

RM Internet Filtering Policy

RM Internet Filtering Policy Introduction

RM connects more schools to the Internet than any other provider in the UK. A key reason for the popularity of the service is the attention paid to filtering. Every Internet connection we supply is subject to RM SafetyNet filtering.

RM also supplies RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal, customisable filtering solutions designed specifically for the education market. For information about RM's filtering solutions, please visit www.rm.com/safetynet

All RM SafetyNet products are designed to filter out material found to be inappropriate for use in the education environment. Items that infringe RM's filtering policy are blocked by our filtering services.

Between March 2007 and March 2008 we identified and blocked 2.9 billion attempts to access web sites that we know to contain offensive material. These web sites include both unsuitable and illegal material that would otherwise have been accessed, either inadvertently or by intent.

This document summarises methods used to minimise the risks associated with accessing unsuitable and illegal web sites, and our filtering policy designed to help protect against these risks. The document outlines the categories that we filter and provides descriptions of the content deemed inappropriate in each of these categories.

In summary the categories included are:

RM SafetyNet, RM SafetyNet Plus, RM SafetyNet Universal core categories:

- IWF Child Abuse Images database
- Pornography and illegal or age-restricted activity
- Drugs and substance abuse
- Violence
- Intolerance
- Web-based chat
- Web-based Social Networking
- Proxy Bypass

RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal additional categories:

- Web-based mail services
- Mobile Phones/SMS/Ring Tones
- Non-educational games
- .MP3 and .exe files

More information on these categories is provided by this policy document.

Intelligence from industry blacklists, plus our dedicated filtering experts and web analysis techniques, and – importantly – input from establishments, Local Authorities and Regional Broadband Consortia, are used to build our unique database for education.

We welcome comments on this policy at any time via our email address filtering@rm.com

Please visit www.rm.com/safetynet to find out more about
our filtering solutions

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Last updated: May 2008

Use of the Internet in education

93% of Internet users utilise the Internet as a fast and efficient means for gaining information (OxIS, 2007).

It has been proven to "promote effective learning. Students with Internet access have been shown to produce better-researched, more effective and well-presented projects" (Becta, 2007).

Despite the benefits 96% of Internet users believe that there should be restrictions in online content for children (OxIS, 2007).

The requirement to ensure that children and young people are able to use the Internet and related communications technologies appropriately and safely is addressed as part of the wider duty of care to which all who work in schools are bound (Becta, 2007).

The key Internet content risks have been categorised by Becta. These categories are outlined in the table below:

Risk	Explanation
Exposure to inappropriate materials	Material that is pornographic, hateful or violent in nature or encourages activities that are dangerous or illegal.
Inappropriate or illegal behaviour	Just as in the real world, young people may get involved in inappropriate, antisocial or illegal behaviour while using new technologies. For example, online bullying.
Copyright infringement	This could include downloading copyrighted material such as music files, or copying others homework.
Obsessive use of the Internet and ICT	This could lead to deterioration in the quality of schoolwork or negative impacts upon family relationships.
Physical danger and sexual abuse	This would include paedophiles using Internet chat rooms to target and develop relationships with young people for the sole purpose of sexual activity.
Inappropriate or illegal behaviour by school staff	This could include viewing or circulating inappropriate material.

Minimising the risks

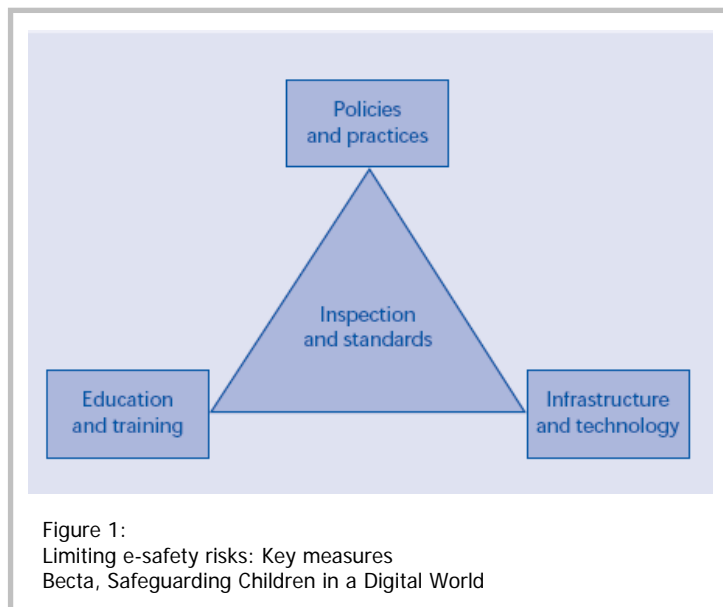
By utilising an RM SafetyNet filtering product you have already significantly minimised the risks.

Between March 2007 and March 2008 we identified and blocked 2.9 billion attempts to access web sites that we know to contain offensive material. These web sites include both unsuitable and illegal material that would otherwise have been accessed, either inadvertently or by intent.

However, since the content on the web changes so dynamically it is simply not possible for any system based on exclusion to be 100% effective. It is important to understand that filtering is one element in a larger strategy for e-safety and acceptable use.

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Becta highlight this point stating that “no technological solution can be 100 per cent effective in guaranteeing safety when using the internet and related technologies”. Becta advise that that “technology can help to minimise the risks to pupils, particularly when supported by a clear acceptable-use policy and appropriate e-safety education.” This coordinated approach is illustrated below.



In line with Becta’s advice, RM recommends that the following measures are adopted and used in conjunction with our filtering products:

- Appropriate supervision and e-safety education
- Creation and whole-school agreement of clearly defined acceptable usage policies

The combination of these measures provides more complete protection.

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RM SafetyNet Internet filtering policy

RM connects more schools to the Internet than any other provider in the UK. A key reason for the popularity of the service is the attention paid to filtering. Every Internet connection we supply is subject to RM SafetyNet filtering.

All RM SafetyNet products are designed to filter out material found to be inappropriate for use in the education environment. Items that infringe RM's filtering policy are blocked by our filtering services.

The following is a list of categories that breach RM's filtering policy. These categories are designed to act as a guide and not an exhaustive list:

Filter list	Explanation and examples
IWF Child Abuse Images database	Sites which the Internet Watch Foundation has identified as breaching UK law
Pornography and illegal or age-restricted activity	Sexually explicit material including video or images as well as explicit animation and textual descriptions and sites promoting illegal or age-restricted activities
Drugs and substance abuse	Web sites that promote the use, manufacture, and distribution of illegal drugs, as well as sites which promote the abuse of legal substances such as prescription drugs, or the sale of alcohol to minors
Violence	Graphical portrayal of violence as well as sites which promote violence, or self-endangerment. Instructions for making bombs and weapons.
Intolerance	Material which promotes intolerance on the basis of religion, race, gender, or sexual orientation.
Web-based chat	Web-based interactive chat and instant messaging that allows users to make unsolicited contact with individuals in the outside world without providing sufficient safeguards and protection to young people.
Web-based Social Networking	Web-based social networking that allows users to make unsolicited contact with individuals in the outside world without providing sufficient safeguards and protection to young people.
Proxy Bypass	Sites that are designed to provide a route for bypassing Internet filters

Please note that material designed to educate, for example on matters such as sexual health or combating drug and substance abuse, would not normally contravene RM's Internet filtering policy.

A general benchmark used by RM to determine whether a site or part of a site should be filtered, is whether or not the questionable material is something which the national press may publish. If it is, then it is unlikely that RM would choose to filter it.

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RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal

RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal are customisable Internet filtering solutions in the SafetyNet filtering product range; these products offer the ability to tailor your filtering solution in line with your establishment or regions Acceptable Use Policy. For information about RM's filtering solutions, please visit www.rm.com/safetynet

RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal share the same common filter lists as RM SafetyNet but are customisable Internet filtering solutions. Using these solutions it is possible to add to and also to override some of the sites that are filtered by RM.

RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal contain a number of additional filter lists:

Filter list	Explanation and examples
Web-based mail services	Sites which allow access to free Web-based email services
Mobile Phones/SMS/Ring Tones	Mobile phone manufacturers, service operators, sites offering Internet based SMS/text messaging services and sites offering ring tones and phone logos.
.MP3 and .exe files	Sites which provide .MP3 and .exe files used regularly by children for non-educational purposes
Non-educational games	Sites which provide or discuss games used regularly by children for non-educational purposes

Not a 100% Guarantee

We proactively conduct thorough searches in an effort to block user access to any inappropriate material. However, it is important to understand that we are unable to offer a 100 per cent guarantee in providing an environment that is perceived to be 'safe' by everyone. One reason for this is the constantly changing nature and content of the World Wide Web.

RM block user-access to a large number of unsuitable sites. We do this by the exclusive method, which means that when an inappropriate site is found, RM prevents user access to it. This is in contrast to the inclusive method, which restricts access to all sites, except those identified as appropriate.

Although it is impossible to identify all unsuitable sites, we still believe that the exclusive method is the most suitable Internet filtering policy. Essentially, we believe that the majority of our customers would find the inclusive method too restrictive, as the scope of acceptable sites would be too limiting.

Although RM restricts access to many areas of common concern through RM SafetyNet, it is not designed to be a tailored filtering system for the unique requirements of individual schools. If a tailored filtering system is required, please consider RM SafetyNet Plus or RM SafetyNet Universal.

In addition, RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal products utilise our Active-Adapt Content Filtering technology. This technology dynamically scans individual web pages for inappropriate content as they are requested. This additional protection checks the suitability of pages that have not yet been added to an RM filter list, providing an additional safety measure which instantly adapts to unsuitable content.

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Your Input

Any activity that could be deemed as 'censorship' has been demonstrated over the years to be a very controversial issue. As the population becomes more risk-aware, we expect over the long term to be using additional mechanisms (e.g. audit logs of use within institutions) in conjunction with varying levels of filtering.

As the Internet is firmly established as a global medium for business, education and entertainment medium, its value is likely to increase perpetually over the years. We suspect the issue of filtering will be with society in general for the foreseeable future, and so we all need to develop our strategies and ideas together.

As this is such a difficult area we depend very heavily on user feedback to choose the right course of action and welcome comments on this policy at any time via our email address filtering@rm.com

How to report inappropriate web sites

Please note that we maintain the right to ultimately determine what is and is not filtered by our products. However, any of our customers who find a site that they feel should be filtered or unfiltered are asked to email filtering@rm.com with the URL. We will review your requests against our filtering policy and notify you on the decision to permit or deny that site.

Further information and advice

Becta: <http://schools.becta.org.uk/>

Internet Watch Foundation: <http://www.iwf.org.uk/>

[Submit URLs for Filtering](#)

(TEC5754)

[How do I obtain unfiltered Internet access through IFL?](#)

(TEC34081)

[How to remove filtering from your IFL dial up account](#)

(TEC14842)

[RM SafetyNet Plus: How to permit or deny sites](#)

(TEC21820)

Any of our customers who find a site that they feel should be filtered or unfiltered are asked to email filtering@rm.com with the URL. We will review your requests against our filtering policy.

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RM Filter Category Definitions

Core Categories

Core categories are those available for all products in the RM SafetyNet range.

C.1 IWF Child Abuse Images database

Defined as content which the Internet Watch Foundation has identified as breaching UK law including:

- a) images of child abuse hosted anywhere in the world, identified by the Internet Watch Foundation;
- b) sites containing material classed as extreme pornography, identified by the Internet Watch Foundation.

The Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill 2007-2008 outlines the law on Child Abuse material, and has recently strengthened that law around the possession of extreme pornography, which is now classed as illegal material.

This list cannot be disabled even by customers with RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal, our customisable filtering solutions.

C.2 Pornography and illegal or age-restricted activity

Defined as material containing sexually explicit images and text, the depiction of actual or realistic sexual activity or illegal or age-restricted activity including but not limited to:

- a) real or simulated sexual intercourse including explicit cartoons/animation;
- b) depiction of sexual activity involving devices such as sex toys;
- c) sexual activity with visible pubic areas and/or genitals;
- d) threats of sexual violence such as rape;
- e) child abuse/paedophilia, excluding content classed as illegal by the IWF encompassed by C.1;
- f) excessive use of profanity and/or obscene gesticulation;
- g) erotic stories and textual descriptions of sexual acts;
- h) sexually exploitative or sexually violent text
- i) content relating to cracked software application distribution;
- j) content relating to pirated software and multimedia downloads;
- k) content promoting, instructing, and distributing malicious executable software, viruses, worms, etc.;
- l) other illegal or age restrictive activities, excluding the use of alcohol by minors encompassed by C.4.

NOTE Material which genuinely seeks to inform and educate such as content relating to current affairs, news, and historical information may be permissible.

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C.3 Drugs and substance abuse

Defined as material relating to the use and promotion of illegal drugs, including but not limited to:

- a) content promoting, encouraging or instructing on the use of illegal drugs, including the use of tobacco, alcohol and other substances illegal to minors;
- b) information relating to the masking of drug use, including alcohol and tobacco;
- c) content promoting the sale and distribution of illegal drugs;
- d) information relating to recipes, manufacturing and growing of illicit substances;
- e) content promoting and instructing on the use of legal highs and the abuse of other legal substances;
- f) content promoting and instructing on abuse of prescription drugs.

NOTE Material which genuinely seeks to inform and educate such as content relating to current affairs, news, and historical information may be permissible.

C.4 Violence (including weapons and bombs)

Defined as material containing graphically violent images and text, including but not limited to the following:

- a) portrayal of graphic violence against humans, animals or institutions;
- b) depictions of torture, mutilation, gore or horrific death;
- c) content advocating self-endangerment, self-mutilation and suicide, including promotion eating disorders or addictions;
- d) graphic violence that in particular dwells on the infliction of pain or injury;
- e) instructions for making bombs and weapons;
- f) portrayal and glamorization of easily accessible weapons, e.g. knives;
- g) content promoting terrorism and terrorist organizations;
- h) content promoting the use and purchase of weapons, ammunition, explosives, poisons, etc.

NOTE Material which genuinely seeks to inform and educate such as content relating to current affairs, news, and historical information may be permissible.

C.5 Intolerance

Defined as material which promotes intolerance, violence or attack on individuals or institutions on the basis of religious, racial or gender grounds, including but not limited to:

- a) content that advocates or incites violence or attack based on religious, racial, ethnic, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or cultural community grounds;
- b) content that advocates social intolerance;
- c) promotion of political agendas based on supremacist, exclusionary, racial, religious, ethnic, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation grounds;
- d) Holocaust denial, revisionist content and other sites encouraging hate;
- e) militancy and extremist content.

NOTE Material which genuinely seeks to inform and educate such as content relating to current affairs, news, and historical information may be permissible.

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C.6 Web-based chat

Defined as unmoderated and unsupervised Web-based interactive chat or instant messaging that allows users to make contact with individuals in the outside world without paying sufficient attention to safeguards and protection for young people, including but not limited to:

- a) web-based interactive chat;
- b) web-based instant messaging.

C.7 Web-based social networking *New category*

Defined as unmoderated and unsupervised social networking that allows users to make contact with individuals in the outside world without paying sufficient attention to safeguards and protection for young people, including:

- a) web-based social networking that allows users to create a personal page or profile and construct and display a social network of their online contacts and/or supply personal information online in an unmoderated and unsupervised way.

C.8 Proxy bypass *New category*

Defined as material related to the creation and distribution of content related to Internet filtering circumvention including but not limited to:

- a) content promoting the unauthorized use, or attempts to circumvent or bypass the security mechanisms of an information system or network;
- b) content providing information relating to filtering applications and associated work-arounds.

Additional Categories

Additional categories are those available for RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal, but not RM SafetyNet.

A.1 Web-based mail services

Defined as material that allows access to free web-based email services that can prove disruptive and distracting if used within an education environment, including:

- a) provision of free web-based email services.

A.2 Mobile phones, SMS and ring tones

Defined as material which promotes mobile phone manufacturers or their services and material which provides Internet based SMS services that can prove disruptive and distracting if used within an education environment, including but not limited to:

- a) promotion of mobile phone manufacturers or service operators;
- b) promotion of free or chargeable mobile services;
- c) provision of Internet based SMS services;
- d) sites offering ring tones or downloadable phone icons.

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A.2 .MP3 and .exe files

Defined as material that allows access to .MP3 files and .exe files used regularly by children for non-educational purposes, including:

- a) .MP3 files that can prove disruptive and distracting if used within an education environment;
- b) .exe files that can prove disruptive and distracting if used within an education environment.

A.3 Non-educational games *New category*

Defined as games that are not specifically designed to support content considered core to UK education curricula, including but not limited to:

- a) content relating to video, adventure, simulation, strategy and war games;
- b) content relating to board games, card games and puzzles.

Non-educational games that relate to pornography, illegal or age-restricted activities are included in the 'Pornography and illegal or age-restricted activities' category, rather than the non-educational games category.

Non- educational games that are violent are included in the 'Violence' category, rather than the non-educational games category.

NOTE Material which genuinely seeks to inform and educate such as content relating to current affairs, news, and historical information may be permissible.

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Category availability matrix

The matrix provided below outline which categories are available for RM SafetyNet, and which are available for RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal.

Core categories	RM SafetyNet	RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal
IWF Child Abuse Images database	This list is always enabled	This list is always enabled
Pornography and illegal or age-restricted activity	This list is always enabled	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
Drugs and substance abuse	This list is always enabled	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
Violence	This list is always enabled	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
Intolerance	This list is always enabled	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
Web-based chat	This list is always enabled	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
Web-based Social Networking	This list is always enabled	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
Proxy Bypass	This list is always enabled	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
Additional categories	RM SafetyNet	RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal
Web-based mail services	This list is not available with RM SafetyNet	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
Mobile Phones/SMS/Ring Tones	This list is not available with RM SafetyNet	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
.MP3 and .exe files	This list is not available with RM SafetyNet	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy
Non-educational games	This list is not available with RM SafetyNet	This list can be amended locally in line with local Acceptable Use Policy

Categories that can be amended by filtering administrators in education establishments with RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal should always be managed in line with the local Acceptable Use Policy.

Please note that if an education establishment with RM SafetyNet Plus or RM SafetyNet Universal cannot see these filter lists or the administration interface this is likely to be because the filter lists for that establishment are managed centrally by the Local Authority, RBC or other designated filtering administrator.

Education establishments with RM SafetyNet filtering cannot amend the filter lists provided; if a locally-customisable filtering solution is required please contact our sales team to discuss our affordable and specialised RM SafetyNet Plus and RM SafetyNet Universal filtering solutions.