

Belfast Model School for Girls

Achievement for All



Policy for the Acceptable Use of the Internet and the school computer network

Agreed by Board of Governors: Feb 2011

To be reviewed: Feb 2014

Rationale

Since all pupils seek to use ICT to enhance their learning across the curriculum, they all interact with material on the Internet. Teachers should guide pupils to appropriate websites where their use of such websites contributes to their learning and improves the quality of their learning experience. In order to guard our pupils from any inherent dangers, it is the responsibility of school staff to take appropriate steps to protect them from the dangers of open access to material found on the Internet while encouraging its use where its benefits are clear.

Purposes

In using the Internet in a structured and supervised way the Belfast Model School for Girls:

- encourages pupils to access the Internet where it is beneficial and where such use supports their understanding of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and subject specifications
- ensures that pupils acquire skills that are useful for them not only in school but also in adult life, in continuing education and training and in employment.
- protects pupils from undesirable experiences and/or influences while using the Internet.
- encourages pupils to work with due consideration of other users when using computer equipment.
- trains pupils in good practice when using the Internet and the computer network.

Guidelines

Every teacher has the necessary knowledge and experience to monitor every pupil's use of this medium. Teachers update their knowledge and skills on a regular basis so that they can guide pupils towards appropriate materials on the Internet. Outside school, parents/guardians bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they would normally exercise with information media such as television, mobile telephones, movies, radio. Staff are happy to give parents advice if they have any concerns about the home use of computers for accessing information.

- The school provides a filtered and monitored access to the Internet for pupils and staff. Nonetheless, no filtering service can be completely foolproof, and teachers ensure that pupil users behave in a responsible manner.
- A copy of the school's policy on the Acceptable Use of the Internet is available to parents on the school website www.belfastgms.org
- Pupils and staff are made aware that the school can and does track and record websites visited by them, the searches made on the Internet and e-mails sent and received by them
- Pupils and teachers are aware that files and communications on the school's networks are monitored. While normal privacy is respected and protected by password controls, **users must be aware that files stored on school servers are not absolutely and unconditionally private.**

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Use email facilities to communicate with other pupils, teachers, schools and industry where such an activity is part of schoolwork.
- Use the Internet to investigate and research school subjects
- Develop their competence in ICT skills and general research skills.
- Use VLE to enhance independent learning

Pupils are not permitted to:

- Copy, save and/or redistribute copyright protected material, without approval. If pupils are unsure if material is protected by copyright, teachers will provide appropriate information to guide them
- Subscribe to any services or order any goods or services
- Play computer games or use interactive 'chat' sites
- Access social networking sites e.g. Facebook
- Use the network in such a way that disrupts the use of the network by other users
- Download software or other files.
- Load software on to any school machine
- Send inappropriate e-mails
- Publish, share or distribute any personal information about any user (such as: home address; email address; phone number)
- Use another user's password or allow other users to use their password
- Communicate to others any information, or engage in any activity which may result in the loss of or damage to another pupil's work
- Use the Internet services provided by the school without a teacher's knowledge and permission
- Retrieve, send, copy or display offensive information or images
- Use obscene, discriminatory or racist language, harass, insult or attack others
- Damage computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Use school computer equipment for any other activity that violates a school rule or school policy.

These policy Guidelines are translated into action through other policies and procedures, for example:

Behaviour Management Policy

School Rules

Pastoral Care Policy

Use of the VLE