



Ruthin School

PUPILS' USE OF ICT, MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT POLICY	
Version	
Effective from	May 2020
Extent of Policy	Ruthin School
Policy Owner	Mark Rimmer
Governor	Tracey Kerrigan
Review by	September 2021
Frequency of Audit	Annual
Circulation	
Publication	Website

Pupils' Use of ICT, Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Equipment Policy

ICT IN THE CURRICULUM

Technology has transformed the entire process of teaching and learning at Ruthin School. It is a crucial component of every academic subject and is also taught as a subject in its own right. Ruthin School has an ICT suite in the school and pupils may use the machines there and in the library for private study.

All of Ruthin School's Lower School pupils are taught how to research on the internet and to evaluate sources. They are educated into the importance of evaluating the intellectual integrity of different websites and why some apparently authoritative sites need to be treated with caution. Some websites that appear to be serious, impartial, historical sites, actually masquerade as sources of racist, homophobic, jihadist or other propaganda. Some free, online encyclopaedias do not evaluate or screen the material posted on them.

THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN OUR PUPILS' LIVES

Technology plays an important part in the lives of all young people. Sophisticated games consoles, or PSPs (play stations portable), like Wiis and Nintendo DS, together with bluetooth-enabled mobile phones provide unlimited access to the internet, to SMS messages, to blogging (web logging), to social media websites (like Twitter), to Skype (video calls, via web cameras built into computers, phones and PSPs), to wikis (collaborative web pages), chat rooms and other social networking sites (such as Facebook, Instagram, WeChat etc), and video sharing sites (such as YouTube).

This communications revolution gives young people unrivalled opportunities. It also brings risks. It is an important part of the School's role to teach pupils how to stay safe in this environment and how to avoid making themselves vulnerable to a range of risks, including identity theft, bullying, harassment, grooming, stalking and abuse. They also need to learn how to avoid the risk of exposing themselves to subsequent embarrassment.

ROLE OF OUR TECHNICAL STAFF

The School recognises that blocking and barring sites pupils to understand why they need to behave responsibly if they are to protect themselves. This aspect is a role for the school's child protection officer and its pastoral staff. The school's technical staff have a key role in maintaining a safe technical infrastructure at the school and in keeping abreast with the rapid succession of technical developments. They are responsible for the security of the school's hardware system, its data and for training the school's teaching and administrative staff in the use of ICT. They monitor the use of the internet and emails and will report inappropriate usage to the pastoral staff.

ROLE OF OUR CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

Ruthin School recognises that internet safety is a child protection and general safeguarding issue.

Mark Rimmer, our Designated Senior Person (DSP) has been trained in the safety issues involved with the misuse of the internet and other mobile electronic devices. He works closely with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and other agencies in promoting a culture of responsible use of technology that is consistent with the ethos of Ruthin School. All of the staff with pastoral responsibilities have also received training in e-safety issues. The school's comprehensive PSE programme on e-safety is the DSP's responsibility. He will ensure that all Lower School year groups in the school are educated in the risks and the reasons why they need to behave responsibly online. It is his responsibility to handle allegations of misuse of the internet.

MISUSE: STATEMENT OF POLICY

Ruthin School will not tolerate any illegal material and will always report illegal activity to the police and/or the LSCB. If the school discovers that a child or young person is at risk as a consequence of online activity, it may seek assistance from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Unit (CEOP). The school will impose a range of sanctions on any pupil who misuses technology to bully, harass or abuse another pupil in line with our anti-bullying policy.

INVOLVEMENT WITH PARENTS

Ruthin School seeks to work closely with parents in promoting a culture of e-safety. The School will always contact parents if it has any concerns about pupils' behaviour in this area and likewise it hopes that parents will feel able to share any concerns with the school. The school recognises that not all parents may feel equipped to protect their son or daughter when they use electronic equipment at home.

CHARTER FOR THE SAFE USE OF THE INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES AT RUTHIN SCHOOL

"Children and young people need to be empowered to keep themselves safe - this isn't just about a top-down approach. Children will be children - pushing boundaries and taking risks. At a public swimming pool we have gates, put up signs, have lifeguards and shallow ends; but we also teach children how to swim."

Dr Tanya Byron "Safer Children in a digital world: the report of the Byron Review".

E-safety is a whole school responsibility and at Ruthin School, the staff and pupils have adopted the following charter for the safe use of the internet inside the school:

Cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying is a particularly pernicious form of bullying because it can be so pervasive and anonymous. There can be no safe haven for the victim who can be targeted at any time or place. The school's anti-bullying policy describes the preventative measures and the procedures that will be followed when the school discovers cases of bullying.
- Proper supervision of pupils plays an important part in creating a safe ICT environment at school but everyone needs to learn how to stay safe outside the school.
- Ruthin School values all of its pupils equally. It is part of the ethos of Ruthin School to promote considerate behaviour and to value diversity.
- Bullying and harassment in any form should always be reported to a member of staff. It is never the victim's fault, and he or she should not be afraid to come forward.

Treating Other Users with Respect

- The School expects pupils to treat staff and each other online with the same standards of consideration and good manners as they would in the course of face-to-face contact. They should always follow the School's 'Rules and Regulations.'
- Staff should only contact pupils via School based servers (ie School emails, TEAMS etc). Contact via text or mobiles may not be used for the Safeguarding and Wellbeing of pupils except for ease of communication on school trips, medical emergencies and where no other school based system is possible or practicable. The School's policy on educational visits explains the circumstances when communication by mobile phone may be appropriate.
- Everyone has a right to feel secure and to be treated with respect, particularly the vulnerable. Harassment and bullying will not be tolerated. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on the School website. The school is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, gender, gender orientation or physical disability.
- All pupils are encouraged to look after each other and to report any concerns about the misuse of technology or worrying issue to a member of the pastoral staff.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones is not allowed in washing and changing areas.

Keeping the School Network Safe

- The school adheres to best practice regarding e-teaching and the internet.
- Certain sites are blocked by the school's filtering system and the school's IT department monitors pupils' use of the network.
- The IT department monitors email traffic and blocks SPAM and certain attachments.
- The school issues all pupils with their own personal school email address. Access is via personal LOGIN, which is password protected. The school gives guidance on the reasons for always logging off and for keeping all passwords securely.

- The school has strong anti-virus protection on its network which is operated by the IT department.

Promoting Safe Use of Technology

Pupils of all ages are encouraged to make use of the excellent online resources that are available from sites such as:

- Cyber Bullying (Gov.wales)
- UK Council for Child Internet Safety (<http://www.education.gov.uk/ukccis>)
- Childnet International (www.childnet-int.org)
- Cyber Mentors (www.cybermentors.org.uk)
- Cyberbullying (www.cyberbullying.org)
- E-Victims (www.e-victims.org)
- Bullying UK (www.bullying.co.uk)

They prepare their own models of good practice which form the subject of presentations during assemblies and discussion in the meetings of the school council. They cover the different hazards on the internet, such as grooming, stalking, abuse, bullying, harassment and identity theft. Guidance covers topics such as saving oneself from future embarrassment explaining that any blog or photograph posted onto the internet is there permanently. Anything that has been deleted may be cached in a search engine, company server or internet archive and cause embarrassment years later.

Safe Use of Personal Electronic Equipment

- The school's guidance is that pupils and staff should always think carefully before they post any information online. Content posted should not be able to be deemed inappropriate or offensive, or likely to cause embarrassment to the individual or others.
- The school offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons which covers blocking and removing contacts from 'friend lists'.
- The school's PSHE lessons include guidance on how pupils can identify the signs of a cyber-stalker and what they should do if they are worried about being harassed or stalked online.
- The school offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe. Privacy is essential in the e-world.
- The school gives guidance on how to keep safe at home by encrypting the home wireless network, not opening unknown attachments and reporting any illegal content.
- Similarly the school covers how a mobile phone filter can be activated and how to block nuisance callers.
- The school advises on the responsible use of Skype but it appreciates that free video calls can provide boarders, particularly overseas boarders, with an invaluable means of maintaining contact with their families and friends.

Considerate Use of Electronic Equipment

Sanctions may be imposed on pupils who use their electronic equipment without consideration for others.

Ruthin School expects all pupils to adhere to this charter for the safe use of the internet. It is available on the school website and the school may impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet, mobile phones and other electronic devices.