

Braywood C of E First School



Internet Policy

“From little acorns, mighty oak trees grow, nurtured and watered by the love of God”

The Internet Policy is part of the ICT Policy and School Development Plan and relates to other policies including those for behaviour, for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and for citizenship. All adults at Braywood are fully aware of the risks and implement our policy for Internet use to help the children become “Internet Wise”.

“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”

RBWM Internet Guidance document 2001

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. It allows us access to worldwide educational establishments, cultural exchanges between pupils from all areas and access to experts in many fields for both pupils and staff. The Government has set targets for networked Internet use in all schools by 2002 through the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) initiative, which we have achieved.

At Braywood we presently provide an Internet service for the use of the children and staff via Broadband and additional access is available in the Office for administrative purposes. We use the Internet as a means of research, communication and an important resource for teaching the children. Teachers use the Internet as a source of information, to update their planning and as a form of communication. All teachers and some support staff are connected to the RBWM Intranet and have “First class” as our E-mail. We believe that the Internet and E-mail is a valuable asset, which if used sensibly can enhance the children’s learning. We endeavour to ensure that the service we provide is safe for the children at all times and the guidance in our Acceptable Use Policy is strictly adhered to.

The Acceptable Use Policy applies to all members of the school community: governors, teachers and teaching assistants, parents and pupils. The policy is regularly circulated and a copy of the policy and the rules for using the Internet are displayed in the necessary areas. In the wider community, the ICT Co-ordinator ensures that care is taken to uphold any legislation concerning computers and software correctly. Materials that are downloaded are from acknowledged sources and our technician maintains and regularly updates the virus protection software. Our Internet Service Provider (Atomwide) prevents a large majority of unsuitable material from entering our network as it provides a filtered and protected service, but we cannot guarantee 100% safety from inappropriate material. This is why we adopt other measures to reduce any risk. The pupils are explained the rules of using the Internet, they are displayed in the ICT Suite and all parents and their children are asked to sign a consent form declaring that they understand these rules. 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.

It is the role of the ICT Co-ordinator to provide training for the teachers, governing body, Headteacher and support staff in relation to the use and safety involved in using the Internet. It is the role of the Headteacher to ensure that the policy is distributed and explained to parents. Class teachers teach their own students these issues as part of their ICT lessons. We adopt the traffic light system (recommended by *Becta*) to show the children some of the more acceptable practices when using this medium. Developing good practice in Internet use as a tool for teaching and learning is clearly essential. Pupils are taught what is acceptable and what is not acceptable and given clear objectives for Internet use.

Internet access is planned to enrich and extend learning activities, sites are researched before use and access levels are appropriate and reflect the curriculum requirements and age of pupils. Children are not allowed to "surf" the net indiscriminately or for purposes other than schoolwork. Safety is ensured because we believe vigilance is essential and regulation the most important strategy. Children are coached in the rules of using the Internet, allowed to explore the medium in safe areas (www.gridclub.com/cybercafe) and are constantly supervised. Children finding unsuitable sites must report this to their teacher immediately and the Service Provider will be notified. Any breaches of these rules would be reported to the relevant staff immediately. Abuse of these rules by any adult using the school's resources would be reported to the Headteacher and action would be taken depending on the severity of the crime. We realise the importance of copyright and that possession of unsuitable material can lead to a prosecution by the police.

The RBWM have provided E-mail addresses for all the children in school with addresses that are not immediately recognisable to protect the identity of the child. Pupils may only use approved E-mail accounts on the school system. In the case of a child receiving an offensive E-mail they must immediately tell a teacher. Pupils must not reveal details of themselves or others, such as address or telephone number, or arrange to meet anyone in E-mail communication. Whole-class or group E-mail addresses should be used at Key Stage 2 and below if we are communicating outside the school's immediate environment. Access in school to external personal E-mail will not be allowed.

Internet access and E-mail facilities at Braywood are provided for all classes, gender, ability and culture. All children will receive equality of access. To ensure that this happens class teachers always provide activities for the whole class, everyone has a "First class" address. Children who do not have a computer at home have the opportunity to use our facilities after school or borrow one of our laptops, which are put aside for this purpose. Children with special education needs have support to ensure they have equality of access. A partnership approach with parents will be encouraged so they are kept fully informed. This could include demonstrations, practical sessions and suggestions for safe Internet use at home.

Our Web site is an area where a risk assessment has been undertaken and it has been decided that 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 enable individual pupils to be identified. Pupils' full names will not be used anywhere on the Web site, particularly associated with photographs. Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school Web site. The Headteacher and ICT Co-ordinator will take overall editorial responsibility and ensure content is accurate and appropriate. The school must hold the copyright of all material and hyperlinks are only made to suitable educational web sites.

The steps we have taken to provide a safe environment.

- We provide a filtered Internet Service, which is regulated and is safe.
- Children will be supervised at all time when on the Internet.
- Sites to be visited will be carefully vetted by the teacher beforehand.
- Children will not be allowed to leave any personal details on the Web and no child is to be named on our Website.
- Children are taught to adopt a critical style of thinking when looking at sites on the Internet.
- Suitable Web sites are contained in a resource book to assist teachers.
- Pupils will not be allowed access to public or unregulated chat rooms.
- These recommendations are to be respected when the children are writing their own web pages or visiting our school web site.
- When using E-mail, children will only be corresponding to local schools or known persons. If communicating outside school, class E-mail addresses are to be used.
- Pupils and staff will not reveal their personal details (home address or telephone address) on the web or with dialogue with other Internet users.
- No photographs of individual children will be published on our Web site.
- We will respect the law of copyright.
- Downloading of files is strictly restricted to staff.
- Any pupils finding themselves uncomfortable or upset by anything they discover will report it to a teacher immediately.
- Our Internet rules are displayed in the ICT Suite and all children have signed a consent form before being allowed to use the facility.

Other Sources of information

- www.parentsonline.gov.uk
- Children's interactive site www.gridclub.com/cybercafe
- www.safety.ngfl.gov.uk/schools/index
- www.kidsmart.org.uk

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