

INTERNET ACCESS POLICY

Responsible use of the Internet and e-mail

As part of our ICT programme, we offer girls access to the Internet and provide them with a school based e-mail account. We believe that there are educational benefits of Internet and e-mail access, not least in the opportunity provided to explore a wide range of information sources and to collaborate with other learners globally. Girls' study skills are developed to make ethical and critical use of this. Girls develop the skills to appropriately select information and to check its origin, currency and accuracy. Girls must be aware of the issues of plagiarism and copyright – not least in connection with preparation of material for public examination courses.

Levels of supervision of the use of the internet and e-mail depend upon the age of a girl.

In Reception (or Year 1) to Year 6 (inclusive) girls' access is under the direct supervision of a member of staff.

In Years 7-9, girls' use of the Internet or e-mail in lessons is supervised by a member of staff. Girls in Years 7 – 13 inclusive also have access to machines outside lesson time and in circumstances (e.g. the library, study areas) where a member of staff may not be available to offer direct supervision.

We take various measures to minimise these risks. Our ICT network operates a filtering system to try to prevent access to inappropriate materials. We have an Internet safety programme for all pupils which teaches the safe behaviour appropriate to adopt when using the Internet or e-mail.

However, although internet use is filtered, families should be aware that some pupils may find ways to access material that is inaccurate, defamatory, illegal or potentially offensive to some people. We recognise that parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the College respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

We are concerned to ensure that girls' use of the Internet is legal and that there is no risk of prosecution. We recognise too our moral responsibilities and our duty to provide protection for pupils in our care. We accept the need to promote high standards in relation to the use of computers and the Internet.

In order to protect pupils and help the school to demonstrate that ICT systems are being used responsibly, monitoring of files or the sites visited is necessary. Software (Securus) is used which does monitor system use and is reviewed by a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team.