



# BRICKHALL SCHOOL

## E-safety policy

Brickhall School recognizes that ICT and the internet are fantastic tools for learning and communication that can be used in school to enhance the curriculum, challenge students, and support creativity and independence. Using ICT to interact socially and share ideas can benefit everyone in the school community, but it is important that the use of the internet and ICT is seen as a responsibility and that students, staff and parents use it appropriately and practice good e-safety. It is important that all members of the school community are aware of the dangers of using the internet and how they should conduct themselves online. E-safety covers the internet but it also covers mobile phones and other electronic communications technologies. We know that some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations or actions online, webcam filming, photography or face-to-face meetings. There is a 'duty of care' for any persons working with children and educating all members of the school community on the risks and responsibilities of e-safety falls under this duty. It is important that there is a balance between controlling access to the internet and technology and allowing freedom to explore and use these tools to their full potential. This policy aims to be an aid in regulating ICT activity in school, and provide a good understanding of appropriate ICT use that members of the school community can use as a reference for their conduct online outside of school hours. E-safety is a whole-school issue and responsibility. Cyber-bullying by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures which are outlined in our **behavior policy**.

### **1. Making use of ICT and the internet in school**

The internet is used in school to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management functions. Technology is advancing rapidly and is now a huge part of everyday life, education and business. We want to equip our students with all the necessary ICT skills that they will need in order to enable them to progress confidently into a professional working environment when they leave school.

Some of the benefits of using ICT and the internet in schools are:

#### **For students:**

- unlimited access to worldwide educational resources and institutions such as art galleries, museums and libraries.
- Contact with schools in other countries resulting in cultural exchanges between pupils all over the world.
- Access to subject experts, role models, inspirational people and organizations. The internet can provide a great opportunity for pupils to interact with people that they otherwise would never be

able to meet.

- An enhanced curriculum; interactive learning tools; collaboration, locally, nationally, and globally; self-evaluation; feedback and assessment; updates on current affairs as they happen.
- Access to learning whenever and wherever convenient.
- Freedom to be creative.
- Freedom to explore the world and its cultures from within a classroom.
- Social inclusion, in class and online.
- Access to case studies, videos and interactive media to enhance understanding.
- Individualized access to learning.

**For staff:**

- Professional development through access to national developments, educational materials and examples of effective curriculum practice and classroom strategies.
- Immediate professional and personal support through networks and associations.
- Improved access to technical support.
- Ability to provide immediate feedback to students and parents.
- Class management, attendance records, schedule, and assignment tracking.

**For parents:**

- Better and easier communication between the school and parents
- Easy access to educational materials in child's general welfare.

## **2. Learning to evaluate internet content**

With so much information available online it is important that pupils learn how to evaluate internet content for accuracy and intent. This is approached by the school as part of digital literacy across all subjects in the curriculum. Students will be taught:

- to be critically aware of materials they read, and shown how to validate information before accepting it as accurate
- to use age-appropriate tools to search for information online
- to acknowledge the source of information used and to respect copyright. Plagiarism is against the law and the school will take any intentional acts of plagiarism very seriously. Students who are found to have plagiarized will be disciplined.

The school will also take steps to filter internet content to ensure that it is appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils. If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites then the URL will be reported to the *school e-safety coordinator*. Any material found by members of the school community that is believed to be unlawful will be reported to the appropriate agencies. Regular software and broadband checks will take place to ensure that filtering services are working effectively.

## **3. Managing information systems.**

The school is responsible for reviewing and managing the security of the computers and internet networks as a whole and takes the protection of school data and personal protection of our school community very seriously. This means protecting the school network, as far as is practicably possible, against viruses, hackers and other external security threats. The security of the school information systems and users will be reviewed regularly by *the IT technicians/ICT coordinator/network manager* and virus protection software will be updated regularly. Some safeguards that the school takes to secure our computer systems are:

- ensuring that all personal data sent over the internet or taken off site is encrypted
- making sure that unapproved software is not downloaded to any school computers. Alerts will be set up to warn users of this
- files held on the school network will be regularly checked for viruses
- the use of user logins and passwords to access the school network will be enforced
- portable media containing school data or programs will not be taken off-site without specific permission from the executive director of the school.

#### **4. Published content and the school website**

The school website is viewed as a useful tool for communicating our school ethos and practice to the wider community. It is also a valuable resource for parents, students, and staff for keeping up-to-date with school news and events, celebrating whole-school achievements and personal achievements, and promoting school projects.

The website is in the public domain, and can be viewed by anybody online. Any information published on the website will be carefully considered in terms of safety for the school community, copyrights and privacy policies. No personal information on staff or pupils will be published, and details for contacting the school will be for the school office only.

## **4.2 Policy and guidance of safe use of children’s photographs and work**

Color photographs and pupils work bring our school to life, showcase our student’s talents, and add interest to publications both online and in print that represent the school. However, the school acknowledges the importance of having safety precautions in place to prevent the misuse of such material.

The images of pupils and staff will not be displayed in public, either in print or online, without consent. On admission to the school parents/carers will be asked to sign a photography consent form. The school does this so as to prevent repeatedly asking parents for consent over the school year, which is time-consuming for both parents and the school. The terms of use of photographs never change, and so consenting to the use of photographs of your child over a period of time rather than a one-off incident does not affect what you are consenting to.

## **4.3 Complaints of misuse of photographs or video**

Parents should follow standard school complaints procedure if they have a concern or complaint regarding the misuse of school photographs. Please refer to our **complaints policy** for more information on the steps to take when making a complaint. Any issues or sanctions will be dealt with in line with the schools **behavior policy**.

## **4.4 Social networking, social media and personal publishing**

Personal publishing tools include blogs, wikis, social networking sites, bulletin boards, chat rooms and instant messaging programs. These online forums are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behavior and where pupils are most vulnerable to being contacted by a dangerous person. It is important that we educate students so that they can make their own informed decisions and take responsibility for their

conduct online. *Pupils are not allowed to access social media sites in school/There are various restrictions on the use of these sites in school that apply to both students and staff.*

Social media sites have many benefits for both personal use and professional learning; however, both staff and students should be aware of how they present themselves online. Students are taught through *the ICT curriculum* about the risks and responsibility of uploading personal information and the difficulty of taking it down completely once it is out in such a public place. The school follows general rules on the use of Social media and social networking sites in school:

- Pupils are educated on the dangers of social networking sites and how to use them in safe and productive ways. They are all made fully aware of the school's code of conduct regarding the use of ICT and technologies and behavior online.
- Any sites that are to be used in class will be risk-assessed by the teacher in charge prior to the lesson to ensure that the site is age-appropriate and safe for use.
- Official school blogs created by staff or students/year groups/school clubs as part of the school curriculum will be password-protected and run from the school website with the approval of a member of staff and will be moderated by a member of staff.
- Pupils and staff are encouraged not to publish specific and detailed private thoughts, especially those that might be considered hurtful, harmful or defamatory. The school expects all staff and pupils to remember that they are representing the school at all times and must act appropriately.
- Safe and professional behavior of staff online will be discussed at staff induction.

## 5. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying, as with any other form of bullying, is taken very seriously by the school. Information about specific strategies or programs in place to prevent and tackle bullying are set out in the **behavior policy**. The anonymity that can come with using the internet can sometimes make people feel safe to say and do hurtful things that they otherwise would not do in person. It is made very clear to members of the school community what is expected of them in terms of respecting their peers, members of the public and staff, and any intentional breach of this will result in disciplinary action.

If an allegation of bullying does come up, the school will:

- take it seriously
- act as quickly as possible to establish the facts. It may be necessary to examine school systems and logs or contact the service provider in order to identify the bully
- record and report the incident
- provide support and reassurance to the victim
- make it clear to the 'bully' that this behavior will not be tolerated. If there is a group of people involved, they will be spoken to individually and as a whole group. It is important that children who have harmed another, either physically or emotionally, redress their actions and the school will make sure that they understand what they have done and the impact of their actions.

If a sanction is used, it will correlate to the seriousness of the incident and the 'bully' will be told why it is being used. They will be asked to remove any harmful or inappropriate content that has been published, and the service provider may be contacted to do this if they refuse or are unable to remove it. They may have their internet access suspended in school.

Repeated bullying may result in a fixed-term exclusion.

## 6. Managing emerging technologies

Technology is progressing rapidly and new technologies are emerging all the time. The school will risk-assess any new technologies before they are allowed in school, and will consider any educational benefits that they

might have. The school keeps up-to-date with new technologies and is prepared to quickly develop appropriate strategies for dealing with new technological developments.

E-safety policy (2017)