



improving learning
through technology

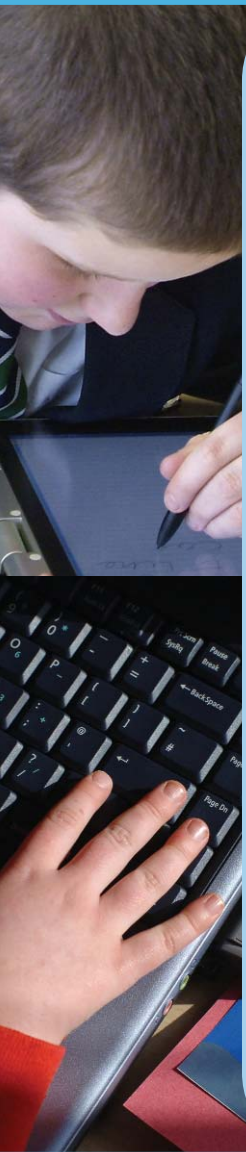


The internet is opening new opportunities for everyone, promoting creativity and effective learning. To use technology effectively requires an understanding of its value in the classroom, and an awareness of both the benefits and risks it poses for children's learning.

All those involved in children's and young people's education have a duty to ensure that – for both teachers and learners – the environment is as safe as possible, and that the solution offers flexibility for users within different institutions, different users within the same institution, and is in line with parental expectations.

using technology safely in schools
an essential guide

what is e-safety?



Keeping up to date with new technologies means schools have to be aware of the safety and security issues, both real and potential, and enable staff and pupil protection, both within and outside school.

E-safety is a wide-ranging issue which, to be effective, relies on the involvement of all concerned:

- Local Safeguarding Children Boards
- Local authority personnel
- Headteachers
- Governors
- Senior management
- Classroom teachers
- Support staff
- Pupils and parents or carers.

All institutions need to have policies that help pupils and staff to identify and practise 'safe behaviour':

- on the internet
- in collaborative environments
- with mobile technologies
- inside the classroom and beyond.

The development and implementation of such policies needs to involve all stakeholders, so that it results in a sense of ownership and whole-school involvement.

Creating a safe ICT learning environment includes three important elements:

- An infrastructure of whole-school awareness, responsibilities, policies and procedures
- An effective range of technological tools
- A comprehensive e-safety education programme for your establishment's entire community.

Technological solutions are therefore only effective if they are part of a comprehensive e-safety programme. This should include a range of tools to help safeguard both pupils and the system itself:

- Virus prevention and protection
- Monitoring systems to keep track of who downloaded what, when they downloaded it, using which computer
- Filtering and content control to minimise access to inappropriate content via your network.

how Becta is supporting e-safety

Becta has put together a framework of functional, technical and quality of service standards, underpinning the development of the National Education Network. One of our roles as Network Management Authority is to ensure appropriate maintenance and implementation of these standards. As a fundamental element of this policy, Becta feels it is appropriate that all services can

demonstrate meeting the minimum requirements. We are therefore working with suppliers to achieve the following objectives:

- Clear definition of the minimum acceptable level of filtering, currently defined within the accreditation scheme
- Thorough on-site testing and quality assurance of services
- Agreement of action plans where services do not meet requirements
- Monitoring action plans until services meet required minimum specifications.

Safeguarding children and young people in both the real and virtual world is everyone's responsibility



Any establishment relying solely on technological solutions could be placing themselves, and their pupils and staff, at risk.

Becta has also set up an internet services accreditation scheme which enables educational establishments to make an informed choice of internet service provider (ISP) with a particular emphasis on the e-safety environment. The accreditation scheme covers various aspects:

- To be accredited, suppliers must be able to meet and maintain specific standards in content filtering and service performance who have voluntarily submitted their services for evaluation.
- Information is provided, relating to many of the basic technical features that should be in place if you are looking to purchase internet services,

or want to check how your current services relate to these requirements.

- Additional issues are addressed, such as related business processes and technical support quality.

The benefit of the scheme is that it gives assurance that the requirements are not only met, but are constantly monitored and maintained to ensure service excellence and best practice.



what you should be doing

- Use a whole-establishment approach towards responsibility for e-safety.
- Develop an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) detailing the ways staff and pupils can and cannot use ICT facilities.
 - Sample AUPs, which you can use as a basis, are available both online and via LAs; tailor them to fit your own circumstances
 - Link AUPs with other school policies, such as anti-bullying and guidance on copyright and plagiarism.
- Local Safeguarding Children Boards, LAs and establishment heads, supported by governors, should take a lead in embedding the agreed e-safety practices.
 - Designate a senior management team member with responsibility for e-safety who is then the central contact point for all e-safety issues.
- Make pupils aware of potential risks and how to practise safe, responsible behaviour, wherever they are located.

Your strategy and teaching should include:

- allowing pupils to develop their own protection strategies for when adult supervision and technological protection are not available
 - giving information on where to seek help and how to report incidents
 - helping pupils understand that they are not accountable for the actions that others may force upon them
 - providing guidelines for parents, carers and others on safe practice.
- Regularly monitor and review your e-safety policies with stakeholders. Technological solutions should support updates and reviews where possible to ensure maintenance of an effective e-safety programme.

Above all, e-safety education should be a continuing feature of both staff development and pupils' educational development. A range of support is available to help you.

further information

Becta's website highlights the safety issues and provides advice on how to use technology safely.

<http://www.becta.org.uk/schools/esafety>

A Becta publication, *E-safety – Developing whole-school policies to support effective practice* is available on our website.

<http://www.becta.org.uk/publications>

The Becta accreditation of internet services to education scheme

<http://www.becta.org.uk/schools/ispsafety>

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