Acceptable use of the Internet policy: IOWSS P2.1

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Policy Links:

- Health and Safety policy
- Behaviour policy
- Safe use and storage of images policy

The resources used by students in the Isle of Wight Studio School are carefully chosen by teachers and determined by curriculum policies. Use of the Internet, however, by its nature, will provide access to information which has not been selected by the teacher. Whilst students will often be directed to sites which provide reviewed and evaluated sources, at times, they will be able to move beyond these, to sites unfamiliar to the teacher.

The problems and issues that have been highlighted by the media concern all schools. Whilst some of the media interest is hype, there is genuine cause for concern that students might access unsuitable material either accidentally or deliberately.

We believe that the benefits to students from access to resources on the Internet, far exceed the disadvantages. Ultimately, the responsibility for setting and conveying the standards that students are expected to follow, when using media and information resources, is one the school shares with parents and guardians.

We feel that the best recipe for success lies in a combination of site-filtering, adult supervision and fostering a responsible attitude in our students in partnership with parents.

1. AIMS OF THE POLICY
- To establish the ground rules we have in school for using the Internet.
- To describe how these fit into the wider context of our behaviour and PSHE policies
- To demonstrate the methods used to protect the students from sites containing pornography, racist or politically extreme views and violence.

2. USING THE INTERNET FOR EDUCATION
The school intends to teach students about the vast information resources available on the Internet, using it as a planned part of many lessons.

All staff will review and evaluate resources available on web sites appropriate to the age range and ability of the students being taught and the ICT co-ordinator will assist in the dissemination of this information.

Initially students may be restricted to sites, which have been reviewed and selected for content. They may be given tasks to perform using a specific group of web sites accessed from a common 'Favourites' menu on the school network.

Students will have the opportunity to exchange information via email. They will be taught how to use the address book, how to attach files to an email and how to follow conventions of politeness.

As students gain experience, they will be taught how to use searching techniques to locate and specific information for themselves. Comparisons will be made between researching from different sources of information, (CD Rom, books, WWW).

We hope that students will learn how to decide when it is appropriate to use the Internet, as opposed to other sources of information, in terms of: the time taken; the amount of information found; the usefulness and reliability of information located.

At times, information, such as text, photos etc may be "downloaded" from the Internet for use in students' presentations. Tasks will be set to encourage students to view web sites and information with a critical eye.

The benefits of using the Internet include:
- Access to a wide variety of educational resources including libraries, art galleries and museums
- Rapid and cost effective worldwide communication
- Gaining an understanding of people and cultures around the globe
- Staff professional development through access to new curriculum materials, expert knowledge and practice
- Exchange of curriculum and administration data with external sites.
- Social and leisure use.
- Increased literacy skills, particularly in being able to read and appraise critically and then communicate what is important to others.

3. ACCESS TO THE INTERNET
The School uses a "filtered" Internet Service, which minimises the chances of students encountering undesirable material.

We will normally only allow students to use the Internet when there is a responsible adult present to supervise. However it is unrealistic to suppose that the teacher's attention will always be directed toward the computer screen.
Members of staff are aware of the potential for misuse, and are responsible for explaining to students, the expectation we have of them.

Teachers will have access to students' emails and other Internet related files and will check these on a regular basis to ensure expectations of behaviour are being met.

All students and their parents/guardians will be asked to read and sign an agreement covering the school's expectations in relation to acceptable pupil use of the Internet.

4. EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS USING THE INTERNET

In the School, we expect all students to be responsible for their own behaviour on the Internet, just as they are anywhere else in school. This includes materials they choose to access, and language they use.

- All students are expected to read and agree the Student Internet Agreement.
- Students using the World Wide Web are expected not to deliberately seek out offensive materials. Should any students encounter any such material accidentally, they are expected to report it immediately to an adult, so that the Service Provider can block further access to the site.
- Students will be taught the rules of etiquette in e-mail and will be expected to follow them.
- Students will be expected not to use any inappropriate language in their email communications and contact only people they know or those the teacher has approved.
- Students must ask permission before accessing the Internet and have a clear idea why they are using it
- Students should not access other people's files unless permission has been given.
- Computers should only be used for schoolwork and homework unless permission has been granted otherwise.
- No program files may be downloaded to the computer from the Internet. This is to prevent corruption of data and avoid viruses.
- No programs on disc or CD Rom should be brought in from home for use in school. This is for both legal and security reason.
- Homework completed at home may be brought in on a memory drive but this will have to be virus scanned by the class teacher before use.
- No personal information such as phone numbers and addresses should be given out over the Internet and no arrangements to meet someone made unless this is part of an approved school project.
- Students who choose not to comply with these expectations will be warned, and subsequently, may be denied access to Internet resources.

They will also come under the general discipline procedures of the school, which comprises an escalating set of measures including a letter to parents and withdrawal of privileges.

5. WEB SITE GUIDELINES

A web site can celebrate good work, promote the school, publish resources for projects and homework, and link to other good sites of interest.

No names and photographs that identify individual students will appear on it.

Home information and e-mail identities will not be included only the school contact details i.e. phone number, school address and e-mail to Head/ Co-ordinator

Any group photos will not contain a names list.

Work displayed will be of the highest quality and reflect the status of the school.