Acceptable Use of the Internet & Digital Technology Policy

"Brackenagh West Primary School is a caring community where every child is valued and respected in an environment which embraces diversity, nurtures talents and celebrates the achievements of all".

This policy is based on and complies with DENI Circular 2007/1 on Acceptable Use of the Internet and digital Technologies in Schools

Introduction

In Brackenagh West Primary School we believe that the Internet and other digital technologies are very powerful resources which can enhance and potentially transform learning and teaching when used effectively and appropriately. The Internet is an essential element of 21st century life for education, business and social interaction.

This school provides pupils with opportunities to use the excellent resources on the Internet, along with developing the skills necessary to access, analyse and evaluate them in a safe, responsible manner.

The above circular states that:

"Used well, digital technologies are powerful, worthwhile educational tools: technical safeguards can partly protect users, but education in safe, effective practices is a key goal for schools."

This document sets out the policy and practices for safe and effective use of the internet in Brackenagh West Primary School. The policy has been drawn up by the Principal with input from the staff.

It has been approved by governors and is made available to all parents. The policy and its implementation will be reviewed bi-annually.

Code of Safe Practice

When using the internet, e-mail systems and digital technologies, all users must comply with all relevant legislation on copyright, property theft, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity. The Code of Safe Practice for Brackenagh West Primary School makes explicit to all users (staff and pupils) what is safe and acceptable and what is not.

The scope of the Code covers fixed and mobile Internet; school PC's, laptops and digital video equipment. It should also be noted that the use of personal devices brought onto school premises (such as mobile phones, camera phones, PDAs) is subject to the same requirements as technology provided by the school.

The ICT Co-ordinator/Principal will monitor the effectiveness of the Code of Practice, particularly in the light of new developments in technology.

Code of Practice for Pupils

Pupil access to the Internet is through a filtered service provided by C2K, which should ensure educational use made of resources is safe and secure, while protecting users and systems from abuse. Parental permission is sought from parents before pupils access the Internet. Both parties sign this ICT Code of Practice Agreement and copies of these are held on file.

In addition, the following key measures have been adopted by Brackenagh West PS to ensure our pupils do not access any inappropriate material:

* The school's Code of Practice for use of the Internet and other digital technologies is made explicit to all pupils and is displayed prominently;

* Our Code of Practice is reviewed each school year and signed by pupils/parents;

* Pupils using the Internet will normally be working in highly-visible areas of the school;

* All online activity is for appropriate educational purposes and is supervised, where possible;

* Pupils will, where possible, use sites pre-selected by the teacher and appropriate to their age group;

Pupils in Key Stage 2 are educated in the safe and effective use of the Internet, through a number of selected programmes.

It should be accepted, however, that however rigorous these measures may be, they can never be 100% effective. Neither the school nor C2K can accept liability under such circumstances.

The use of mobile phones by pupils is not normally permitted on the school premises during school hours, unless in exceptional circumstances, where permission may be granted by the Principal. (See E-Safety Policy)

During school hours pupils are forbidden to play computer games or access social networking sites, unless specifically assigned by the teacher.

Sanctions

Incidents of technology misuse which arise will be dealt with in accordance with the school's discipline policy. Minor incidents will be dealt with by the Principal/ICT Co-ordinator and may result in a temporary or permanent ban on Internet use. Incidents involving child protection issues will be dealt with in accordance with school child protection procedures.

Code of Practice for Staff

Staff have agreed to the following Code of Safe Practice:

* Pupils accessing the Internet should be supervised by an adult at all times.

* All pupils are aware of the rules for the safe and effective use of the Internet. These are displayed in classrooms and discussed with pupils.

* All pupils using the Internet have written permission from their parents.

* Recommended websites for each year group are available under Favourites. Any additional websites used by pupils should be checked beforehand by teachers to ensure there is no unsuitable content and that material is age-appropriate.

* Deliberate/accidental access to inappropriate materials or any other breaches of the school code of practice should be reported immediately to the Principal/ICT Co-ordinator.

* In the interests of system security staff passwords should only be shared with the network managers.

* Teachers are aware that the C2K system tracks all Internet use and records the sites visited. The system also logs emails and messages sent and received by individual users.

* Teachers should be aware of copyright and intellectual property rights and should be careful not to download or use any materials which are in breach of these.

* Photographs of pupils should, where possible, be taken with a school camera and images should be stored where they are accessible only to teaching staff.

* School systems may not be used for unauthorised commercial transactions.

Internet Safety Awareness

In Brackenagh West PS we believe that, alongside having a written safety policy and code of practice, it is essential to educate all users in the safe and effective use of the Internet and other forms of digital communication. We see education in appropriate, effective and safe use as an essential element of the school curriculum. This education is as important for staff and parents as it is for pupils.

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:

<u>Potential Contact</u>

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 forms. 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.

Internet Safety Awareness for pupils

Rules for the Acceptable use of the Internet are discussed with all pupils and are prominently displayed in classrooms. In addition, Key Stage 2 pupils follow a structured programme of Internet Safety Awareness using a range of online resources. Eg. CEOP, Think You Know programmes.

Internet Safety Awareness for staff

The ICT Co-ordinator keeps informed and updated on issues relating to Internet Safety and attends regular courses. This training is then disseminated to all teaching staff, classroom assistants and supervisory assistants on a regular basis.

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. 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.

* Children do not need thousands of website addresses. A small appropriate choice is much more effective.

* Individual e-mail addresses may not be considered appropriate for younger children. Class or project e-mail addresses may 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. Be informed – read about e- safety e.g. – Becta materials: http://schools.becta.org.uk

Internet Safety Awareness for parents

The Internet Safety Policy is available for parents by request and is also posted on the school website. The Code of practice for pupils is sent home for parental signature.

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. (see appendix 2)

- 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.

Health and Safety

Brackenagh West PS have attempted, in so far as possible, to ensure a safe working environment for pupils and teachers using ICT resources, both in classrooms and in the ICT suite, which has been designed in accordance with health and safety guidelines. Pupils are supervised at all times when Interactive Whiteboards and Digital Projectors are being used.

Digital and Video Images of Pupils

Parental permission is sought to cover the use of photographs of pupils on the school website, in the local press and for displays etc within school and written permission must be obtained from the parent/carer.

School Website

Our school website promotes and provides up to date information about the school, as well as giving pupils an opportunity to showcase their work and other aspects of school life. In order to minimise risks of any images of pupils on the school website being used inappropriately the following steps are taken:

* The point of contact on the website is the school address, school e-mail and telephone number. Staff or pupils' home information will not be published.

* Website photographs that include pupils will be selected carefully and will not enable individual pupils to be identified by name.

* Pupils' full names will not be used in association with photographs.

* Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are used by the school.

Storage of Images

Digital and video images of pupils are, where possible, taken with school equipment. Images are stored on a centralised area on the school network, accessible only to teaching staff. Photographs of pupils are removed when they leave the school.

Social Software

Chatrooms, blogs and other social networking sites are blocked by the C2K filters so pupils do not have access to them in the school environment. However, we regard the education of pupils on the safe and responsible use of social software as vitally important and this is addressed through our Internet Safety Education for pupils.

Instances of cyber bullying of pupils or staff will be regarded as very serious offences and dealt with according to the school's discipline policy and child protection procedures.

Pupils are aware that any misuse of mobile technology should be reported to a member of staff immediately.

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 the managed 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.

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Principal Mr M J Peacock B Ed (Hons)

Vice-Principal Mrs K Annett B Ed (Hons)

Brackenagh West Primary School
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Dear Parents

Responsible Use of the Internet

In Brackenagh West Primary School pupils have the opportunity to access the Internet. We are currently updating our records to ensure that permission has been given for your child to have supervised access to the Internet in School.

There have been widely publicised concerns about pupils having access to undesirable materials when they use the Internet. Mindful of this, we have taken steps to deal with this.

We obtain our Internet access from C2K who operate a filtering system to block access to inappropriate materials and websites. All computer screens will be in public view and children will be supervised when using the Internet.

No system is perfect, however, and you should be aware that it is not possible to remove entirely the risk of finding unsuitable material. We have set out rules that all pupils are expected to follow. I would ask you to read through these rules and discuss them with your daughter and return the signed form to the class teacher at school.

Yours sincerely

M J Peacock
(Principal)

ICT Code of Conduct Agreement for Pupils and Parents

RULES FOR THE RESPONSIBLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Brackenagh West Primary School has a networked computer system, which is filtered and controlled by C2K. This filtered system enables staff and children to share and store materials electronically and to access a limited number of Internet sites which are of educational value.

Children in Brackenagh West Primary School will only access the filtered Internet connection under strict supervision by their teacher and will therefore not have any opportunities to freely "surf the net". Using ICT is an essential tool, which is used to promote and enhance all aspects of teaching and learning throughout the curriculum. It is therefore important that all children in Brackenagh West Primary School have the opportunities to benefit from the experiences gained by using these readily available resources.

There are now opportunities in Brackenagh West Primary School for children to use electronic toys such as BeeBots and Roamers, and to use digital cameras to acquire still pictures and video for presentation and display purposes. Again, it is essential that these are used under strict guidelines and supervision.

The following rules will keep everyone safe and help us be fair to others.

- **I will only access the system with the username and password I have been given.**
- **I will not access other people's files without permission.**
- **I will only use the computers for school work and homework.**
- **I will not bring in and use software/CDs/memory sticks without permission.**
- **I will not use my mobile phone in school**
- **I will ask permission from a member of staff before using the Internet.**
- **I understand that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the Internet sites I visit.**

Children in Key Stage 2 classes may occasionally have opportunities to communicate with each other via email or video conferencing. These rules will again keep everyone safe and promote learning in a positive and creative way for all involved.

- **I will not use Internet chat-rooms in school.**
- **I will always use language that is supportive and kind.**

- **I will never give out personal information or passwords.**
- **I will only ever use my C2k email address.**
- **I will only e-mail people I know, or my teacher has approved.**
- **I will not open e-mails sent by someone I don't know.**
- **The messages I send will be polite and responsible.**
- **I will not give my home address or telephone number, or arrange to meet someone.**
- **I will report any unpleasant material or messages sent to me.**

PARENTAL CONSENT

As the parent or legal guardian of the pupil named below, I grant permission for him/her to use the school networked computer system. I understand that pupils will be held accountable for their own actions and I accept responsibility for setting standards for my child to follow when selecting, sharing and exploring information and media at home. I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the school of any changes to my circumstances that may affect the above rules.

Signed by child _____

Signed by parent/guardian _____

Date _____

Appendix 2 **Are you SMART on the internet?**

At Brackenagh West Primary School we follow the SMART rules when we use the internet to help to keep ourselves safe.

Read about what they are and maybe you could even download a poster and stick it next to your computer so everyone knows how to stay safe online!

Secret - Always keep your name, address, and password private.

Make sure you tell your parent or teacher if someone wants to talk to you when you are online.

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

Remember that someone on-line may be lying and not be who they say they are.

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

* You can report online abuse to the police at: www.thinkuknow.co.uk