SA College School
ICT Policy

Schools Internet Policy

1st Edition, July 2005

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.

Introduction

Fluency in the use of ICT is becoming as important as fluency in language and number. At SACS we believe that ICT deserves to have a planned profile in the school curriculum equivalent to that for other essential skills.

ICT is becoming the most efficient medium for finding and using information as part of the learning process. By utilising an effective ICT strategy we will encourage pupils to fully utilise the ICT resources to improve their quality of work and presentation skills across subjects.

Information is the key raw material of the Information Age. Pupils need to be fluent in its use for learning, leisure and academic work.

All pupils are entitled to opportunities to use computers whenever it can make learning more effective.

This ICT policy serves as a mechanism to constantly improve our teaching methods and presentation of the subject, thereby developing ICT skills across all year groups and subject areas.

Core Principles of Internet Safety

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.

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 of pupils in embarrassing, inappropriate and even dangerous situations. Schools need a policy to help to ensure responsible use and the safety of pupils.

The SACS Internet Policy is built on the following five core principles:

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 also reduce the opportunities for activities of dubious worth.

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.

Pupils may obtain Internet access in Youth Clubs, Libraries, public access points and in homes. Ideally a similar approach to risk assessment and Internet safety would be taken in all these locations, although risks do vary with the situation.

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.

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 unmoderated chat rooms present immediate dangers and are usually banned. Fair rules, clarified by discussion and prominently displayed at the point of access will help pupils make responsible decisions.

Appropriate strategies

This document describes strategies to help to ensure responsible and safe use. They are based on 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

Promoting Higher Standards at SA College School

- By utilising sufficient timetabled teaching time for ICT, making use of applicable homework resources and extra-curricular clubs, ICT teachers will always be progressing in the teaching of ICT and constantly creating awareness in the subject.
- An ICT scheme of work which is based on clear teaching objective and outcomes, will promote high expectations, consistent approaches and sustained progression. This will ensure high standards of work and presentation skills through the use of ICT through the whole school will be apparent.
- High expectations from the Head of Department will present both teaching staff and pupils with achievable objectives and strategies, thereby motivating them to always look for ways in which their skills can be developed.
- Professional development for the teaching staff both within and outside of Colston's will be encouraged as this will broaden their knowledge of new applications and methods of teaching.
- Technical support will ensure that resources are properly maintained and serviced.

SACS Policy on Chat Rooms

Although chat sites are generally banned by school filtering system, their use by pupils outside school is huge and frankly there is little hope of control. The approach therefore that parents need to take is one of keeping aware of developments and advising their children of the dangers.
The Childnet International site www.chatdanger.com has useful advice for pupils.

Security Issues Monitored by IT Administrator and staff
Local Area Network security issues include:
- The user must act reasonably. Loading non-approved software could cause major problems. Good password practice is required including logout after use.
- The workstation should be secure from casual mistakes by the user.
- Cabling should be secure and wireless LANs safe from interception.
- Servers must be located securely and physical access restricted.
- The server operating system must be secured to a high level.
- Virus protection for the whole network must be installed and current.

Wide Area Network (WAN) security issues include:
- All external connections must be assessed for security risks including the wide area network connection and any modems staff may wish to use.
- Firewalls and routers should be configured to prevent unauthorised use of software such as FTP and Telnet at the protocol level.

Information and Communications Technology Policy

A framework for an ICT policy, and its relationship to a development plan and an ICT handbook

A policy is a document that sets out a school's **beliefs** about the nature and purpose of ICT
A policy explains this belief to the school community
A policy sets a **vision** for what it wishes to achieve
A policy will describe a **strategy** for how the school will promote its beliefs
A policy sets out **principles** to guide decisions
A **development plan** describes the stages to go through to achieve the school's vision
An **ICT handbook** describes operational details of the development plan

The beliefs in the potential of ICT which underpin the purposes for an ICT policy
This school believes that:

- Fluency in the use of ICT is becoming as important as fluency in language and number
- ICT deserves to have a planned profile in the school curriculum equivalent to that for other essential skills.

- ICT is becoming the most efficient medium for finding and using information as part of the learning process.
- An effective ICT strategy should result in an improved quality of work and greater pupil attainment across subjects.

- Information is the key raw material of the Information Age.
- Pupils need to be fluent in its use for learning, leisure and work.

- All pupils are entitled to opportunities to use computers whenever it can make learning more effective.
- We will constantly seek to improve the quality of teaching and learning using ICT.

The principles which underpin decisions made about the development of ICT - more useful than lots of rules
Our ICT strategy will be guided by the following principles:

- Investments in ICT resources must be linked to raising the achievement of pupils

- We will seek to evaluate and maximise the effectiveness of our ICT systems

- We will not allow obstacles to stand in the way of developments which ensure the effective use of expensive resources

- ICT resources will be deployed so as to provide the greatest amount of use to the greatest number of pupils

- We will seek to support and to expect development of highest standards of teaching and learning using ICT

A statement of the outcomes to developing ICT in line with the school's beliefs - can be used as success criteria

This school seeks to develop the use of ICT :

- to promote pupils skills in using ICT thoughtfully

- to help pupils apply their ICT skills effectively to their work in subjects

- to build a library of NC-related electronic source materials to promote the process of research in subjects

- to promote the skills associated with enquiry and using information as a raw material to build 'information products'

The development plan will describe the stages in moving towards the vision for ICT.

The ICT handbook will set out operational details like responsibilities, resources and procedures.

The Role of the ICT Co-ordinator

The IT Co-ordinator should:

- Liaise with the Senior Management Team on all IT issues
- Be responsible for planning and purchasing resources; both hardware and software
- Co-ordinate the cross-curricular planning and delivery into a single coherent framework
- Assist with raising awareness and the implementation of cross-curricular IT
- Disseminate relevant IT information throughout the school to appropriate members of staff
- Plan and where appropriate, deliver suitable INSET
- Advise other teaching staff on up to date developments of hardware and software
- Be aware of current IT developments both local and national
- Maintain an IT inventory for the whole school

- Co-ordinate the activities for all the staff concerned with developing and maintaining IT resources
- Know the IT capability of the staff
- Regularly review and update that information

Issues to keep in mind

- Resourcing is a whole school issue. This should be reflected in the policy
- IT is used to enhance learning in all subjects therefore all subject teachers should have a budget for IT within their subject?
- Subject co-ordinators could have specific requirements for hardware. Is there provision for them to be a part of the decision making?
- Equal opportunities must be made available to all pupils
- Is there special funding to provide targeted software or specific hardware for SEN children?
- Do all relevant teachers know what is available for the specific special needs children in their care?
- Are Health and Safety issues being monitored and adhered to?
- What role are the parents asked to play in the development of IT in school?
- If parents fund raise for IT resources are they kept informed of what the purchasing aims are?
- How can parent support school IT work in the home?
- Is there a statement in the Home School Links document?
- Is the access for the children the best that can be arranged?
- Is maximum use being made of the resources?
- Are peripherals managed effectively?
- Are the systems secure?

"All this assumes that when the IT co-ordinator's role is drawn up, adequate planning time is allocated for him/her to carry out this work."

SACS High School

Responsible Internet Use

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

- **I will ask permission before using the Internet.**

- **I will use only my own network login and password, which is secret.**

- **I will only look at or delete my own files.**

- **I understand that I must not bring software or disks into school without permission.**

- **I will only e-mail people I know, or my teacher has approved.**

- **The messages I send will be polite and sensible.**

- **I understand that I must never give my home address or phone number, or arrange to meet someone.**

- **I will ask for permission before opening an e-mail or an e-mail attachment sent by someone I do not know.**

- **I will not use Internet chat.**

- **I see anything I am unhappy with or I receive messages I do not like, I will tell a teacher immediately.**

- **I understand that the school may check my computer files and the Internet sites I visit.**

- **I understand that if I deliberately break these rules, I may not be allowed to use the Internet or computers.**

The school may exercise its right to monitor the use of the school's computer systems, including access to websites, the interception of e-mail and the deletion of inappropriate materials where it believes unauthorised use of the school's computer system is or may be taking place, or the system is or may be being used for criminal purposes or for storing unauthorised or unlawful text, imagery or sound.

1 July 2005

Dear Parents

Responsible Internet Use

As part of your child's curriculum and the development of ICT skills SACS High School is providing supervised access to the Internet. We believe that the effective use of the World Wide Web and e-mail is worthwhile and is an essential skill for children as they grow up in the modern world. Please would you read the attached Rules for Responsible Internet Use and sign and return the consent form so that your child may use Internet at school.

Although there are concerns about pupils having access to undesirable materials, we have taken positive steps to reduce this risk in school. Our school Internet provider operates a filtering system that restricts access to inappropriate materials. This may not be the case at home and we can provide references to information on safe Internet access if you wish.

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

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

Yours sincerely