

Welcome to a 'special' edition of parent post which focuses on how the use of computer technology is revolutionising teaching and learning at school and home.



Did you know....

- The school now has over 400 desktop and laptop computers available to students and staff
- There are five fully equipped ICT suites in the school. A further three locations contain between 8 and 20 computers. Additionally there are 3 sets of student laptops
- All classrooms now have a powerful desktop computer on every teacher's desk
- Students are registered electronically every single lesson
- Over 30 classrooms have a ceiling mounted digital projector connected to the teacher computer used for showing DVD's, internet pages, media clips and, of course, worksheets and presentations



PARENT POST ICT SPECIAL

The Internet



The school buys its internet connection from an educational provider. This means only content which is considered acceptable in schools and colleges can be viewed; students generally have access to far less content at school than at home. However, no system is perfect, so we rely on students, with your support at home, to be sensible. They should abide by the systems and internet protocol that is in all student planners.

E-mail

Every student (Year 7 from this term) has a school e-mail address. Students can check their school e-mail from any internet enabled computer in the world! Top Tips are:

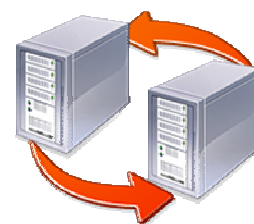
- 1 It is quite acceptable for students to set up their school e-mail to their preferred e-mail (hotmail, yahoo etc). However, if they reply to an e-mail that has been forwarded the reply will come from their 'personal' address
- 2 Any IT teacher or member of library staff can re-set forgotten passwords
- 3 The e-mail system also includes 50Mb of space on the Derbyshire CC servers. Useful for extra storage and for moving work from school to home
- 4 Check the 'Useful links for students' on the school website for a full information sheet



Easylink

Did you know that if you have an Internet enabled computer at home your son/daughter can access their school work from home? Top Tips are:

- Check the 'Useful links for students' on the school website for a full information sheet
- File type matters! The school uses Microsoft Office XP and Serif applications as standard. If you do not have compatible applications at home files may not open
- The same applies if you use software at home that we do not have at school!
- Always keep a copy of work amended or completed at home on the home computer



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Internet/Mobile phone safety

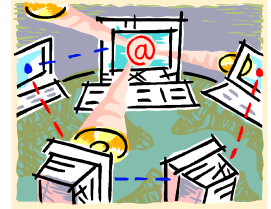


For parents this can be an issue. The school is developing work on internet safety through PSHCE and IT lessons. Often the young people in the house know more than the adults about computer, gaming and mobile phone technology. Try <http://www.kidsmart.org.uk/> for sensible advice. Some of the stories on the 'Over 11' section make for sober reading.

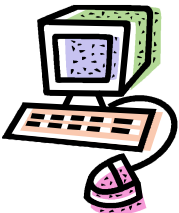
What next?

Technology doesn't stand still so neither is the school! Each teaching team now has an 'IT Champion', a teacher with an acknowledged interest and possibly expertise in some area of IT education. Some of the new initiatives students can expect to see are:

- Class voting pads, electronic devices that allow students to answer questions electronically as a class
- Digital video editing, initially footage from the recent Year 7 trip to Kingswood
- Greater use of mobile devices in class. Some students, closely supervised, are already using their own mobile phones to download photographs to support class work
- A ceiling mounted projector in every classroom, by April 2008



Microsoft Office 2007 – nice but.....



If your family has a new computer with Office 2007 used for school work please be wary when saving the files if they are to be used on the school network. Microsoft have changed the file format completely so an Office 2007 Word, Excel or PPT file will NOT open in earlier versions of Office. The school will be loading a converter onto the network but it is easier to save the file as an earlier version.....

Did you know:

The school had its own 'blog' during the Kingswood trip updated by a Year 7 students. Construction students regularly take photographs of their own work with their mobile phones and Bluetooth the results to their teacher's laptop. This saves time and evidence is available at once. In IT and Maths lessons www.teach-ict.com and www.mymaths.com have been integrated into schemes of work as they provide such powerful learning tools for individual and group work. Each student has 50Mb of storage on the school network, that is the equivalent of (roughly) 50,000,000 letters of the alphabet all strung together.

Blog

Electronic Library Catalogue



The library catalogue is now available on the school website. This means you can search for books and other information available in the school library and also find out which books a student has on loan.

Anyone can use the catalogue by visiting the school website and clicking on the link, but to find out what books are on loan students will need a user number and pin (available from the library) to be able to view their record.

The new school website will be launched in the near future. This should both improve the visual appearance of the site and make the information on the site easier to find.

English and IT

Like other departments, English is using more and more ICT, both in preparing lessons and as part of teaching. Four data projectors are used frequently, sometimes for showing DVD based material, such as film clips, or for sharing work and whole class writing. They have also started to use more innovative products, such as digital voice recorders and wireless keyboards. These allow students to share their work more easily. The department has already produced short video podcasts showcasing the wide range of student talent from Poetry Café, the Year 7 Newspaper Day and poetry work in nearby primary schools. Hopefully the use of this technology will spread across the department as a whole.

