FURNESS VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

INTERNET ACCESS POLICY

This policy outlines our purpose in providing e-mail facilities and access to the Internet at Furness Vale Primary School and explains how school is seeking to avoid the potential problems to which unrestricted Internet access could give rise. It should be read in conjunction with the **"Guidelines on the use of the Internet and Electronic Mail by Staff"** (attached).

Internet access in school

Furness Vale School is committed to providing Internet & e-mail facilities to employees where an educational need is established and to promoting employee awareness of the benefits and potential dangers involved.

Providing access to the Internet in school will raise educational standards and support the professional work of staff.

Teachers and pupils will have access to web sites world-wide (including museums and art galleries) offering educational resources, news and current events. There will be opportunities for discussion with experts in many fields and to communicate and exchange information with students and others worldwide.

In addition, staff will have the opportunity to access educational materials and good curriculum practice, to communicate with the advisory and support services, professional associations and colleagues; exchange curriculum and administration data with the LEA and DfES; receive up-to-date information and participate in government initiatives such as NGfL and the Virtual Teacher Centre.

In the longer term the Internet may also be used to enhance the school's management information and business administration systems.

Staff, including supply staff, will not be expected to take charge of an Internet activity without training. Staff should be given opportunities to discuss the issues and develop good teaching strategies. All staff (including teachers, supply staff and classroom assistants) and any other adults involved in supervising children accessing the internet, will be provided with the School Internet Access Policy, and will have its importance explained to them.

Parents' attention will be drawn to the Policy by letter in the first instance and, thereafter, in our school prospectus. Our school Internet Access Policy will be available for parents and others to read on demand.

Ensuring Internet access is appropriate and safe

The Internet is a relatively new communications medium and is freely available to any person wishing to send e-mail or publish a web site. In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available on the Internet is unsuitable for pupils. Pupils in school are unlikely to see inappropriate content in books due to selection by publisher and teacher and the school will take every practical measure to ensure that children do not encounter upsetting, offensive or otherwise inappropriate material on the Internet. The following key measures have been adopted to help ensure that our pupils are not exposed to unsuitable material:

- our internet access is purchased from Derbyshire County Council which provides a service designed for pupils including a filtering system intended to prevent access to material inappropriate for children;
- children using the internet will normally be working in the classroom, during lesson time and will be supervised by an adult (usually the class teacher) at all times;
- staff will check that the sites pre-selected for pupil use are appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils;
- staff will be particularly vigilant when pupils are undertaking their own search and will check that the children are following the agreed search plan;
- pupils will be taught to use e-mail and the internet responsibly in order to reduce the risk to themselves and others;
- our Rules for Responsible Internet Use will be posted near computer systems.
- the ICT co-ordinator will monitor the effectiveness of internet access strategies;
- the ICT co-ordinator will ensure that occasional checks are made on files to monitor compliance with the school's Internet Access Policy;
- the Headteacher will ensure that the policy is implemented effectively;

- methods to quantify and minimise the risk of pupils being exposed to inappropriate material will be reviewed in consultation with colleagues from other schools and advice from the LEA, our Internet Service Provider and the DfEE.

It is the experience of other schools that the above measures have been highly effective. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of information available via the Internet, it is not possible to guarantee that particular types of material will never appear on a computer screen. *Neither the school nor Derbyshire County Council can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences thereof.*

A most important element of our Rules of Responsible Internet Use is that pupils will be taught to tell a teacher **immediately** if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.

If there is an incident in which a pupil is exposed to offensive or upsetting material the school will wish to respond to the situation quickly and on a number of levels. Responsibility for handling incidents involving children will be taken by the ICT Co-ordinator and the Child Protection Officer in consultation with the Head Teacher and the pupil's class teacher. All the teaching staff will be made aware of the incident at a Staff Meeting if appropriate.

- If one or more pupils discover (view) inappropriate material our first priority will be to give them appropriate support. The pupil's parents/carers will be informed and given an explanation of the course of action the school has taken. The school aims to work with parents/carers and pupils to resolve any issue.
- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites the ICT co-ordinator will be informed. The ICT co-ordinator will report the URL (address) and content to the Internet Service Provider and the LEA; if it is thought that the material is illegal, after consultation with the ISP and LEA, the site will be referred to the Internet Watch Foundation and the police.

Pupils are expected to play their part in reducing the risk of viewing inappropriate material by obeying the Rules of Responsible Internet Use which have been designed to help protect them from exposure to Internet sites carrying offensive material. If pupils abuse the privileges of access to the Internet or use of e-mail facilities by failing to follow the rules they have been taught or failing to follow the agreed search plan when given the privilege of undertaking their own Internet search, then sanctions consistent with our School Behaviour Policy will be applied. This may involve informing the parents/carers. Teachers may also consider whether access to the Internet may be denied for a period.

Maintaining the security of the school ICT network

We are aware that connection to the Internet significantly increases the risk that a computer or a computer network may be infected by a virus or accessed by unauthorised persons.

The ICT co-ordinator will up-date virus protection regularly, will keep up-to-date with ICT news developments and work with the LEA and Internet Service Provider to ensure system security strategies to protect the integrity of the network are reviewed regularly and improved as and when necessary.

Using the Internet to enhance learning

Pupils will learn how to use a web browser. Older pupils will be taught to use suitable web search engines. Staff and pupils will begin to use the Internet to find and evaluate information. Access to the Internet will become a planned part of the curriculum that will enrich and extend learning activities and will be integrated into the class schemes of work.

As in other areas of their work, we recognise that pupils learn most effectively when they are given clear objectives for Internet use.

Different ways of accessing information from the Internet will be used depending upon the nature of the material being accessed and the age of the pupils:

- access to the internet may be by teacher (or sometimes other-adult) demonstration;
- pupils may access teacher-prepared materials, rather than the open internet;
- pupils may be given a suitable web page or a single web site to access;
- pupils may be provided with lists of relevant and suitable web sites which they may access;
- older, more experienced, pupils may be allowed to undertake their own internet search having agreed a search plan with their teacher; pupils will be expected to observe the Rules of Responsible Internet Use and will be informed that checks can and will be made on files held on the system and the sites they access.

Pupils accessing the Internet will be supervised by an adult, normally their teacher, at all times. They will only be allowed to use the Internet once they have been taught the Rules of Responsible Internet Use and the reasons for these rules. Teachers will endeavour to ensure that these rules remain uppermost in the children's minds as they monitor the children using the Internet.

Using information from the Internet

We believe that, in order to use information from the Internet effectively, it is important for pupils to develop an understanding of the nature of the Internet and the information available on it. In particular, they should know that, unlike the school library for example, most of the information on the Internet is intended for an adult audience, much of the information on the Internet is not properly audited/edited and most of it is copyright.

- pupils will be taught to expect a wider range of content, both in level and in audience, than is found in the school library or on TV;
- teachers will ensure that pupils are aware of the need to validate information whenever possible before accepting it as true, and understand that this is even more important when considering information from the internet (as a non-moderated medium);
- when copying materials from the Web, pupils will be taught to observe copyright;
- pupils will be made aware that the writer of an e-mail or the author of a web page may not be the person claimed.

Using e-mail

Pupils will learn how to use an e-mail application and be taught e-mail conventions. Staff and pupils will begin to use e-mail to communicate with others, to request information and to share information.

It is important that communications with persons and organisations are properly managed to ensure appropriate educational use and that the good name of the school is maintained. Therefore:

- pupils will only be allowed to use e-mail once they have been taught the Rules of Responsible Internet Use and the reasons for these rules.
- teachers will endeavour to ensure that these rules remain uppermost in the children's minds as they monitor children using e-mail;
- pupils may send e-mail as part of planned lessons but will not be given individual e-mail accounts at present;
- in-coming e-mail to pupils will not be regarded as private;
- children will have the e-mail messages they compose checked by a member of staff before sending them;
- the forwarding of chain letters will not be permitted;
- pupils will not be permitted to use e-mail at school to arrange to meet someone outside school hours.

Furness Vale Primary School web site

Our school web site is intended to:

- provide accurate, up-to-date information about our school;
- enable pupils to publish work to a high standard, for a very wide audience including pupils, parents, staff, governors, members of the local community and others;
- celebrate good work;
- provide pupils with the opportunity to publish their work on the internet;
- promote the school.

In the future it may be used to publish resources for projects or homework.

All classes may provide work for publication on the school web site. Class teachers will be responsible for ensuring that the content of the pupils' work is accurate and the quality of presentation is maintained. All material must be the author's own work, crediting other work included and stating clearly that author's identity and/or status. The ICT co-ordinator is responsible for up-loading pages to the school web site, ensuring that the links work and are up-to-date, and that the site meets the requirements of the site host.

The point of contact on the web site will be the school address, telephone number and e-mail address. We do not publish pupils' full names or photographs that identify individuals on our web pages. Home information or individual e-mail

identities will not be published. Staff will be identified by their title and surname unless they request otherwise. Permission will be sought from other individuals before they are referred to by name on any pages we publish on our web site.

School website address*:   www.*furnessvale*.uk.org*

Internet access and home/school links

Parents will be informed in our school prospectus that pupils are provided with supervised Internet access as part of their lessons. We will keep parents in touch with future ICT developments by letter and newsletter.

Internet use in pupils' homes is rapidly increasing and some parents may be grateful for any advice/guidance that school can offer – especially with regard to safe access for children. The ICT co-ordinator is willing to offer advice and suggest alternative sources of advice on the understanding that neither he, the school nor the LEA can be held responsible for the consequences of such advice. Further:

- school guidelines on issues such as safe internet use will be made available to parents together with printed information and internet sites providing information for parents about safe access for children;
- the ICT co-ordinator will maintain a stock of relevant leaflets from organisations such as BECTa, PIN, and NCH Action for Children;
- the ICT co-ordinator will offer demonstrations/practical ICT sessions for parents during 2003 to inform parents and encourage a partnership approach;
- in the future it is possible that suitable educational and leisure activities that make responsible use of the Internet will be developed with parents.

As noted above, it is not possible to be certain of the originator of an e-mail message, and for this reason the school is unable to accept an e-mail as parental authorisation of a pupil absence.

Date of adoption: _____   Date of previous review(s): _____

Date of review: _____

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Furness Vale Primary School

Rules for Responsible Internet Use

The school has installed computers with Internet access to help our learning. These rules will help **keep us safe and help us be fair to others.**

Using the computers:

- **I will only access the computer system with the login and password I have been given;**
- **I will not access other people's files;**
- **I will not bring in floppy disks or CDs from outside school and try to use them on the school computers.**

Using the Internet:

- **I will ask permission from a teacher before using the internet;**
- **I will report any unpleasant material to my teacher immediately because this will help protect other pupils and myself;**
- **I understand that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the internet sites I visit;**
- **I will not complete and send forms without permission from my teacher;**
- **I will not give my full name, my home address or telephone number when completing forms.**

Using e-mail:

- **I will ask permission from a teacher before checking the e-mail;**
- **I will immediately report any unpleasant messages sent to me because this would help protect other pupils and myself;**
- **I understand that e-mail messages I receive or send may be read by others;**
- **The messages I send will be polite and responsible;**
- **I will only e-mail people I know, or my teacher has approved;**
- **I will only send an e-mail when it has been checked by a teacher;**
- **I will not give my full name, my home address or telephone number;**
- **I will not use e-mail to arrange to meet someone outside school hours.**

Dear Parents/Carers,

Use of the Internet and E-mail

As you may know, it is government policy to connect all schools to the Internet. I am writing to inform you that each classroom in our school has at least one computer installed which will allow the children to have supervised access to the Internet.

Pupils will be able to exchange electronic mail with partner schools and search for information from museums, libraries, news providers and suitable web sites related to their lessons.

There have been widely publicised concerns about pupils having access to undesirable materials when they use the Internet. We believe that the educational advantages of enabling the children supervised access the Internet greatly outweigh the likely problems, if appropriate safeguards are put in place. We have purchased our Internet access from Derbyshire County Council, an educational supplier which operates a filtering system to block access to inappropriate materials. Our computer screens will be in public view and, as stated above, Internet access will be supervised.

The school has prepared a detailed Internet Access Policy which is intended to help us make the most of the opportunities that the Internet offers whilst minimising the possible risks. It includes a set of Rules for Responsible Internet Use that we will be teaching the children and I attach a copy of these.

We regret that, because it is not possible to be certain of the originator of an e-mail message, the school is unable to accept an e-mail as parental authorisation of a pupil absence.

Should you wish to read our school Internet Access Policy or to discuss any aspect of Internet use please telephone me to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

ICT Co-ordinator