



Children, Computing and E-Safety

Information for Parents and carers

The purpose of this guide



Children today are increasingly using computers in schools and at home.

This guide explains:

- How your children are using computers in school.
- How using computers at home can help children learn.
- How children can use the Internet safely at home.
- Where to access further information.

How your child uses computers at school

Word Processing – to write stories, poems or letters

Databases – to record information, e.g. minibeasts

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

Internet and CD-roms – to find information

Email – to contact children and teachers in another school

Digital Cameras – to record what they have done in class or on a visit

Electronic Sensors – to record changes in light, sound and temperature

Controllable Robots – to give instructions and make something happen

Simulations – to explore real and imaginary situations

Website Publishing – to present ideas over the internet

Video Conferencing – to share ideas or ask and expert.

How you can help your child at home

Computing is not just about using a computer. It also includes the use of controllable toys, digital cameras and everyday equipment such as I Pads and DVD Players.

- Writing a letter to a relative
- Sending an email to a friend
- Drawing a picture on screen
- Using the internet to research a class topic
- Planning a route with a controllable toy
- Using interactive games.

A selection of companies offer school software for use at home.

Benefits of using computers at home

How we know that using computers 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, computing can improve children's achievement
- Using computers at home and at school develops skills for life
- Children enjoy using computers
- Using computers provides access to a wider and more flexible range of learning materials.

How learning at home with computers benefits children

Home use of computers by children:

- Improves their computer skills
- Offer them choice in what they learn and how they learn it
- Supports homework and revision
- Can improve the presentation of their work
- Connects learning at school with learning at home
- Makes learning more fun.

All this can lead to better performance at school and an improved standard of work.

For further information go to: Parents Carer: www.parentscentre.gov.uk/usingcomputersandtheinternet

From the menu choose either: Links by topic or Links by age

Using the Internet safely at home

Whilst many Internet Service Providers offer filtering systems and tools to help you safeguard your child at home, it remains surprisingly easy for children to access inappropriate material including unsuitable text, pictures and movies. Parents are advised to set the security levels within Internet Explorer or other browsers with this in mind. Locating the computer in a family area where possible, not in a bedroom will enable you to supervise your son/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 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 of keeping safe online and making sure they understand their importance.

Simple rules for keeping your child safe

To keep your child safe they should:

- Ask permission before using the internet and discuss what websites they are using
- Only use websites you have chosen together or a child friendly search engine
- Only email people they know, (why not consider setting up an address book)?
- Ask permission before opening an email sent by someone they don't know
- Not use their real name when using games or websites on the internet, (create a nick name)
- Never give any personal information about themselves, friends or family online including home address, phone or mobile number
- Never arrange to meet someone they have 'met' on the internet without talking to an adult first; always take an adult and meet in a public place
- Never tell someone where they go to school or post any pictures of themselves in school uniform
- Only use a webcam with people they know
- Tell you immediately if they see anything they are unhappy with.

Using these rules

Go through these rules with your child and pin them up near to the computer. It is also a good idea to regularly check the internet sites your child is visiting e.g. by clicking on History and Favourites. Please ensure your child 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 internet is concerned.

For further information go to: CEOP www.ceop.gov.uk

Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Childnet: www.childnet-int.org

Some useful websites

When searching the internet we recommend you use one of the following child friendly search engines:

Ask Jeeves for kids: www.askkids.com

Yahoo! Kids: www.kids.yahoo.com

CBBC search: www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/search

Kidsclick: www.kidsclick.org

National Education Network: www.nen.gov.uk/tandl