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Dear Parent/Carer

Personalised Learning and Learning Platforms

Over the course of this term we will be introducing children to STARZ and providing them with usernames and passwords that will enable them to access their own webspace.

STARZ is a local solution to a government target set for schools to provide Personalised Learning and Learning Platforms where "all pupils will be able to access a personalised workspace, capable of supporting an e-portfolio, by 2007-08". A Learning Platform is basically a dedicated webspace that includes:

- communication and collaboration tools e.g. web-based email to enable peer/mentor dialogue;
- safe and secure, individual online learning space for the school workforce and pupils enabling anytime, anywhere learning;
- tools to enable teachers to manage and tailor content to user needs and learning styles, and to track user progress.

Cambridgeshire's solution, to which we have subscribed, has been to design STARZ which is a personalised on-line webspace where pupils can access and store their work, have access to learning resources and activities, and be able to communicate electronically with their teachers and peers. Although it may be some time before we make full use of the learning platform potential in respect of Personalised Learning (a further government initiative) and home-school liaison, the short term benefits will enable us to meet a number of Information and Communication Technology subject objectives.

With password controlled access to STARZ pupils will be able to work from any computer with an internet connection in school, from home or elsewhere.

We will provide the personal logins - usernames and passwords - that will give access to the personal online webspace in STARZ. The webspace is not accessible by anyone but themselves and the system administrators which will include their teachers. Through STARZ children will have access to numerous learning resources that are provided by our own teachers or by ICT Services.



Cambridgeshire
County Council
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People's Services

On the webspace children will be able to store documents, sound, pictures and video, access e-learning resources and use e-mail. The e-mail facility is restricted to other STARZ users, i.e. those provided with STARZ accounts, and is limited to pupils in other Cambridgeshire schools. Children will not be able to send or receive mail outside of the STARZ system. The web search facility is subject to Local Authority protocols and restrictions in respect of the sites that can be accessed. E mails are monitored and accounts will be closed down if used inappropriately.

STARZ is maintained by ICT Services (which is a Cambridgeshire Local Authority agency) and hosted by Digitalbrain. As it is provided by the Local Authority it does mean that internet safety and security are an integral part of the system. STARZ can be accessed from Cambridgeshire's portal at www.cceducation.net and by selecting the Education tab, then STARZ. The children's unique logins will provide access to their own webspace.

Your child's username and password are on the label below.

Please ask any questions you may have about STARZ and my apologies for the use of jargon!

Yours sincerely

Pauline Marsh (ICT subject leader)

