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Headteacher: Mr Alex Rawlings • **Deputy Headteacher:** Mrs Jayne Westwood

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Dear Parents

Use of the Internet by Pupils

As part of the drive to personalise learning and to support learning opportunities within the school, your child will, at appropriate times, be given access to the Internet as an information source, a communications tool and a publishing medium.

The Internet has become a major source of educationally useful material and the primary distribution medium for a wide range of organisations. The potential to support the classroom teacher and the learner is significant and will continue to grow.

There are well-publicised concerns regarding access to material and sites on the Internet that would be considered unsuitable for school pupils. Whilst it is impossible to ensure that a pupil will not access these, the school, in liaison with Dudley LA and Research Machines (RM) plc, is taking all reasonable steps to minimise a pupil's access to that which is unsuitable.

These steps include:

- Use of a filtered Internet Service to prevent access to Internet sites with certain types of material e.g. pornography, violent, offensive and abusive material.
- Restricted access to 'chat rooms'.
- The requirement that wherever possible all Internet access during school hours will be supervised by a member of staff or other responsible adult.
- Tracking mechanisms that enable the school to identify which Internet sites have been visited and to monitor Internet access. The monitoring system alerts school to questionable or inappropriate material for safeguarding reasons which school investigates and records.
- Education of pupils as to the potential legal consequences of accessing certain types of material.

Attached to this letter is a copy of the school's Acceptable Use Statement for both adults and pupils. All users of school computer equipment are expected to abide by this statement. Users not abiding by it may have their right to use the systems withdrawn. For some offences, the police or other authorities may have to be involved.

The school continues to develop its web site which will include information about many aspects of school life. Within published guidelines (attached) the school may publish pictures or work relating to your child. Please indicate on the "use of images form" your willingness (or not) for any reference to your child to be included on the school web site.

The school is also developing a web-based approach to communication information sharing. This will eventually allow parents/carers to access school-based information (eg prospectus, policies etc) via the web.

The school's policy on the use of computers, including the use of the Internet, is available for parents to inspect.

If you want to discuss any of the issues surrounding the use of the Internet or the content of this letter please contact the school and ask for Mrs Westwood or myself.

Occasional awareness sessions regarding use of the Internet may be run for parents - please ask for details.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Rawlings', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alex Rawlings (Mr)
Headteacher

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