

E-safety and Security at Penryn College

Our number one priority is the safety and security of the children in our care. We live in an age where there has never been a greater level of electronic access to so many rich and varied resources, with many types of device available to simplify communications. When it comes to managing the Information Technology systems of a large secondary school, we must strike a balance between accessibility of information and the protection of our young people; as well as ensuring that we educate our students to behave safely when on-line. We must also have a full understanding of the potential risks inherent in the use of ICT as well as the tremendous benefits.

At Penryn College we have a set of regularly reviewed policies regarding the use of the facilities and resources. These cover both Student and Staff usage, and external Community access. These include Acceptable Use Policies which are signed either physically or electronically by all end users, and are strictly worded to ensure all users comply with current Government and County Council legislation and guidance.

E-mail and User accounts can be monitored by Network Management staff on suspicion of a breach of the policies. There are also clear County Council policies in place to cover more serious activity, and all Technical Staff are trained to understand the various options and react accordingly.

Portable devices such as mobile phones or Personal Data Assistants are only actively allowed to connect to the school network wirelessly in liaison with Network and School Management.

All internet access is filtered by an internal Proxy Server with filter lists, an internal hardware Firewall and external ISP filtering services before ever reaching the public domain. Similar filtering is in place for the school internal mail server. Abusive e-mails are flagged by the system and the Network Management team can be automatically notified.

Technology is continually evolving. At Penryn College we have invested significantly over the years ensuring that all students have access to the best technology available to support their learning. Increasingly businesses, individuals and universities are moving away from using traditional PCs; for many, tablets are now the preferred method to access technology and the Internet. It is for that reason that we have now invested in I-Pad technology.

All students having an iPad in all lessons brings enormous benefits to teaching and learning. Teachers and students have an incredible range of learning tools at their fingertips. Students tell us how much they value active and collaborative learning.

However, we are fully aware that there are concerns about students having access to this technology. This is one of the reasons we have waited so long before taking this step. In the past year alone there have been significant advances in the management of iPad devices and in the development of new filtering systems for them. We have compared a range of filtering systems and have selected what is widely believed to be the best educational filtering system for iPads – Lightspeed. This allows us all kinds of controls over the Internet usage on our iPads. Similarly the management system for these means that the school can set limits on how the iPad is used. We work closely with the Parents' Forum and the Student Council to use these controls as helpfully as possible.

In addition, to this we have ensured that prior to each student receiving their i-pad, they, and where possible their parents, receive the latest e-safety advice from our Safeguarding Team at school.

Security

Monitored CCTV cameras are employed in various locations for the safety and protection of users of the buildings.