use.
- Internet access will be planned to enrich and extend learning activities. Access levels will be reviewed to reflect the curriculum requirements and age of pupils.
- Staff should guide pupils in on-line activities that will support the learning outcomes planned for the pupils' age and maturity.
- Pupils will be educated in the effective use of the Internet in research, including the skills of knowledge location, retrieval and evaluation.

How pupils learn to evaluate Internet content

Pupils in our school are unlikely to see inappropriate content in books due to selection by publishers and staff. The school also has appropriate filters on the Internet. As with books, regardless of appropriate filters being in place, there is always a risk that children may discover inappropriate content. Internet safety is embedded within our curriculum and children know that they must immediately inform an adult if they discover material that is inappropriate, or that they are uncomfortable with.

Pupils will need to be aware that there is no regulatory authority body for the Internet. Anyone anywhere can publish material. It is not censored for opinion, bias or validity of information.

- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content must be reported to the Internet Service Provider via the Computing co-ordinator.
- Schools should ensure that the use of Internet derived materials by staff and by pupils complies with copyright law.
- Pupils will be taught evaluation techniques to assess the validity of internet based-information. This will be achieved through cross-referencing with information from known and reliable sources.
- Pupils will be taught how to carry out structured searches of the Internet.

How e-mail will be managed

- Pupils may only use approved e-mail accounts on the school system.
- Pupils must immediately tell a teacher if they receive offensive e-mail.
- Pupils must not reveal details of themselves or others in e-mail communication, such as address or telephone number, or arrange to meet anyone.
- Access in school to external personal e-mail accounts may be blocked. (such as Hotmail and Yahoo mail)
- E-mail sent to an external organisation should be written carefully and authorised before sending, in the same way as a letter written on school headed paper.
- The forwarding of chain letters is not permitted.
- E-mail sent from school computers may be liable to random checks.

Management of school website

Skyswood Primary & Nursery School has created a web site to improve communication, and to celebrate the children's work and the achievements of the school. Work published in this way can inspire others to produce work of a high standard, for a wide audience.

- The point of contact on the Web site should be the school address, school e-mail and telephone number. Staff or pupils' home information will not be published.
- Web site photographs that include pupils will be selected carefully and will not include any photographs of Children Looked After.
- Pupils' full names will not be used anywhere on the Web site, particularly in association with photographs.

- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school Website.
- The headteacher, Business Manager and Computing Co-ordinator will take overall editorial responsibility and ensure that content is accurate and appropriate.
- The Website should comply with the school's guidelines for publications.
- The copyright of all material must be held by the school, or be attributed to the owner where permission to reproduce has been obtained.
- Information on the school's website is compliant with GDPR and follows our safeguarding policies with regard to GDPR.

Use of Chat

- Chat is a popular conferencing application offering instantaneous exchange of text and images between groups of users via the Internet. In principle, chat has great potential for education; for instance pupils could exchange live text, speech or video with pupils in India or Italy, at low cost.
- Pupils will not be allowed access to public or unregulated chat rooms.
- Children should use only regulated educational chat environments. This use will be supervised and the importance of chat room safety emphasised.
- A risk assessment will be carried out before pupils are allowed to use a new technology in school.

Management of emerging Internet applications (Virtual classrooms, Virtual communities, mobile communications)

- Emerging technologies will be examined for educational benefit and a risk assessment will be carried out before use in school is allowed.
- Mobile phones within classrooms are forbidden for pupils.

How Internet access is authorised

- Parents will be informed that pupils will be provided with supervised Internet access
- Parents will be asked to sign and return a consent form. Please see the sample form later in this document.

How the risks will be assessed

- In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available via the Internet is unsuitable for pupils. The school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of Internet content, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a school computer. Neither the school nor HCC can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences of Internet access.
- The use of computer systems without permission or for inappropriate purposes could constitute a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990.
- Methods to identify, assess and minimise risks will be reviewed regularly.
- The headteacher will ensure that the Internet policy is implemented and compliance with the policy monitored.

How filtering will be managed

- The school will work in partnership with parents, the LEA, DfES and the Internet Service Provider to ensure systems to protect pupils are reviewed and improved.
- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content must be reported to the Internet Service Provider via the Computing co-ordinator.
- Senior staff will ensure that regular checks are made to ensure that the filtering methods selected are appropriate, effective and reasonable.
- Filtering strategies will be provided by the Hertfordshire Grid.

Introducing the policy to pupils

- Rules for Internet access will be posted in the Computing Suite and classrooms.
- Pupils will be informed that Internet use will be monitored.
- Instruction in responsible and safe use should precede Internet access.

Working with staff

- All staff must accept the terms of the 'Responsible Internet Use' statement before using any Internet resource in school.
- All staff including teachers, supply staff, classroom assistants and support staff, will be made aware of the School Internet Policy, and its importance explained.

- Staff should be aware that Internet traffic can be monitored and traced to the individual user. Discretion and professional conduct is essential.
- The monitoring of Internet use is a sensitive matter. Staff who operate monitoring procedures should be supervised by senior management.
- Staff development in safe and responsible Internet use, and on the school Internet policy will be provided as required.
- Staff need to be aware of e-copyright laws as breach of copyright is always down to the individual not the employing establishment.

Security maintenance of the ICT system

- The school ICT systems will be reviewed regularly with regard to security.
- Virus protection will be installed and updated regularly.
- Security strategies will be discussed with the LEA, particularly where a wide area network connection is being planned.
- Use of personally owned portable media such as memory sticks and CD-ROMs may not be brought into school without specific permission.
- Unapproved system utilities and executable files will not be allowed in pupils' work areas or attached to e-mail.
- Files held on the school's network will be regularly checked.
- The Computing co-ordinator / network manager will ensure that the system has the capacity to take increased traffic caused by Internet use.

Internet complaints

- Responsibility for handling incidents will be delegated to a senior member of staff.
- Any complaint about staff misuse must be referred to the headteacher.
- Pupils and parents will be informed of the complaints procedure.
- 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 could be made to establish the legal position and discuss strategies.
- Pupils who actively seek unsuitable material on the Internet may have their access to it removed on either a temporary or permanent basis.

Enlisting parents' support

- Parents' attention will be drawn to the School Internet Policy in newsletters, the school brochure and on the school Website.
- Internet issues will be handled sensitively to inform parents without undue alarm.
- A partnership approach with parents will be encouraged. This could include demonstrations, practical sessions and suggestions for safe Internet use at home.
- Advice on filtering systems and educational and leisure activities that include responsible use of the Internet will be made available to parents.
- Interested parents will be referred to organisations such as PIN, Parents Online and NCH Action for Children.