

Medway Grid for Learning

Policies and Guidance



ICT Housekeeping

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Introduction

This document is intended to provide general information and guidance related to connecting school LANs to the broadband Grid for Learning network, and running school systems and servers effectively to deliver a reliable, high performance service. It also provides specific policies adherence to which is necessary for the smooth and effective running of the whole network.

1 Overview

The following ICT housekeeping and administration guidance is designed to help you keep your ICT equipment and ICT function operational, secure and legal. These notes are intended as guidance only. Some sections include links to relevant BECTa information sheets that you may find useful (these links are for the .pdf version of each information sheet; .html versions are also available elsewhere on the BECTa site).

2 Hardware

2.1 Hardware audit

Conduct an audit of hardware to take stock of what the school has and how it is being used. For example, how do the teachers make use of stand-alone computers in classrooms if there is also a computer room with networked computers? Is there a school network or intranet? Find out what other resources are available, such as a digital camera, electronic whiteboard, scanner or electronic microscope.

The audit can be used to construct a complete asset register of all hardware including such information as serial numbers, asset numbers, purchase dates and locations. This can include PCs, servers, monitors, scanners, projectors and whiteboards. An audit should then be repeated annually, to ensure the information is up to date.

This information will help to schedule renewal of equipment, provide a count for maintenance / support contracts and is often required for insurance purposes.

2.2 Sustainability

We recommend that schools consider instigating a renewals scheme for their ICT hardware. This entails putting aside a certain amount of money for each hardware asset based on the expected life of that asset. For example, a PC can reasonably be expected to last 3 years; under a renewals scheme, a third of the value of each PC would be put aside each year after the pc has been purchased, so that after 3 years the funds are available to replace the PC. The average life span for printers would be approximately 4 years, and 4 years for servers.

3 Software

Anti-virus software - update virus software on all PCs regularly

Anti-virus software should be installed on all servers and PCs. This should be updated as frequently as possible, but at least every two weeks to ensure adequate protection for your network. If this is not practical a monthly update on workstations combined with a weekly update on all servers should prove adequate.

The Sophos anti-virus software package is available from the Medway Grid for Learning support website (http://support.medway.org.uk/support/faq/virus/virus_frame.asp) and can be accessed by nominated ICT Contacts. The broad terms of the licence for this product enables schools to download it to a CD for use PCs used outside the school by anyone who has a direct connection with the school (staff or pupil).

Further useful information can be found at <http://www.becta.org.uk/technology/infosheets/pdf/antivirus.pdf>

3.1 Licences – ensure that you have adequate licences

Ensure that you have adequate licences to cover all software and all users. You may wish to do an annual licence audit to ensure that all changes in software and users during the year have been taken account of. Remember to check the terms of each licence as some may be for single users, some may apply to a particular PC itself, some may be concurrent licences (i.e. a concurrent 5 user licence would allow 5 people to use the software simultaneously, even though more than 5 people may have access to the software) and some may be renewable on a periodic basis.

Useful information can be found at:

<http://www.becta.org.uk/technology/software/curriculum/docs/licensing.pdf>
<http://www.becta.org.uk/technology/infosheets/pdf/licensing.pdf>

3.2 Copyright

Ensure that the school does not breach any copyright legislation with regard to publication of material (electronic or otherwise).

Further information can be found at <http://www.becta.org.uk/technology/infosheets/pdf/copyright.pdf>

4 Health and safety – be aware of health and safety issues

Perform regular health & safety audits with regard to ICT usage; this should include topics such as lighting, desk heights and cabling. Consider the implementation of a “new user” induction course with regard to ICT.

Further helpful information can be found at <http://safety.ngfl.gov.uk/schools/pdf/d9.pdf>

5 Housekeeping

5.1 Backups

Regular backups (preferably daily) of all servers and any data stored directly on PCs should be performed. All backup copies should either be stored offsite or in a fireproof cabinet away from the main computer room. The effectiveness of these backups should be checked periodically by restoring a varying sample of data from the backups, this is crucial because otherwise it is possible to have the impression that your data is securely backed up when it is not.

5.2 File maintenance – on-going housekeeping on pc’s

Each PC should be checked on a regular basis to ensure certain unnecessary files, such as temporary files, on the hard disk drive are deleted so that space is not wasted and the performance of PCs impaired. The hard drive of each PC should also be checked for errors and de-fragmented on a regular basis using the built-in tools in Windows (except for NT4 which has no built-in defragmenter which means you will need to buy a third party product such as Diskeeper from <http://www.execsoft.co.uk/>).

6 Administration

6.1 E-mail accounts – administration of pupil/staff e-mail addresses

For every pupil / member of staff that leaves the school but stays within the Medway LEA, no action is required by the exit school, the receiving school should notify Atomwide through the “create an email account” form on the LEA support site. When the pupil / member of staff joins the new school and does not know their email address / password, the school can use the relevant “create an email account” form on the LEA support site, ensuring that you complete the section with regard to transfer from another school. Atomwide will notify the school of the relevant details.

If a student / member of staff leaves the school and leaves the Medway LEA, have their email account deleted, using the relevant form on the LEA support site.

6.2 Nominated ICT Contact

Ensure that if a nominated ICT contact leaves the school, Atomwide are advised of this and any new contacts are nominated using the relevant forms on the LEA support site. Note that these forms must be signed by the Headteacher and Atomwide will generally decline to communicate with anyone at the school who is not a nominated contact (Headteachers are automatically included as an ICT contact).

6.3 Passwords

All passwords should be changed on a regular basis, at least every three months.

Systems should be configured to enforce password changes every 3 months and impose restrictions on minimum password length (at least 6 characters), content (at least alphanumeric) and history (no repetitions in at least the previous ten passwords).