



Information for Parents on E-safety and ICT at School and in the Home

About this leaflet

Children today are increasingly using ICT at school and at home. When we talk about ICT however, it is not just using computers and the internet, but includes a huge range of devices, such as digital cameras, video cameras, remote control devices, DS games, mobile phones, calculators and more. This leaflet tries to explain:

- how children use ICT in school;
- how you can help your child use ICT at home;
- internet safety;
- where to get more information.

What children do in school

ICT in school is taught as a separate subject but is also embedded in all other subjects, including literacy and maths, and used when appropriate to research or extend learning through interactive means. In ICT lessons children learn to use a wide range of programmes and devices, including:

- word processing;
- controlling on-screen devices or floor robots by giving them instructions;
- databases to record information;
- spreadsheets to create tables, charts and graphs;
- multimedia presentations to present text, pictures and sound;
- desktop publishing to design posters, leaflet and cards;
- drawing programmes to create pictures and designs;
- researching on the internet;
- making judgements about the reliability and bias of information found on the internet;
- data loggers that collect data using electronic sensors to record changes in light, sound and temperature;
- exploring computer simulations of real and imaginary situations;
- using e-mail;
- taking photos or video.
- Animation and video editing

Why using ICT at home helps

Using and developing ICT skills at home can help by:

- improving children's general ICT skills through regular practice;
- offering a choice about what they learn and how they learn it, which can be greatly empowering;
- supporting homework by presenting information to them in different ways;
- improving the presentation of their work;
- connecting learning at school with everyday tasks at home.

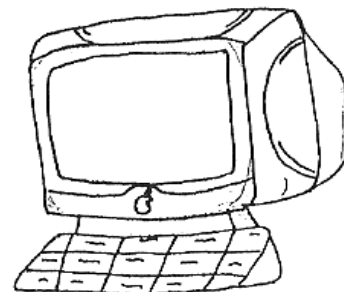
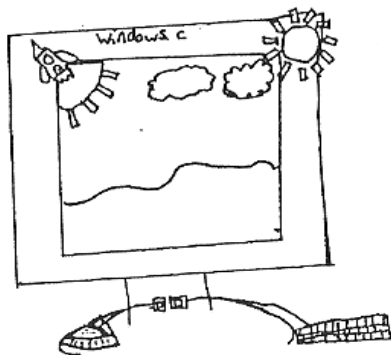
How you can help your child with ICT at home

You can help your child develop their ICT skills at home in a number of ways, some possibilities are suggested below:

(Some will need more supervision than others, but all can be done at a level appropriate to any age range.)

- practising and improving accuracy when moving the mouse;
- using various tools to draw an original picture, or to copy an existing picture;
- use the internet to research a topic of interest or to practise skills for a school subject;
- use a mobile phone to take photos, record sounds and send messages;
- use interactive, educational games to solve problems and puzzles and find solutions;
- use a DVD player, digital camera, video camera and editing photos and movies;
- plan routes around obstacles with a controllable toy, such as a remote control car;
- send e-mails to friends or family, including replies and attachments;
- writing a letter (thank you / invites etc) to a relative or friend using a word processor.

A selection of companies offer school software for use at home, and there are many websites that can be accessed too.



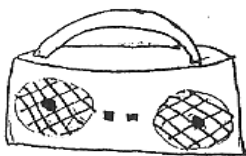
Internet safety at home

This is often a huge worry for parents but there are many things that can be put in place to help keep children safe online. However, supervision and keeping an open dialogue with your child about what they are doing is the most important.

Many internet providers offer systems to help you keep your child safe at home, but it can still be too easy for children to stray onto inappropriate material, whether text or images. Set the security levels on your chosen internet browser with this in mind using 'Internet Options' in the 'Tools' section of the tool bar. Putting the computer in a family area and not in a bedroom will help you monitor what your child is doing when they use the internet. Another idea is to create a 'favourites' list together made up of websites you are happy for them to go on. Then they can easily accessed those sites without having to search or type in an address.

One of the most common concerns raised by parents today is social networking sites e.g. Facebook, Bebo, MySpace etc, as well as instant messaging sites such as MSN. In each case please check the appropriate websites terms and conditions as many are not designed for use by children and have a minimum age of about 13. Club Penguin and Moshi Monsters are sites that are specially designed for children to use. The 'ThinkUknow' website has some good advice for parents on this issue and tells you what you need to know about such sites. A further issue raised by children on previous e-safety days was online gaming, where they were using various gaming consoles to play, via the internet, with people they didn't know. Again it is suggested that anything that has internet accessibility is put in a family area of the house where it can be supervised.

The internet can be an amazing resource, fun and informative. Don't stop your child from using the information and games available on it, but do set down simple rules for keeping them safe, make sure they understand them and know why they are necessary.



Some simple SMART rules for children

S - Safe

Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when you're chatting or posting online. Personal information includes your e-mail address, phone number, school address, home address and password.

M - Meeting

Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present. Remember online friends are still strangers even if you have been talking to them for a long time.

A - Accepting

Accepting e-mails, instant messages or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems—they may contain viruses or nasty messages!

R - Reliable

Someone online might lie about who they are and information on the internet may not be true. Always check information with other websites, books or someone who knows. If you like chatting online it's best to only chat to your real world friends and family.

T - Tell

Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online or by phone.

Rules are from www.kidsmart.org.uk

Additional rules you might want to discuss:

- only use websites I have agreed with an adult
- only use a child friendly search engine
- use a nick-name when using games on the internet rather than my real name

Go through these rules with your child regularly and check the internet sites your child is visiting by clicking on 'history' or 'favourites'. Please explain to your child that these rules are there because you want to keep them safe rather than take the internet away from them.

Useful websites on e-safety

Further information for both adults and children can be found here:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk: the main UK Government website with advice for parents on how to keep children safe online. This website also includes an age specific children's section which is well worth looking at and fun!

www.ceop.police.uk: the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) is the Government body dedicated to eradicating abuse of children. Concerns about inappropriate contacts between a child and an adult, including online, can be reported directly to CEOP.

www.childnet-int.org: has information for parents which is written in a variety of different languages.

www.chatdanger.com: gives real life stories and advice on a range of online issues, including internet games.

A number of specialist websites contain general advice that may be of help to parents e.g. www.nspcc.org.uk, www.nch.org.uk, www.barnardos.org.uk, and www.bullying.co.uk.

Other sites can offer parents support on broader issues. These include www.parentlineplus.org.uk and www.parents.org.uk.

www.getnetwise.org: lists over 140 tools to make the internet safer.

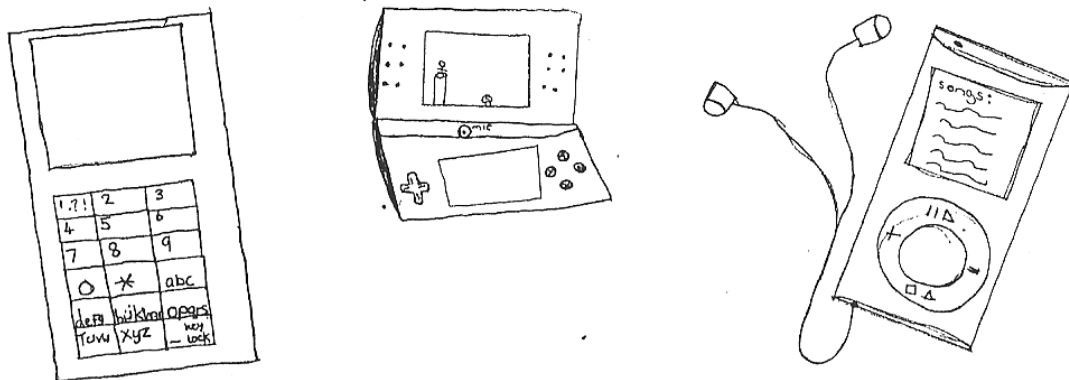
Other useful websites

When searching the Internet we recommend you use a child friendly search engine, such as:

www.askkids.com
www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/find

www.kids.yahoo.com
www.bbc.co.uk/CBeebies

www.dibdabdo.com



There is also more information available on the school website www.abhps.com

