DROMARA PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR THE ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND THE INTERNET

Introduction

As a fundamental aim of all schools is to further children's educational experiences throughout all curricular areas, access to the Internet is provided for both pupils and staff at Dromara Primary School. This powerful tool will aid everyone concerned in researching information and communicating with others whilst helping us all keep abreast with today's increasingly rapid moving technology. Access to the Internet will only be available with parental consent. The school will ensure that access to the Internet will operate a filtering mechanism, however such a service can never be totally secure and therefore the following policy must be adhered to rigidly otherwise access will be lost.

Staff and Pupils

When using the Internet users must comply with all copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws. All school staff are expected to communicate in a professional manner consistent with the rules of behaviour governing employees in the educational sector. Access to the Internet provided to staff and pupils in school is a filtered service and all users must be aware that the school will track and record the searches made and sites visited.

All staff should ensure that pupils clearly understand how they are to use the internet appropriately and why rules exist. Pupils who do not follow these rules will have their access withdrawn.

Pupils must understand that no internet user is permitted to:

- retrieve, send, copy or display offensive messages or pictures;
- use obscene or racist language;
- harass, insult or attack others;
- damage computers, computer systems or computer networks;
- violate copyright laws;
- use another user's password without permission;
- trespass in another user's folders, work or files;
- intentionally waste resources (such as on-line time and consumables);
- use the network for unapproved commercial purposes

To access the internet parental consent forms will have to be completed by both parent/guardian and pupil. While using the internet in school, pupils should be, where possible, supervised. Internet access will only be available in highly used areas of the school which are the classrooms and library. However, at times, pupils may be granted permission to pursue research independent of staff supervision.

While normal privacy is respected and protected by password controls, as with the internet itself, users must not expect files stored on the C2K network to be absolutely private. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that users are using the system responsibly.

Examples of Acceptable and Unacceptable Use

On-line activities which are encouraged include, for example:

- the use of email and computer conferencing for communication between colleagues, between pupil(s) and teacher(s), between pupil(s) and pupil(s), between schools and industry;
- use of the internet to investigate and research school subjects, cross-curricular themes and topics related to social and personal development;
- the development of pupil's competence in ICT skills and their general research skills;
- Uploading files onto a secure workspace (Fronter) and posting constructive comments regarding school work.

On-line activities which are **not permitted** include, for example:

- searching, viewing and/or retrieving materials that are not related to the aims of the curriculum unless specifically approved by the school;
- copying, saving and/or redistributing copyright protected material without approval;
- subscribing to any services or ordering goods or services unless specifically approved by the school;
- playing non-educational computer games or using other interactive 'chat' sites, unless specifically assigned by the teacher;
- publishing or sharing any personal information about a user;
- using the network in such a way that use of the network is disrupted for other users (for example; downloading large files during peak usage times; sending mass email messages);
- any activity that violates a school rule;

EQUELLA

Equella is an online resource library which supports the implementation and sharing of effective practices by C2K users across Northern Ireland. Staff should be encouraged to use *Equella* resources in their teaching and learning activities and for contact with others in education.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Dromara Primary School views offering advice to parents as very important to their child's education. We hope that it would be thus beneficial to draw their attention to ways in which they can appropriately educate their children in good internet practice at home. Home use of the internet for children can be educationally beneficial and is an important aid for both home and school work. It should, however, be supervised and parents should guide children towards appropriate materials on the internet as they would normally exercise with other information sources such as the television, telephones, videos, radio and other media.

Parents may like to guide their children in the following ways:

- discuss the rules for appropriate internet and computer usage:
- get to know the sites used by your children and talk to them about what they are learning;
- make them aware of the dangers of giving out personal information on the internet, such as address, phone number, school name or financial details;
- encourage them not to respond to unwelcome messages if using email/chat/blogging facilities.