Title

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was revised in January 2015 as part of a review of all school organisational policies. It also serves to prepare for our application for a "Digital Schools of Distinction" Award. It was adapted to the current format from an original policy on Internet Acceptable Usage dated, October 2013.

Rationale

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) will be used, school-wide, within a framework of an integrated and cross-curricular approach. School Management and teaching staff are aware that ICT should not be used for its own sake, but should be used as a learning tool; it can provide the children with the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning; ICT can develop children's independent research skills and promote life-long learning. It is considered important that pupils are made aware of the ways in which ICT can be made to work for them. However, children must also appreciate the ways in which computers and internet activity can intrude on our private lives.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of our School

Our school aims to provide a learning environment that is meaningful and inclusive; we believe that the use of ICT has facilitated our endeavour in this regard by providing us with access to visual learning content and information. The safety and well –being of our pupils is paramount; this Acceptable Use Policy hopes to keep our children safe while working online in the school building.

Content of the Policy

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet.

General

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by an adult
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material
- The school can/will monitor pupils' Internet use
- Pupils and Teachers will be provided with advice in the area of Internet safety
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software/content will not be permitted
- Virus protection software will be used and updated as required
- The use of personal memory sticks, CD-ROMs or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission
- Pupils will be responsible for good behaviour on the Internet.
  Teaching staff will ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that pupils know and understand that no internet user is permitted to;
  - Use the internet for any illegal activity, including accessing other computers
  - Retrieve, send, copy or display offensive messages or pictures
  - Use obscene or offensive language
  - Cause damage to computers, computer systems or networks
  - Violate copyright laws
  - Use another user's password
  - Trespass in another user's folders, work or files
  - Cause any form of vandalism to the machine or the work of others including the uploading or creation of viruses.

Accessing the Internet

- Pupils will not intentionally visit sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable material
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials should this occur, for any reason, through the filter settings
- Pupils will use the Internet for educational and/or educational research purposes only

- Pupils will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism)

- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies is in breach of the school's Internet Acceptable Use Policy

- Pupils will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons

- Pupils will not disclose their own or other people's personal details, such as names, addresses, telephone numbers or pictures

- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the Internet

- Pupils will not access chat rooms, discussion fora or use any messaging service in the school.

School Website

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to have their work published on our school website in accordance with and on the approval of their class teacher, who will manage the process

- The publication of pupils' work will be co-ordinated by the class teacher

- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs/video clips that focus on group activities. No pupil will be named in photographs published on our school website.

- Parental wishes with regard to the publishing of their child's photograph will be adhered to strictly. Group photographs with children whose parents indicated were not to be published will not be uploaded unless the withdrawal of that child from the photograph would cause exclusion e.g. Principal's Award Winners; in such cases the child's face being pixelated to ensure anonymity

- The school will ensure that the image files are of groups and are appropriately named – the school will avoid using pupils' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the website

- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

- Personal pupil information including home address or contact details will be omitted in all cases from our school website

Personal Devices

Pupils are not permitted to bring or use mobile phones/camera phones or any other devices that can take or store images or video material in the school, on school property or on school tours. Please refer to our Mobile Phone in School Policy, Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Social Networking

Social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have age restrictions for their usage; these can be found in the terms and conditions of each. It is illegal for children under the age of 13 to set up personal accounts on these social networking sites. If a teaching staff member becomes aware that a pupil in school has an operational personal account on social networking sites and is not 13 years old, the parents/guardians of that child will be informed. The passing on this type of information is only done to ensure the safety of pupils and that parents/guardians are informed.

Consequences for Unacceptable Use of the Internet at School

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including

- Written warnings
- Withdrawal of access privileges

In extreme cases the gross misuse of the school's internet facilities can lead to suspension or expulsion.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Success Criteria

Guidelines within this policy will be monitored closely to ensure their suitability for purpose; this will be done on a whole school basis to be discussed at staff meetings.

Timeframe for Implementation

This policy will take immediate effect.

Timeframe for Review

The policy will be reviewed annually at a staff meeting.

Appendix 1

St. John's National School, Ballisodare, Co. Sligo

Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

Please read our Internet Acceptable Usage Policy. Sign and return this permission form to the school.
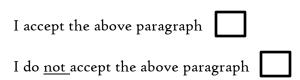
Name of Pupil: _____ Class: _____

Pupil

I agree to follow the school's Internet Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the internet at school. I will use the internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me in school.

Pupil's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian

As the Parent or Legal Guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Internet Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my child/the child in my care to access the Internet at school. I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide online safety but the school cannot be held responsible if the pupils access unsuitable material.

I accept the above paragraph ☐

I do <u>not</u> accept the above paragraph ☐

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Internet Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing children's work on the school's website, including the use of photographs and video files produces following the Internet Acceptable Use Policy guidelines.

I accept the above paragraph ☐

I do <u>not</u> accept the above paragraph ☐

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2

Advice for Parents on ICT in the Home

During school hours teachers will guide pupils towards appropriate materials on the Internet. Outside of school, parents or guardians should bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they normally would with other information sources, such as television, magazines, books etc.

Parents and guardians should be aware that the internet service provider at home may not be filtered.

It is therefore important that these guidelines are considered.

- Devise rules for using the Internet with your child(ren) and decide together when, for how long and what comprises appropriate use
- Be aware of the sites your children are visiting and discuss with them what they are learning
- Ensure that children do not give out personal identifying information in the internet such as picture/images, names, address, telephone number, school name or any financial information.
- Appropriate home use of the Internet can be educationally beneficial and can make a useful contribution to home and school life. It is advised that it should be supervised and the parents are aware that they are responsible for their children's use of the Internet resources at home.
- Parents should also be aware that social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have age restrictions for their usage; you will find these in the terms and conditions of each. It is illegal for children under the age of 13 to set up personal accounts on these social networking sites.