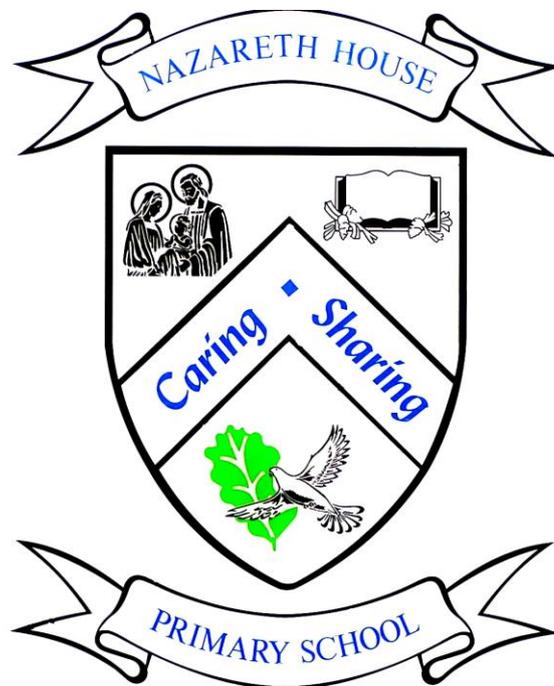


Nazareth House Primary School



Internet Safety Policy

An Acceptable Use of the Internet

With the installation of C2K computers in classrooms, children and teachers now have increased access to the Internet. There is a need to provide pupils with as safe an Internet environment as possible and a need to teach them to be aware of and respond responsibly to the risks.

What is the Internet?

The Internet is a huge network of computers making a worldwide community. It is a way of connecting computers together so that people using them can:

- talk to each other,
- send and receive messages,
- obtain information and resources,
- publish information,
- buy and sell things and
- have fun.

Its most frequently used facilities include:

The World Wide Web (WWW)

The World Wide Web (WWW) or Web provides easy access to the vast quantity of information and resources available on the Internet and is the facility which people use to “surf” for information. It is made up of millions of screens or pages of information.

The collection of pages created by one individual or organisation is known as a website. Each page can include text sound, images, animation and video and has its own unique address.

E-Mail

E-mail allows users to send and receive written messages.

Chat Rooms

Chat rooms allow a number of people to “meet” on the Internet. It is similar to having a telephone conversation with a number of people at one time except that the participants type instead of talk.

The Internet is often described as being like a vast city. It is an exciting place with a great variety of places to visit. There are shops, entertainment areas, educational areas and people to meet. But it also contains dangers. There are areas that we do not want to go to and that we certainly would not want children to visit.

How Valuable is the Internet in Education?

The Internet is a unique and exciting resource. It brings the world into the classroom by giving children access to a global network of educational resources.

- It gives children opportunities to locate, retrieve and exchange information.
- It encourages the development of ICT skills that are vital to life-long learning.
- It takes learning beyond the classroom.
- It allows access to stores of information that might otherwise be unavailable in school.
- It provides up-to-date information.
- It is a fast and efficient way of communicating and retrieving information.
- It encourages independent learning.
- Children enjoy using it.
- It is part of their life experience. It is “cool”.

The Internet is increasingly forming part of our work, home, social and leisure activities. There is no doubt that the use of the Internet is an essential skill for children as they grow up in the modern world.

What are the Dangers?

The Internet is an open communications channel, available to all. Anyone can send messages, discuss ideas and publish materials with little restriction. This brings young people into contact with people from all sectors of society and with a wide variety of materials some of which could be unsuitable.

Key Concerns are:

Potential Contact

Children may come into contact with someone on-line who may wish to harm them. Some adults use chat rooms or e-mail to communicate with children for inappropriate reasons

Children need to be taught:

- That people are not always who they say they are.
- That “Stranger Danger” applies to the people they encounter through the Internet.
- That they should never give out personal details or
- That they should never meet alone anyone contacted via the Internet

Inappropriate Content

Through the Internet there are unsuitable materials in many varieties. Anyone can post material on the Internet.

- Some material is published for an adult audience and is unsuitable for children e.g. materials with a sexual content.
- Materials may express extreme views. E.g. some use the web to publish information on weapons, crime and racism which would be restricted elsewhere.
- Materials may contain misleading and inaccurate information. E.g. some use the web to promote activities which are harmful such as anorexia or bulimia.

Children need to be taught:

- That information on the Internet is not always accurate or true.
- To question the source of information.
- How to respond to unsuitable materials or requests and that they should tell a teacher/adult immediately.

Excessive Commercialism

The Internet is a powerful vehicle for advertising. In visiting websites children have easy access to advertising which is very persuasive.

Children should be taught:

- Not to fill out forms with a lot of personal details.
- Not to use an adult’s credit card number to order online products.

If children are to use the Internet in places other than at school e.g. – libraries, clubs and at home, they need to be educated about how to behave on-line and to discuss problems.

There are no totally effective solutions to problems of Internet safety. teachers, pupils and parents must be vigilant.

Steps We Take to Protect Children in School

Use of a Filtered Service

Access to the Internet is provided through a filtered service. All access is provided through the NINE Connect service which is designed to filter out unsuitable material.

Supervision

No filtering service is 100% effective, therefore all children's use of the Internet is supervised by an adult.

Planned Activities

Use of the Internet is a planned activity. Aimless surfing is not allowed. Children are taught to use the Internet in response to a need e.g. a question which has arisen from work in class.

Websites are previewed by teachers and revisited to ensure that they are suitable for children's curriculum needs and ability levels.

Search engines are used selectively. Teachers will choose the search engine and topic and discuss sensible search words which have been tried out beforehand.

Restrictions on E-mail

Children are not given individual web-based e-mail addresses. In some instances children may have access to a group e-mail address to communicate with other children as part of a particular project. Messages sent and received in this way are supervised by the teacher.

Internet Safety Rules

Children are taught to be Internet Wise. Children are made aware of Internet Safety Rules and are encouraged to discuss how to cope if they come across inappropriate material.

Points for Teachers to Consider

Internet use should be planned, task orientated and educational within a regulated and managed environment

- Supervision is the key strategy. Children should have a teacher or classroom assistant present when using the Internet. Computers should be positioned so that it is possible for adults to see materials on screen.
- Children should know why they are using the Internet. Aimless surfing should never be allowed. Teach children to use the Internet in response to a need. E.g. to answer a question which has arisen from work in class.
- Search engines require careful use and planning/supervision. Children can be bombarded with information and yet fail to find the material they need. Teachers should select the search engine and topic and discuss sensible search words which have been tried out beforehand.
- Children do not need thousands of website addresses. A small appropriate choice is much more effective. Favourites is a useful way to present this choice. Sites should always be previewed and revisited to be checked out. Consider off-line viewing
- Individual e-mail addresses are not considered suitable for children. Class or project e-mail addresses should be used. All incoming and outgoing mail should be checked.
- Discuss with pupils the rules for responsible Internet use. It is not enough to protect children from materials, we must teach them to become Internet Wise. Children need to learn to recognise and avoid the risks. Children need to know what to do if they come across inappropriate material or if they are approached by a stranger.
- Discuss Internet Safety with colleagues and as a staff.

Points for Parents to Consider

It is important to promote Internet Safety in the home and to monitor Internet use.

- Keep the computer in a communal area of the home.
- Ask children how the computer works.
- Monitor on-line time and be aware of excessive hours spent on the Internet.
- Take an interest in what children are doing. Discuss with the children what they are seeing and using on the Internet.
- Advise children to take care and to use the Internet in a sensible and responsible manner. Know the SMART tips.
- Discuss the fact that there are websites which are unsuitable.
- Discuss how children should respond to unsuitable materials or requests.
- Remind children never to give out personal information on the Internet.
- Remind children that people on line may not be who they say they are.
- Be vigilant. Ensure that children do not arrange to meet someone they meet on line.
- Be aware that children may be using the Internet in places other than in their own home or at school.

Filtering for the Home Computer –

Parents may wish to invest in security software for their children's computers. Some of this software works by monitoring all Internet activity for trigger words.

There are many types of security software available.

Examples include:

- Net Nanny, www.netnanny.com
- Cyber Patrol
- Surfwatch www.safesurf.com

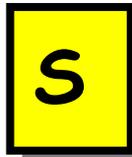
Mobile Phones

Be aware of the safety issues regarding mobile phones. Increasingly these may have Internet access.

Encourage children to talk about how they use mobile phones. Remind children not to give mobile numbers to strangers and people they do not know very well. Talk about responsible use of text messaging.

Points for Children to Consider

Follow These **SMART TIPS**



Secure - Always keep your name, address, mobile phone number and password private – it's like giving out the keys to your home!



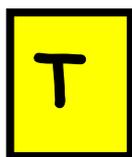
Meeting someone you have contacted in cyberspace can be dangerous. Only do so with your parent's/carer's permission, and then when they can be present.



Accepting e-mails or opening files from people you don't really know or trust can get you into trouble – they may contain viruses or nasty messages.



Remember someone on-line may be lying and not be who they say they are. Stick to the public areas in chat rooms and if you feel uncomfortable simply get out of there!



Tell your parent or carer if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried.

SMART Tips from: – Helping your parents be cool about the Internet,
produced by: Northern Area Child Protection Committees

An Acceptable Use of the Internet

Children should know that they are responsible for making an Acceptable Use of the Internet.

They must discuss and agree rules for this Acceptable Use. Parents are also asked to be aware of the code of Acceptable Use and confirm that their children will follow these rules.

- On the network, I will only use my own login username and password.
- I will not look at, change or delete other people's work/files.
- I will ask permission before entering any website, unless my teacher has already approved that site.
- I will only send e-mail which my teacher has approved. I will make sure that the messages I send are polite and sensible.
- When sending e-mail I will not give my name, address or phone number or arrange to meet anyone.
- I understand that I am not allowed to enter Internet Chat Rooms while using school computers.
- If I see anything I am unhappy with or I receive messages I do not like, I will tell a teacher immediately.
- I understand that if I deliberately break these rules I could be stopped from using the Internet.

A School Website

On our School Website:

- Children are only referred to by their first names.
- Any images of children will not be labelled with their name.
- No close-up pictures of children will be made available on line.
- Children and teachers will not reveal their personal details, home addresses or telephone numbers on the website.
- Children do not have individual e-mail addresses.
- Website links selected by teachers may be put on the website for pupils to access outside of school – sites will be previewed and checked regularly.

Parents'/Carers' permission will be sought to publish pupils work and/or photographs. These will only be published subject to the strict safeguards above.

All reasonable and appropriate steps have been taken to protect pupils. The school recognises that despite employing safety procedures, in some circumstances, the Internet may give children access to undesirable information or images.

Children are regularly reminded that should they encounter inappropriate material on line they must immediately

- Leave that website
- Inform an adult

Should a child or teacher encounter unsuitable material through using the NINE Connect service, this will be reported to C2k via the C2k helpdesk number.

Policy Review

Internet technology and school use of resources will develop and change with time. It is our intention to revise and up-date our Internet Safety Policy as appropriate and where necessary.