



WALTER HALLS PRIMARY AND EARLY YEARS SCHOOL INTERNET POLICY

Updated: September 2023 Review: September 2024

Use of the Internet

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1. Introduction

Usually, the resources used by pupils in school are carefully chosen by the teacher and determined by curriculum policies. Use of the Internet, by its nature, will provide access to information, which has not been selected by the teacher. Whilst pupils 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 children might access unsuitable material either accidentally or deliberately.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish the ground rules we have in school for using the Internet
- Describe how these fit into the wider context of our discipline and PSE policies
- Demonstrate the methods used to protect the children from sites containing pornography, racist or politically extreme views and violence. The school believes that the benefits to pupils from access to the resources of the Internet far exceed the disadvantages. Ultimately, the responsibility for setting and conveying the standards that children are expected to follow, when using media and information resources, is one the school shares with parents and guardians.

At Walter Halls, we feel that the best recipe for success lies in a combination of site filtering, of supervision and by fostering a responsible attitude in our pupils in partnership with parents.

Parents will be sent an explanatory letter and the rules, which form our Internet Access Agreement (Attached to the end of this document). This can be seen as an extension to the Home School Agreement.

2. Using the Internet for Education The benefits include:

- Access to a wide variety of educational resources including libraries, art galleries and museums
- Rapid and cost effective world-wide communication
- Gaining an understanding of people and cultures around the globe
- Staff professional development through access to new curriculum materials, experts' knowledge and practice
- Exchange of curriculum and administration data with LEA/DFEE
- Social and leisure use.
- Greatly increased skills in Literacy, particularly in being able to read and appraise critically and then communicate what is important to others
- The school intends to teach pupils 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 pupils being taught and the IT Co-ordinator will assist in the dissemination of this information.

As pupils 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).

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

3. Pupils' Access to the Internet

At present, Walter Halls School uses Nottingham. City Council's "filtered" Internet Service provided by 'Open Hive', which will minimise the chances of pupils encountering undesirable material.

Walter Halls School will only allow children 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.

Each term children will participate in lessons revising the School Acceptable Use rules. This should be regularly mentioned by staff during lessons as a way of keeping the rules fresh in pupils' minds.

Members of staff will be aware of the potential for misuse, and will be responsible for explaining to pupils, the expectation we have of pupils.

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

4. Expectations of Pupils using the Internet

- a. All pupils are expected to read the details provided in the Home School Agreement upon admission (and sent out annually)
- b. The school purchases a filtering software package called Smoothwall (further information is provided in our Filtering & Monitoring policy)
- c. At Walter Halls, we expect all pupils 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.
- d. Pupils using the World Wide Web are expected not to deliberately seek out offensive materials. Should any pupils encounter any such material accidentally, they are expected to report it immediately to a teacher, so that the Service Provider can block further access to the site.
- e. Pupils are expected not to use any rude language in their email communications and contact only people they know or those the teacher has approved. They have been taught the rules of etiquette in email and are expected to follow them
- f. Pupils must ask permission before accessing the Internet and have a clear idea why they are using it
- g. Pupils should not access other people's files unless permission has been given.
- h. Computers should only be used for schoolwork and homework unless permission has been granted otherwise.
- i. No program files may be downloaded to the computer from the Internet. This is to prevent corruption of data and avoid viruses.

- j. No programs on CD Rom or flash drive should be brought in from home for use in school. This is for both legal and security reasons. Homework completed at home may be brought in on flash drive but this will have to be virus scanned by the class teacher before use.
- k. No personal information such as phone numbers and addresses should be given out and no arrangements to meet someone made unless this is part of an approved school project.
- l. Pupils consistently choosing 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.

Web Site Guidelines:

- A web site can celebrate good work, promote the school, and publish resources for projects and homework, and link to other good sites of interest.
- Home information and e-mail identities will not be included only the point of contact to the school i.e. phone number, school address and e-mail to Head/coordinator
- Group photos will not contain a names list
- Work displayed will be of the highest quality and reflect the status of the school

Cyber bullying

Definition:

Cyber bullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT) particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. This can take the form of:

- Threats and Intimidation
- Harassment and Stalking
- Exclusion (of an individual from groups and sites)
- Identity theft, unauthorised access and impersonation
- Publicly posting, sending forward personal or private information or images
- Manipulation (pressure to arrange a meeting or to give out personal information).

The Education and Inspections act of 2006

The power to regulate pupil's behaviour out of school works as a defence for school staff to confiscate items e.g. mobile phones.

Head teachers are specifically granted powers that enable them to police cyber-bullying carried out by pupils even at home.

Criminal Laws

Although there is not a specific offence known as cyber bullying there are criminal laws that apply in terms of harassment and threatening and menacing communications.

A person will be guilty of threatening behaviour if he or she:

- Uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour or distributes or displays to another person any threatening abusive or insulting written material, sign or any other "visual representation"
- Causes another person to fear immediate violence
- Provokes the immediate use of violence by another person.

Walter Halls School will investigate any reported incidents of cyber bullying and reserve the right to confiscate any mobile phones or other means of communication and will notify the police of any such incidents.

The school will record all incidents. In exceptional circumstances the school reserves the right to notify outside agencies if infringements warrant this.

5. Responsible Internet Use and Home School Agreement

The Home School Agreement issued to pupils upon admission, and sent out annually during the entirety of their time at Walter Halls, sets out the rules and guidance for responsible internet use both in school and for both parents/carers and children at home in the use of ClassDojo.

By sending your child to school you agree to follow these systems. Please do not hesitate to contact school if you require clarification.