



Villa Real School

together we achieve

Information and Communications Technology Policy 2026

Responsibility: Alan Granton

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Introduction

Villa Real school is a forward-thinking vibrant organisation where children will be given the skills and education to prepare them for their next step in life. We provide a caring working atmosphere where your child will be given access to a full and varied curriculum, they will be supported at all times along their learning journey. In this ever increasingly technology focused world, we view ICT and computing as a vital component in readying your child for their future steps.

Villa Real School is a forward-thinking and inclusive environment where all pupils are supported to develop the skills, knowledge and independence required for their next steps in life.

We provide a caring and supportive learning environment, ensuring all pupils have access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum, where individual needs are recognised and supported throughout their learning journey.

In an increasingly digital world, ICT and Computing play a vital role in preparing pupils for adulthood. Through the effective use of technology, we ensure that all learners can access, engage with and succeed in learning, developing the confidence, independence and skills needed for life beyond school.

Rationale

At Villa Real School we are committed to providing your child with an ICT and computing curriculum that will incorporate the four strands of Interactive Media, Computing, Communication Technology and using technology in life, but – most importantly – safety through all four strands. We consider the e-safety aspect a high priority for vulnerable students and will focus on teaching your child relevant ways to stay safe now - as well as in the future. ICT/ Computing will be incorporated across the curriculum to enrich learners' experiences and work towards using technology in different situations.

At Villa Real School, we are committed to delivering an ambitious, inclusive and relevant ICT and Computing curriculum for all pupils.

The curriculum incorporates four key strands:

- Digital Skills
- Computing and Robotics
- Information Technology
- Using Technology in Everyday Life - PfA

Online safety is a fundamental aspect across all strands and is prioritised to ensure pupils develop the knowledge, understanding and resilience to use technology safely, both now and in the future.

ICT is used to enhance learning across the curriculum, enabling pupils to apply their skills in a range of meaningful and real-life contexts. Through this approach, pupils develop confidence, independence and the ability to use technology effectively in different situations.

The curriculum is designed to remove barriers to learning, ensuring all pupils can access, engage with and succeed in ICT through adaptive approaches and the effective use of technology. This supports pupils in developing essential communication, problem-solving and life skills required for adulthood.

Aims of ICT and Computing at Villa Real

Our aims are:

- To provide all learners with at least the requirements of the National Curriculum at the appropriate level, that is relevant to their next steps ensuring a wide and varied curriculum accessible by all ages and abilities.
- To develop learners' confidence when using ICT to plan, carry out, review, and improve tasks.
- To equip students to use technology for communication effectively and safely, at school, in work situations and during adulthood.
- To encourage students to use technology as a problem-solving tool
- To use technology to enhance students' learning in other areas, across the curriculum.
- To provide adapted technology and use it effectively to ensure each learner achieves their full potential
- To provide learners with the adult skills they need to carry out everyday tasks using technology, including – where appropriate – electronic payments, using .gov websites, and NHS services
- To provide learners with the knowledge to be safe at all times when using modern technology

Our aims are:

- To provide an ambitious and accessible ICT and Computing curriculum that meets the needs of all learners and supports their next steps
- To develop pupils' confidence and independence when using technology to plan, create, review and improve their work
- To enable pupils to communicate effectively using a range of digital tools and technologies

- To support pupils in using technology safely, responsibly and appropriately in school, at home and in the wider community
- To develop problem-solving skills through the use of technology
- To use ICT to enhance learning across the curriculum and support engagement in all subjects
- To provide adaptive and assistive technology to remove barriers to learning and ensure full participation for all pupils
- To prepare pupils for adulthood by developing essential digital life skills, including accessing online services, communication and everyday tasks
- To ensure all pupils develop the knowledge and understanding required to stay safe in an increasingly digital world

Guidelines for teaching

- All students will receive ICT/ Computing lessons – either taught as a stand-alone topic or integrated into other curriculum areas
 - Planning will be based on the National Curriculum for ICT, Computing and Interactive Media at the appropriate level for individual students, and to ensure enjoyment, engagement and success in the subject.
 - Where appropriate the ICT / Computing lead will support teachers with planning to ensure lessons are suitable for individual learners.
 - ICT skills and good practice will be taught and reflected upon in other curriculum areas to help students understand the benefits and limitations of technology
 - Evidence of progress will be recorded by a combination of: printed student work, work saved via cloud services, statement evidence, and photographic evidence
 - Students should be taught to reflect upon, evaluate, and improve work
 - Where appropriate teachers will integrate online safety into lessons.
 - Computing will be offered as an enrichment activity to all learners and will offer the opportunity to experience elements of Computing that are not a focus in the curriculum e.g. computer club.
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- ICT and Computing is delivered through both discrete lessons and across the wider curriculum, enabling pupils to develop and apply their skills in a variety of meaningful contexts.
 - Planning is informed by the National Curriculum and adapted to meet the individual needs of all pupils, ensuring learning is engaging, relevant and accessible.

Teaching is underpinned by adaptive approaches which remove barriers to learning, rather than relying solely on differentiation. This includes:

- Providing multiple ways for pupils to access learning (e.g. visual, practical and digital approaches)
- Providing multiple ways for pupils to demonstrate their understanding
- Using assistive and adaptive technology to support access and participation
- Structuring learning to support understanding, retention and recall over time

- Teachers:
 - Present subject matter clearly and model key skills
 - Check understanding regularly and address misconceptions
 - Use repetition and reinforcement to support pupils to know more and remember more
 - Adapt teaching responsively to meet pupils' needs

- ICT is used across the curriculum to enhance learning, support communication and increase independence.

- Evidence of progress is recorded through a range of methods, including:
 - Digital work stored securely
 - Photographic evidence
 - Teacher assessment
 - Observations linked to EHCP targets

- Pupils are supported to:
 - Reflect on their work
 - Evaluate outcomes
 - Make improvements where appropriate

- Online safety is embedded within all teaching and is reinforced through both discrete lessons and cross-curricular learning.

- Enrichment opportunities, such as Computing clubs, provide pupils with opportunities to extend their skills and interests beyond the core curriculum.

At Villa Real School, all teaching is informed by the identified curriculum pathway for each learner, as outlined in the Villa Real School Pathways.

Teachers are expected to plan and deliver learning that is appropriately adapted to the pathway each pupil is following. This ensures that learning is meaningful, relevant and ambitious for all pupils, regardless of their starting point.

This includes:

- Adapting content, pace and outcomes in line with the learner's pathway
- Designing learning that supports progression within and across pathways
- Ensuring activities are appropriate to pupils' cognitive, communication and sensory needs
- Using adaptive teaching approaches to remove barriers to learning
- Providing opportunities for pupils to develop independence and apply skills in real-life contexts

Teachers use their professional judgement, supported by assessment and EHCP outcomes, to ensure that all pupils access learning that is appropriately challenging and aspirational.

The use of structured pathways ensures consistency, progression and clear outcomes for all learners, supporting their preparation for adulthood.

Internet and Online Safety

Internet and online safety forms part of the core curriculum and is embedded through the curriculum whilst also taught as standalone units. Units taught in the safety aspect of the Computing curriculum complement subject matter delivered in Kidsafe, PSHCE and RSE. The views of parents, carers and pupils are taken into account to shape the curriculum whilst the latest advice and guidance is sought from DFE, SWFL and Online 360. Online safety as whole is regularly reviewed by the schools Online Safety Team and monitored by school governors on regular basis.

Internet and Email

Pupils will be protected from having access to undesirable materials by:

- Close adult supervision
- Using only web sites which have recently been checked for content by an adult
- Working on-line, with an understanding that they will be held accountable for their own actions, as outlined in the school Acceptable Use Policy.
- Knowing that if they see something which upsets them that they switch off the monitor and tell an adult.
- For the storage of temporary files, pupils will each have a personal directory on the computer network

- Computers will at all times be ready for use in the classrooms and shared areas
- Hardware and software provision will be reviewed each year
- Training will be made available each year for all school staff according to need
- Appropriate monitoring of systems and procedures will be carried out by the onsite ICT technician. Breaches of the online safety policy will be kept and reviewed by the online safety team.
- Staff will be regularly updated in respect of the latest threats to children's safety.

Online safety is a central element of the ICT and Computing curriculum and is embedded across all areas of learning, as well as being taught through discrete lessons.

At Villa Real School, the Purple Mash '2BeSafe' online safety programme forms a core part of our curriculum. This provides a structured, progressive framework for teaching online safety, aligned with national guidance and adapted to meet the needs of all learners.

Teaching is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils through structured, accessible and personalised approaches. This includes the use of visual supports, modelling, repetition and real-life scenarios to support understanding.

Pupils are supported to:

- Recognise and understand potential risks when using technology
- Develop safe and responsible online behaviours
- Communicate concerns confidently with trusted adults
- Build resilience when encountering online challenges
- Apply their knowledge of online safety in real-life situations

Through this approach, pupils develop increasing independence in digital environments and are prepared to use technology safely both in school and in the wider community.

Appropriate supervision and filtering systems are in place to safeguard pupils, alongside clear procedures for reporting and responding to concerns, in line with the school's Online Safety and Safeguarding policies.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils will have regular and equal access to a broad and balanced ICT experience across the whole curriculum.

Pupils in primary provision will follow a curriculum which will be supported by the subject specialist and a package known as Purple Mash, Switched On ICT and bespoke resources. Primary students will also have the opportunity to engage in Primary Computing activities based on the Primary National Curriculum for computing. All students will be supported by staff to achieve their personal best in every activity. Those pupils working below the National Curriculum will access the Engagement Model.

Key stage three students will follow a curriculum that supports progression towards qualification route. This will be mapped and supportive to prepare students for potential access to qualification courses. All students will be supported by staff to achieve their personal best in every activity.

Where the above is not appropriate to the learners needs ICT skills for adulthood will be accessed, focusing on stay safe online.

Secondary students will have the opportunity to study for recognised qualifications in either ICT, Interactive Media, Digital Skills, Computer Coding or Computer Science at an appropriate level that is accessible, challenging and engaging. All students will be supported by staff to achieve their personal best in every activity.

All pupils have equal access to a broad, balanced and ambitious ICT and Computing curriculum, regardless of ability, need or background.

At Villa Real School, we recognise that all learners are different and require individualised approaches. Teaching and learning are designed to remove barriers and ensure all pupils can access, engage with and succeed in ICT through adaptive teaching and the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Technology is used as a key tool to:

- Promote accessibility and inclusion
- Support communication and engagement
- Develop independence
- Enable participation for all learners

In the primary provision, pupils follow a curriculum supported by structured programmes such as Purple Mash, alongside bespoke resources, ensuring accessibility and engagement at all levels.

Key Stage 3 learners follow a curriculum that supports progression towards appropriate KS 4 and 5 pathways, with learning adapted to ensure it is meaningful, engaging and achievable.

Where formal qualifications are not appropriate, pupils access a curriculum focused on ICT skills for adulthood, including the safe and effective use of technology in everyday life.

Secondary pupils are offered opportunities to work towards recognised qualifications in ICT, Interactive Media, Digital Skills or Computing, at an appropriate level that is accessible, challenging and relevant.

Learners working below National Curriculum levels access ICT through the Engagement Model, ensuring progress is recognised through engagement, interaction and increasing independence.

All pupils are supported to achieve their personal best through the use of adaptive teaching, assistive technology and personalised learning approaches.

Resources

Students will have access to technology that is appropriate to complete tasks set in the curriculum. Access to this technology is given on the understanding that it is used appropriately, and it is at the discretion of the classroom teacher to determine this.

Access to study materials will be available that is suitable for the key stage of students and should be used appropriately in lesson time.

Assessment

Assessment in ICT and Computing follows the whole-school assessment framework and is used to monitor progress, inform planning and support next steps for all pupils.

Assessment includes:

- REAL progress against the REAL Curriculum
- The Engagement Model for learners working below National Curriculum levels
- Individual EHCP targets
- Qualification and exam board criteria, where appropriate
- Teacher assessment, including digital platforms such as Purple Mash

Earwig

Assessment is ongoing and includes observation, practical application and recorded outcomes through a range of methods, including digital work and photographic evidence.

Progress is measured through:

- The development of knowledge, skills and understanding
- Increasing independence in the use of technology
- Communication and interaction using digital tools
- The ability to apply learning in real-life and meaningful contexts

Assessment is used to identify next steps and ensure teaching is adapted to meet the needs of all learners, supporting continued progress and preparation for adulthood.

Homework

The ICT / Computing curriculum follows the whole school policy, while in addition to this allows learners to complete homework using the online platform Purple Mash.

Acceptable Use Policy

Both students and staff members must follow the Acceptable Use Policy when using technology in school. All learners and parents will be provided with access to this policy through the school website.

Appendix 1
Glossary of Key Terms

TERM	DEFINITION
Breach	When your data, systems or networks are accessed or changed in a non-authorised way.
Cloud	Where you can store and access your resources (including data and software) via the internet, instead of locally on physical devices.
Cyber-attack	An attempt to access, damage or disrupt your computer systems, networks or devices maliciously.
Cyber incident	Where the security of your system or service has been breached.
Cyber security	The protection of your devices, services and networks (and the information they contain) from theft or damage.
Download attack	Where malicious software or a virus is downloaded unintentionally onto a device without the user's knowledge or consent.
Firewall	Hardware or software that uses a defined rule set to constrain network traffic – this is to prevent unauthorised access to or from a network.
Hacker	Someone with some computer skills who uses them to break into computers, systems and networks.
Malware	Malicious software. This includes viruses, trojans or any code or content that can adversely impact individuals or organisations.
Patching	Updating firmware or software to improve security and/or enhance functionality.
Pentest	Short for penetration test. This is an authorised test of a computer network or system to look for security weaknesses.
Pharming	An attack on your computer network that means users are redirected to a wrong or illegitimate website even if they type in the right website address.
Phishing	Untargeted, mass emails sent to many people asking for sensitive information (such as bank details) or encouraging them to visit a fake website.
Ransomware	Malicious software that stops you from using your data or systems until you make a payment.
Social engineering	Manipulating people into giving information or carrying out specific actions that an attacker can use.

Spear-phishing	A more targeted form of phishing where an email is designed to look like it's from a person the recipient knows and/or trusts.
Trojan	A type of malware/virus designed to look like legitimate software that can be used to hack a victim's computer.
Two-factor/multi-factor authentication	Using 2 or more different components to verify a user's identity.
Virus	Programmes designed to self-replicate and infect legitimate software programs or systems.
Virtual private network (VPN)	An encrypted network which allows remote users to connect securely.
Whaling	Highly- targeted phishing attacks (where emails are made to look legitimate) aimed at senior people in an organisation.