

Merlin: A quick guide for parents

Merlin is part of the SWGFL (South West Grid for Learning) and is what is termed an Electronic Learning Platform. It allows schools to set up a secure environment on which the children and other members of the school community who have access rights can access and upload information.

In Kemble Primary School we have begun using it in two ways. The first of those is for public pages. And the second is to set up groups of learners who can access specified password protected pages and can use those pages to help their learning.

Public Pages

You can access the public page from a link on our main school website:

<http://www.kemble.gloucs.sch.uk/> . This gives a welcome message, some links and then navigation links on the left hand side of the page. Those links take you to other areas of our Merlin public pages.

So far, our public pages consist of a **maths page** which contains links and a game for children to play. Over the coming months there will be useful documents on the page which will help you better understand how we teach maths at Kemble. There is also an **E-safety page** which contains some excellent links to help your children stay safe when they are using the internet. **Chestnut Class** also have a public page on which they post their weekly homework and spelling tasks.

Main Homepage

Links to Chestnut public, Maths and e-safety pages

Topical or useful links

Password protected pages

Each child in Chestnut Class currently has a username and password which allows them to use specific password protected pages. The pages and other functions that they can access are determined by the administrator (Chris and Dan).

As they have a password, they have access to their own desktop where they can create RSS feeds to their favourite news sites. They can also customise their desktop with a picture and add links to their favourite websites. They also have the ability to upload work and download work which is a very useful tool for enabling the children to upload incomplete work from school, work on it at home and then re-upload it so that they can get it back in school again. Additionally, the children will be able to access specific learning links related to the curriculum areas that they are studying, and be able to take part in discussions, contribute to wikis, access calendars, take part in a blog or take part in a survey.

At the moment it is only children in Chestnut Class who have secure logins although we hope that more children will be given them in the near future.

Chestnut Main Page

Mr. G's Class Manage Space Add Space to Favourites Create Space

Most Used Spaces

- Noticeboard
- Chestnut's Calendar
- Chestnut's Stars of the Week
- Chestnut's Discussions...
- Myst Page
- Chestnut's Surveys
- Chestnut Homework
- Recycle Bin

Add Content

Noticeboard

Welcome to Mr. G's class page! This page is specifically for the children in my class. Throughout next year, we will be using Merlin more and more, you will be uploading homework from home direct onto the site, so you will no longer have to remember to bring some pieces of work into school!
I will upload all of your spellings and homework to this area so that you can always access your homework at home.
(Then there will never be an excuse for not having done it!)
If you have any suggestions for our page, please just let me know! Mr. G.

Picture

Tudor Web Links

- The Tudors
- Woodlands Tudor Pages
- <http://www.brims.co.uk/tudors/>
- <http://tudorhistory.org/>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/tudors/>
- <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/Tudors.htm>
- <http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/nettsch/time/tudors.html>

Chestnut Discussions menu page

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Chestnut's Discussions...

Mr. G's Class > Chestnut's Discussions...

New Actions Settings View: Subject

Subject	Created By	Replies	Last Updated
What is your favourite sport to watch and why?	Mr Dan Glentworth	3	18/09/2011 04:41 PM
What would be your idea of a perfect day out?	Mr Dan Glentworth	11	14/09/2011 04:11 PM
What are your hobbies? What makes them special?	Mr Dan Glentworth	1	14/09/2011 01:57 PM
What did you miss most about school over the summer?	Mr Dan Glentworth	24	08/09/2011 02:24 PM

How is it safe?

Merlin comes under the umbrella of the SWGFL and as such it has the highest rates of encryption security available. Passwords are given to the children and they are told not

to share them with anybody (except their parents). All pages and features are regularly reviewed, both by the teacher who is responsible for them, and by the SWGFL team. As part of their learning in ICT the children are taught about internet safety and if any child uses any of the functionality inappropriately or is suspected of giving their password to anybody else then we would speak with both the child and their parent at the earliest convenience. Pages, posts, discussions, blogs and users can all be deleted or have altered permissions at the click of a button. Children who leave the school have their accounts deleted, although they are welcome to contribute to any public discussions.

Merlin allows children to have the experience of taking part in important aspects of modern communication such as discussion, blogs and wikis without the need to use external sites such as MSN, Facebook and Twitter.

How long will we be using Merlin?

Merlin is currently included in our considerable annual internet and infrastructure service costs. However, in April 2013 Merlin will stop being included in the cost and so we will have to review our use of Merlin at that point.

If you would like to know more about Merlin or any other area of the curriculum then please pop in and see Mr. Conners or write a suggestion on the slips in the conservatory area.

Chris Conners

19.9.11