Durston House

Use of the Internet and Digital Technology Policy

Aims of the Policy

- to establish an agreed set of principles for the use of the internet and digital technology for the Durston House community
- to establish an agreed set of principles for the use of the internet and digital technology which safeguards the pupils in the care of the Durston House community

Objectives of the Policy

- to clarify the safe use of the internet and digital technology for pupils at school, in their homes and in the homes of others of the Durston House community
- to gain the support of all in the Durston House community for an acceptable use, by pupils, of the internet and digital technology
  to complement the **Pastoral Care Policy**, the **Behaviour Policy**, the **Safeguarding Policy**, the **Anti-Bullying Policy**, the **Rewards and Sanctions Policy**, the **Staff Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication Policy**, the **Exclusion Policy, the Data Protection Policy (in the School Handbook)**, and the **ICT and PSHME Schemes of Work**

Introduction

At Durston House the safeguarding of pupils is paramount. Durston House wants to promote the safe and responsible use of the internet and digital technology by all pupils who use the Durston House internet resources, and internet resources outside school. This policy, which applies to all pupils, including those in EYFS, seeks to establish protocols which keep them safe, from those within, and without the school. With an ever-increasing use of the internet and digital technology by pupils, and with an ever-expanding capacity of the internet to inform, provide services and enable social intercourse, using ever-developing digital technology, it is incumbent on all in the Durston House community to make sure that they are used responsibly and with discernment by all pupils.

The school provides internet access to pupils, staff, and administration as part of its educational provision. Most, if not all pupils, have internet access at home, and use a range of electronic devices, with ease. When these are used appropriately, it can provide a wealth of information and resources to supplement classroom learning and aid personal development. Durston House recognises that the use of the internet and electronic devices can also be dangerous, and can enable some pupils to use them with negative motives, especially when they are used without supervision.

In this policy, the internet resources are defined as any e-mail, chat room, the World Wide Web, instant messaging, social networking, cloud storage, **the Virtual Learning Environment** and other forms of communication accessed via the internet. The digital technology comprises electronic devices such as mobile phones, smart phones, tablets, laptops, ebook readers and other internet-connected devices.

Pupils and parents are asked to sign an agreement acknowledging their acceptance of this policy and its accompanying guidelines, and to declare their determination to safeguard all pupils.

Role of Pupils

The pupils at Durston House are at the forefront of a fast-developing, technological world. They are its future guardians, and their skills and understanding of it should be of benefit to all in the communities to which they belong. The careful development of their use of the internet and electronic devices is paramount for all into whose care the pupils are entrusted. Each pupil is asked to use the internet and electronic devices, at school and at home, in a manner that is worthy of him, his education, and the ethos of the Durston House community. He is asked to read, consider and put into practice the guidelines which are attached to this policy, and sign the accompanying policy agreement, acknowledging his acceptance of them.

Role of Parents

The parents of all pupils at Durston House are a vital part of the school community, stakeholders alongside the pupils, the staff and friends of the school. In this way, it is important that parents, too, have a part to play in safeguarding the development of their sons, through the responsible and appropriate use, at home, of the internet and electronic devices. Adherence, at home, to the guidelines attached to this policy, will support the work of the school in training pupils to use the internet and electronic devices positively and wisely, and with increasing discernment. Essential tasks of Durston House parents are to be knowledgeable about what the internet can offer, have an awareness of what electronic devices their sons are using and what their sons are doing on the internet at home, and in the homes of others, and to monitor them carefully. They are asked to read the policy and the guidelines, and also sign the policy agreement, not just to signal tacit agreement to it, but also as support to their sons and the wider school community.

Using the Internet and Digital Technology at School

With access to computers and people all over the world comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value. Durston House has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial material, or that which is of little educational benefit. Access to the internet is restricted to times when supervision by staff is possible.

The control and maintenance of the school's computer network is entrusted to the Head of Communications (the System Administrator), who may be supported by the ICT Assistant or the Head of ICT. Durston House assumes no liability for any direct or indirect damages arising from the user's connection to the internet. The school is not responsible for the accuracy of information found on the internet and only facilitates the accessing and dissemination of information through its systems. Users are solely responsible for any material that they access and disseminate through the internet. The guidelines attached are expected to be followed.

Using the Internet and Digital Technology Outside School

Whilst the school has no control over the use of the internet and digital technology outside school hours, the effects of their use can easily be translated to its daily life, either positively or negatively, having an impact on the happiness and security of pupils. Where the effect is negative, Durston House must act, in consort with parents, so that the right of each pupil, to be educated in a safe environment, is upheld.

Simple, positive communication between friends about school work or match arrangements, prep or after-school commitments, for example, can help pupils be better organised and prepared, content and secure in what they are doing, allowing for the maximum benefit of school life to be reaped.

Unfortunately, there are times when pupils might choose to use digital technology, through the internet, to taunt or tease, to be abusive, or to encourage third parties to do the same. Such

negative communication causes hurt and stirs conflicts in school. This is unacceptable and the school does not tolerate such behaviour. In such instances, the full weight of the school's Sanctions system (see **Rewards and Sanctions Policy**) will come into play, if necessary, resulting in exclusion from Durston House.

Guidelines

Guidelines are in place to help all pupils, parents and staff benefit from a positive, ethical and legal use of the internet and digital technology. Their beneficial use, and the smooth operation of the school network, rely on the proper conduct of all. Users, both adult and pupil, are asked to adhere to the guidelines which apply, whether connected to a Durston House network or not.

Failure to Comply with the Guidelines

If a pupil does not adhere to these guidelines, and school life is affected in any way, appropriate Sanctions (see **Rewards and Sanctions Policy**) will be applied; his account at school may be terminated. It is hoped that similar action will be taken at home. The System Administrator, in consultation with SMT, will deem when guidelines have not been followed. Parents will be informed.

Promoting Online Safety

Online safety is highlighted, each year, in ICT and PSHME lessons. Boys are given the opportunity to learn about the dangers they face when using the internet or digital technology, and to share their experiences. Internet Safety Workshops are held biennially for boys, as they move from Year 3 to Year 5, and subsequently, to Year 7. A similar workshop for parents is held on the same day, to support them in their monitoring of their sons' online use outside school hours. Also, every second year, this policy and its accompanying pupil guidelines are sent to parents, in all parts of the school (excluding Reception), so that they can discuss them with their sons and, then, for each to sign an agreement that they accept these guidelines.

Monitoring and Filtering

It is essential that the school, and parents at home, monitor any internet activity. Durston House currently uses filtering software to limit access to sites on the internet and to monitor internet traffic. It is hoped parents employ similar means of filtering, or at least have ways of monitoring their sons' use of the internet and digital technology.

If the school should discover activities which do not comply with applicable law or policy, records retrieved may be used to document the wrongful content in accordance with due process. It is important to note that any electronic communication via the internet is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to, or in support of, illegal activities may be reported to the appropriate external authority.

Reporting Issues and Concerns

Boys or parents who have concerns about another boy's use of the internet and/or digital technology, should follow the process for reporting them to the school, found in the Durston House Anti-Bullying Policy.

Evaluation of this Policy

This policy will be evaluated biennially by the school, amended where necessary and approved by SMT.

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