

ESAFETY POLICY FOR PUPILS

Keeping Yourself Safe Online

As you use technology more, it is essential that you know how to stay safe online.

Computers provide many opportunities, especially for communication, but you need to be aware of the risks.

Although the virtual world may seem separate from the real world, you are still responsible for your actions.

Use of Queen Margaret's School Computer Network

The network is the property of the school. Your files, the internet sites you visit and emails you send or receive through the network may be examined, especially if misconduct or inappropriate use is suspected.

Email

Although email is electronic, it is still a written form of communication and you must take care over the content. Think of it like a letter which is delivered instantly.

All emails can be saved by a recipient and forwarded to others. Once sent, they cannot be retrieved; they are out of your control. You must think carefully about what you write.

Every email should have good email etiquette: a greeting and closing statement should always be included (e.g. Dear X, Yours/Regards/Best Wishes). When you email members of staff, you should make sure your tone is formal, that you have checked your spelling and grammar and have removed any inappropriate signatures.

You are provided with your own email account. It is your responsibility to manage your mailbox and ensure it is not full, so that you can continually receive emails.

Chat Rooms and Instant Messaging (IM)

Chat rooms and instant messaging (such as MSN Messenger) allow you to have real-time conversations, with several people 'talking' (typing messages) at the same time.

There are a few important points to remember:

- Who are you really 'talking' to? Only chat with people you have met in real life.
- NEVER give out personal details or your private thoughts and feelings.
- Never feel pressured to join a conversation. Leave whenever you want to.
- Do not let the speed in which you can send messages reduce the care you take over what you say.

- Remember it may seem temporary but all conversations can be saved by any user involved.
- Think very carefully before you post a picture on the internet, and never post a picture of someone else without their permission.

For information on social networking, such as Facebook, please see the **eSafety Policy on Social Networking for Pupils**.

I Have A Problem Online, What Should I Do?

Cyberbullying is using computers or mobile phones to deliberately hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Just like real world bullying, you should tell someone: a member of staff, such as your housemistress, tutor, Head of Year or any other teacher. If possible save a copy of what has been sent or take a screenshot as evidence.

If you feel uncomfortable with a situation when you are online, you should tell someone as soon as possible. Things that make you feel uncomfortable could include someone saying something inappropriate; asking personal questions; asking you to upload photographs; or anything else that makes you feel uncomfortable. You should tell a member of staff as soon as possible.

The website www.thinkuknow.co.uk has been set up with support from the Government to provide advice and protection to young people online. If you experience something online which makes you feel uncomfortable, you can use the Report Abuse button on this website. This will then ask you to report what has happened and a member of social services or the police will contact you.



For more information, please also see the **Acceptable Usage Policy for Pupils**.

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Social Networking

Social networking (SN) includes websites such as Facebook. Their main purpose is to provide communication between people.

SN sites such as Facebook require their users to be at least 13 years old. Therefore only pupils aged 13 and above may have access to Facebook (or international equivalents) within Queen Margaret's School.

Below are guidelines you should follow when using social networking sites, however you must take responsibility for your own actions when online

Personal Details and Images

- NEVER give out personal information, either in your profile or in any messages you post. Never give out your home address, phone numbers or email addresses.
- Before posting any messages, consider what you are saying. Never feel pressured to give out information about yourself, either personal details or private thoughts and feelings.
- Think very carefully before posting any pictures. You are advised not to put pictures of yourself on the internet, especially embarrassing ones. Once you have posted them, you will never know who has a copy. Never post pictures of other people without their permission.
- Do not put anything in your profile that you would not tell a stranger on the street. Have a profile that you would be happy for your parents or the Headmaster to see.
- Remember that university admissions tutors and future employers are now looking at social networking sites as part of the selection process. Anything that has been deleted may still be cached in a search engine, company server or internet archive and cause embarrassment years later.

Privacy and Friends

- Make sure your profile is set to a high level of privacy. Help sheets are on the shared drive: S:\ICT lessons
- Do not make your friends list available to others; your friends may not be very happy if strangers can see them.
- Do not agree to be friends with people you have never met. You can never be sure who they really are.

Groups

- Think carefully before joining any groups, especially if your messages can be read by anybody. Some groups are global and others are private. Global groups can be seen by anyone and allow anyone to join. Private groups can only be joined with the permission of an administrator and posts can only be seen by members of that group.
- You should not join any groups which are offensive to an individual or a group of people (these break Facebook's own rules and you could be banned from using their site).
- You should not join any spoof or fake groups (such as for a school or a person) as these are potentially libellous and anyone involved risks prosecution.
- If you are not happy with a conversation or group, leave it. This avoids you being involved in any investigation and subsequent sanctions by Facebook or the school, if it is found to be in breach of their rules.
- You are advised not to set up any groups. As the administrator of a group, you can be held responsible for other people's posts and may come into contact with unwelcome and unreasonable people and viewpoints.

Remember that your profile may still be seen by others, even with privacy settings turned on, through a friend network (e.g. you are friends with Tanya; Tanya is friends with Brian; therefore Brian can see your profile).

Remember anything you put online, even if you later remove it, might already have been copied by someone else. Any messages you post or pictures you upload are no longer your property.

For more information, please also see the **Acceptable Usage Policy for Pupils** and the **eSafety Policy for Pupils**.

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