



E-Safety Policy

This policy relates to all members of the Regent community (including learners, staff, visitors and contractors) who have access to, and are users of ICT systems and resources both in and out of learning venues where actions relate to school set activities or use of school online systems.

Context:

To prepare learners for the needs of today and their future working lives where the curriculum and their personal goals require them to learn how to locate, retrieve and exchange information using a variety of technologies. Computer skills are vital to access employment and life-long learning as ICT is now seen as an essential skill for life. However, technologies present risks to vulnerable groups as well as benefits. Internet use for work, home, social and leisure activities is expanding across all sectors of society. This brings our staff and learners into contact with a wide variety influences some of which may be unsuitable.

These new technologies are enhancing communication and the sharing of information, which inevitably challenge the definitions and boundaries of the school environment. Current and emerging technologies in school and more importantly, in many cases outside the school by learners include:

Internet websites

Instant messaging

Social networking sites

Emails

Blogs

Podcasting

Video broadcasting sites

Chat rooms

Gaming and gambling sites

Music download sites

Mobile phones with camera and video functionality

Digital cameras

Smart phones, tablets and computers with e-mail and web applications

All of these have potential to help raise standards of teaching and learning, but may equally present challenges to both learners and tutors in terms of keeping themselves safe. These challenges include:

Exposure to inappropriate material

Cyber-bullying via websites, social media, mobile phones or other technologies

Identity theft or invasion of privacy

Downloading copyrighted materials

Exposure to inappropriate advertising online gambling and financial scams

Safeguarding issues such as grooming (children or vulnerable adults)

Other illegal activities

At Regent we seek to maximise the educational benefit that can be obtained by exploiting the use of ICT, whilst at the same time minimising any associated risks. By making clear to learners, staff, contractors etc. what the school expectations are regarding the use of ICT, we aim to protect our learners and staff from harm, as far as reasonably practicable. The precise nature of the risks faced by users will change over time as technologies, fads and fashions change but there are general principles of behaviour and the code of conduct that apply to all situations e.g.: all users need to know what to do if they come across inappropriate material, and that staff members should not give out their personal information to learners such as their personal email address or allow access to their personal social networking site accounts etc. We must also communicate to our students on courses that they should not give out their personal information such as telephone numbers, addresses etc. to strangers or publish this information on social networking sites.

A balance needs to be struck between educating staff and learners to take a reasonable approach towards the use of regulation and technical solutions. We must recognise that there are no totally effective solutions to moderate and control the internet, so this policy incorporates both approaches.

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff

All teaching and non-teaching staff (including suppliers and contractors) are responsible for supporting the safe behaviour throughout the school and following e-safety procedures. All school staff should be familiar with the E-safety and Acceptable use of ICT policy (AUP) as well as their relevance to the code of conduct and safeguarding policies, which are available on the school website. A copy of this policy will also be included in the staff handbook.

- All staff should participate in any e-safety training and awareness raising sessions
- Act in accordance with the AUP and e-safety policy
- Staff should report any suspicion of misuse to the designated persons or line manager
- Staff should refrain from making negative comments about learners or Regent on any blogs or social networking sites. Negative comments such as these could be considered as gross misconduct as it potentially affects the reputation of the school and/or lowers morale.
- Staff should help educate learners in keeping safe especially with vulnerable groups. Whilst regulation and technical solutions (such as filtering systems) are important, they must be balanced with educating learners to take a responsible approach. The education of learners in e-safety is an essential part of using technology in classes.
- Staff should act as a good role model in their own use of ICT.
- Where Internet use is pre-planned in sessions or enrichment activities, learners should be directed to sites which are appropriate for their use and procedures should be followed for reporting any unsuitable material that is found on Internet searches. Where practicable staff should pre-check sites and any possible searches.
- Where learners are able to freely search the Internet such as in our common rooms staff should be vigilant in monitoring the content of websites in case there is any unsuitable material.

- Staff should be aware of the potential for cyber-bullying in their sessions where malicious messages e.g. through the use of forums and social networking sites, or via internal class emails or text messages on mobile phones etc, which can cause hurt or distress.
- Learners should be taught to be critically aware of the materials/content they can access online and be guided to validate the accuracy of information.
- Learners are educated to of the need to acknowledge the sources of any information used and to respect copyright when using material accessed on the Internet
- Staff are required to use the BCC address label when sending emails from the company teacher email accounts to groups of students to prevent circulation of email addresses.

Learners

The provision of ICT resources and facilities are a privilege, not a right. Learners are encouraged to access various technologies in lessons and in the completion of assignments and independent research, and are therefore expected to follow the school's AUP. They should fully participate in e-safety activities and report any suspected misuse to a member of staff. Learners are required to follow the guidelines of our e-safety policy which are summarized in the code of conduct.

Learners are expected to:

- behave in a safe and responsible manner;
- treat equipment with respect
- use USB/Flash memory key(s) only for educational purposes
- be polite and not use e-mail, social media or blogs etc to make negative comments, bully or insult others
- use the resources only for educational purposes

Learners are expected not to:

- eat or drink in the ICT suites
- have any inappropriate files (e.g. copyrighted or indecent material)
- attempt to circumvent or "hack" any systems.
- use inappropriate or unacceptable language;
- reveal their personal details or passwords;
- visit websites that are offensive in any way;
- use chat rooms or newsgroups;
- do anything that could damage the reputation of the school;
- download anything inappropriate or install any programs
- waste resources including Internet and printers

School Management

Each school management team takes e-safety very seriously and will ensure that policies and procedures are in line with best practice and the safeguarding agenda. In particular they will ensure that all staff receive suitable training and development to carry out their e-safety roles and sufficient resources are allocated to the task. Senior managers will follow the correct procedure in the event of a serious e-safety allegation being made against a member of staff and ensure that there is a robust system in place for monitoring e-safety. This includes making sure that the academic network infrastructure is safe and secure and that policies and procedures approved within this policy are implemented. Regular review of the issues will take place at the safeguarding working group meetings with feedback sessions scheduled to the senior management team meetings.

Responding to issues

It is important that any incidents are dealt with as soon as possible in a proportionate manner and that members of the school community are aware those incidents have been dealt with.

Any concerns around the misuse of ICT must follow the referral process within the safeguarding policy and procedure where there is a potential threat to another learner, vulnerable person or member of staff. Any suspected misuse must be reported to a member of staff and then an appropriate course of actions will be agreed.

Where it is suspected that any misuse might have taken place and dependent on the nature of misuse, the disciplinary procedure will be invoked. Where an allegation has been made against a student an investigation will take place by the Principal or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The outcome of the investigation will decide what the appropriate course of action will be and depending on the nature of the misuse the student could be suspended from classes till the investigation is complete. The student code of conduct procedure will be invoked should the allegation be found to be true and the sanction will depend on the seriousness of the misuse and whether it was accidental or deliberate, a first time offence, thoughtless or malicious e.g.: intended to cause harm to others. Sanctions could involve the student having ICT access removed for a period of time or in very serious cases, exclusion. Where there is a potential legal issue the Principal will decide on the need for involvement of outside agencies including the police, together with the designated persons and other members of the senior management team in line with our safeguarding and other policies.

Reviewed January 2020

To be reviewed January 2021