



Young People , ICT and e-safety

*Information for
carers*

parents and



The purpose of this guide

Young people of today are increasingly using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in school and at home.

This guide explains:

- How young people are using ICT in school.
- How using ICT in the home can help young people to learn
- How young people can use the Internet safely at home.
- Where to access further information to be safe on line

How your son or daughter uses ICT at school

ICT in schools is taught as a subject in its own right and also supports students' learning in other subjects, including English and Mathematics. Within ICT lessons students learn to use a wide range of ICT including:

- Word Processing to write essays, news articles or letters
- Databases to record information, e.g. GCSE data handling project
- Spreadsheets to create tables, charts and graphs
- Desktop Publishing to design posters, leaflets or cards
- Multimedia Presentation to present text, pictures, sound and video
- Drawing Programs to create pictures and designs in Art and Technology lessons
- Internet and CD-ROMs to access research for project work
- Email to contact friends in another school and email coursework to teachers
- Digital Cameras to record what they have done in class or on a

How you can help your son or daughter at home

ICT is not just about using a computer. It also includes the use of mobile phone, digital cameras and equipment such as a tape recorder, MP3 or DVD player. Students can be helped to develop their ICT skills at home by:

- writing a letter or email to a friend or relative
- creating digital artwork and pictures
- using the Internet to do research for a project
- using an online simulation to develop problem solving
- using interactive games to enhance their learning

Benefits of using ICT at home

How we know that using ICT at home can help

Many studies have looked at the benefits of having access to a computer and/or the Internet at home. Here are some of the key findings:

- used effectively, ICT can improve students' achievement
- using ICT at home and at school develops skills for life
- students with supportive and involved parents and carers do better at school

How learning at home with ICT benefits students

- improves their ICT skills and makes learning more fun
- offers them choice in what they learn and how they learn it
- supports homework and revision
- improves the presentation of their work
- connects learning at school with learning at home.

All this can lead to better performance at school and an improved standard of work. For further information go to www.parentscentre.gov.uk/

Using the Internet safely at home

Whilst many Internet Service Providers offer filtering systems and tools to help you safeguard your son or daughter at home, it remains surprisingly easy for young people to access inappropriate material including unsuitable text, pictures and movies. Locating the computer in a family area where possible, not a bedroom, will enable you to supervise your son or daughter as they use the Internet. Also consider mobile phones and games consoles and other devices that can access the internet.

However, don't deny them the opportunity to learn from and enjoy the wide variety of material and games available on the Internet. Instead discuss with them some simple rules for keeping safe online and making

Using the Internet safely at home

To keep safe they should:

- use websites recommended by teachers and use a student friendly search engine
- consider who created a website and possible bias within information
- only email people they know (why not consider setting up an address book?)
- exercise caution before opening an email sent by someone they don't know
- use Internet chat rooms, websites, instant messaging etc. with caution and know how to block and report unwanted users
- not use their real name when using games or websites on the Internet, (create a nick name)
- never give out any personal information about themselves, friends or family online including home address, phone or mobile number
- never email your school name or a picture in school uniform (even to a friend)
- never arrange to meet anyone alone, and always tell an adult first and meet in a public place
- only use a webcam with people they know

Using these rules

Go through these rules with your son or daughter and pin them up near to the computer. It is also a good idea to regularly check the Internet sites they are visiting e.g. by clicking on History and Favourites. Please reassure them that you want to keep them safe rather than take Internet access away from them. Create a dialogue and a relationship of mutual respect as far as the Internet is concerned.

Some useful websites

CEOP: www.ceop.gov.uk

Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Digizen: www.digizen.org

GetSafeOnline: www.getsafeonline.org/

BeatBullying: www.beatbullying.org/

InternetWatchFoundation: www.iwf.org.uk/

VirtualGlobalTaskForce: www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com/