Year 9 – Practical Skills and Digital Citizenship in ICT Curriculum Intent

What the curriculum is designed to do

While most young people today have grown up as 'digital natives', with technology involved in most aspects of their daily lives, they may still lack the critical thinking and media literacy skills that are key to practising positive digital citizenship. This course aims to bridge that gap and give students the functional ICT skills required in both and education and employment setting.

How we deliver the curriculum

In year 9 students study ICT for 1 hour every two weeks. We aim to build a safe and inspiring space where young people are empowered to learn, discover, share, create and express themselves and experience a sense of belonging.

The Short Course has been split into two distinct areas, Practical Skills in ICT and Digital Citizenship. A breakdown of these is given below.

Practical Skills in ICT

The Practical Skills in ICT will operate at two levels, Foundation Level and Higher Level.

At the Foundation-Level students will need to be able to:

- identify the ICT requirements needed to solve a task and apply their knowledge and understanding to produce an appropriate solution (complexity)
- apply their knowledge and skills within a non-routine but familiar context (familiarity)
- apply a range of techniques in a number of applications to produce an appropriate outcome (technical demand)
- solve problems that are essentially tutor guided, demonstrating the confidence to make informed choices and knowing when to seek guidance (independence).

At the Higher-Level students will need to be able to:

- analyse multi-step tasks and separate the components, identifying the relevant ICT requirements and applying their knowledge and understanding to produce an appropriate solution (complexity)
- apply their knowledge, skills and understanding within non-routine and non-familiar contexts (familiarity)
- demonstrate the application of a wide range of techniques across several applications to produce an appropriate outcome (technical demand)
- solve problems independently, overcoming challenges to produce successful outcomes (independence).

Digital Citizenship

To help students become positive digital citizens they will:

- look at concepts of dis- and misinformation online, the difference between them, how inaccurate information can cause real harm, and what internet users can do to respond effectively.
- explore biased writing, particularly forms encountered in traditional and social media, and how it can shape people's opinions and perception of events. They will also explore the filter bubble phenomenon, including the trade-offs of a 'personalised web' and how the content we are served online can narrow our understanding of the world.
- examine how personal biases, both conscious and unconscious, can lead us to stereotype others, and the potential negative consequences for individuals and society. As part of this discussion, they will cover how divisive 'us vs them' thinking can polarise society and lead people to communicate in echo chambers.
- explore what freedom of speech means according to UK law, the responsibilities associated with it, and how to respond to abuse, bullying or hate speech online.
- demonstrate their understanding of digital citizenship and put their skills into practice in a creative and collaborative way.

How we assess students

Final assessment of the short course will take pace under formal examination conditions with certification at both the foundation and higher levels.

Students will also be given the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities and certify as positive Digital Citizens.

How it benefits students learning and personal development

Students will develop the ability to independently solve problems and create solutions using ICT which will give learners the skills to operate confidently, effectively and independently in education, employment and everyday life.