St. Peter's N.S. Phibsboro
Internet Safety: Acceptable Use Policy
A.U.P. 2023-2024

Introduction

St. Peter's National School recognises that access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gives our students enhanced opportunities to learn, engage, communicate and develop skills that will prepare them for many aspects of life. Our goal in providing internet access and devices to its students and staff is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (referred to hereunder as AUP) is to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all the members of the school community are preserved. It also aims to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe, effective, ethical and legal manner.

With access to ICT comes the availability of material that may not be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Internet use and access is considered a school resource & privilege and not a right. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed. The policy applies to all St. Peter's N.S. devices which means all computers, iPads, laptop, chromebooks smartphones and other IT resources that connect to the network in St. Peter's N.S.

This policy applies to the entire school community i.e. management, teachers, all staff, pupils and parents/guardians.

It is envisaged that the Board of Management, school and parent representatives will revise the AUP annually.

REVIEW:

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually by the following stakeholders:

- Board of Management, teaching staff, and pupils.
- All parents will be informed of any amendments necessary after such a review.

General Approach

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in St. Peter's National School. It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carer's and others who access the internet in St. Peter's National School.

Before students are allowed to make use of the school's internet facility, all Parents/Guardians will be required to complete a Permission Form (Appendix 1) and return it

to the Office. Permission forms will be sent home to families of new students during the September of each year and the school's database will be updated accordingly.

- **Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.**
- Filtering solftware and/or equivalent systems facilitated through the broadband netword, will be used in order to minimize risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school reserves the right to regularly monitor pupil's internet usage in school.

When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected:

- To treat others with respect at all times.
- Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Respect the right to privacy of all other members of the school community.
- Respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

St. Peter's National School will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of pupils or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies.
In such cases St. Peter's National School will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions.

Safer Use of the Internet
St. Peter's National School implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in St. Peter's National School through our PASTORAL CARE, ICT, SPHE programmes and outside agencies e.g. Ger Brick, Cyber Safe kids, etc.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.

This policy has been developed by a working group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, pupils, parents/carers, and representatives of the Board of Management.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.
- Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).
- Internal monitoring data for network activity.
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils, parents, and teaching staff.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, relevant staff will be informed i.e. the Principal, deputy principal, IT co-ordinator's and relevant Staff members.

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the board of management and all staff members.

Content Filtering

St. Peter's National School has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

- Level 4- This level allows blocks on certain websites and allows usage of youtube.
- Pupils taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

Web Browsing and Downloading

- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom to their teacher.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school but outside the classroom to relevant class teacher, IT co-ordinator, deputy principal or principal.
- Pupils and staff will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content.
- Pupils and staff 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 use the school's internet connection only for educational and career development activities.
- Pupils will not engage in online activities such as uploading or downloading large files that result in heavy network traffic which impairs the service for other internet users.
- Pupils will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will be made 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.
- Use of file sharing and torrent sites is allowed at certain times.
- Downloading by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is allowed with staff permission.

Email and Messaging

- The use of personal email accounts is not allowed at St. Peter's National School.
- Pupils will use approved class email accounts through Microsoft Teams (5th and 6th class) to communicate with staff/class teachers but only under supervision by or permission from a teacher. (During prior school closures students from Junior infants to 3rd made use of class dojo accounts, and 4th class used Microsoft teams email accounts, these have been discontinued.)
- Pupils should be aware that email communications (via. Microsoft Teams) are monitored.
- Pupils will not send or intentionally receive any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

- Pupils should immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication.
- Pupils should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, pupils should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.
- Students should not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses, telephone numbers or pictures
- Students must use appropriate language and not swear or use vulgarities.

Social Media

The following statements apply to the use of social media, messaging, blogging and video streaming services in St. Peter's National School:

- **Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is only with express permission from teaching staff.**
- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, Whatsapp, G Chat, Stars, Discord, Instagram etc. is not allowed in St. Peter's National School.
- Staff and pupils, parents and all members of the school community must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, other members of the St. Peter's National School community
- Staff and pupils, parents and all members of the school community must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the St. Peter's National School community on social media.
- Staff and pupils must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring St. Peter's National School into disrepute.
- Staff and pupils must not represent your personal views as those of bring St. Peter's National School on any social medium.
- **If pupils engage in any of the above, Sanctions listed below will be followed in line with the school code of behaviour.**

Personal Devices and loaning of school devices/IT infrastructure

Pupils using their own technology in school should follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if they were using school equipment.

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, and digital music players in St. Peter's National School:

- Pupils are not allowed to switch on their personal internet-enabled devices while in St. Peter's National School or outside of the school, while representing the school. E.g. on school trips, tours, excursions etc.

Personal Media Devices/Mobile Phones

Personal Media Devices including all personal technological devices such as mobile phones, and tablets are not allowed to be switched on on the school premises during school hours. Any use by a pupil of their own personal devices within the school grounds is in direct breach of the School's AUP and may also be in breach of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy. (Steps to be taken)

Mobile phones may not be used to take videos, photographs, or to record another pupil or a member of staff. In this way, without someone's permission it would seriously infringe on a person's rights. To misuse a phone/device in this way will be deemed a serious breach of the code of behavior and may result in sanctions up to and including suspension.

In accordance with child protection procedures, parents who accompany a class on an outing or a school tour are not permitted to take photographs or recordings using phones or other devices.

Staff making use of school online platforms such as Aladdin connect, Microsoft teams, outlook, etc. on their own personal mobile phones, must ensure to have adequate password protection and log out when finished.

Images & Video

- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- At St. Peter's National School pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is not allowed under any circumstances, except by staff members for educational purposes.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is allowed once care is taken that no harm is done to staff or pupils of St. Peter's National School.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website.
- **Images taken by staff on personal devices must be deleted from personal devices as soon as they are uploaded to school laptop/website.**
- Pupils must not share images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.
- Sharing explicit images and in particular explicit images of pupils and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.
- Sharing explicit images of other pupils automatically incurs suspension as a sanction.

Cyberbullying

- When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times.
- Engaging in online activities with the intention to harm, harass, or embarrass and another pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.
- Measures are taken by St. Peter's National School to ensure that staff and pupils are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. This definition includes cyber-bullying even when it happens outside the school or at night.

- Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.
- The prevention of cyber bullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

School Website
- St. Peter's National school website is https://www.stpetersns.net/.
- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.
- The website will be regularly checked by relevant APII to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.
- Webpages allowing comments or user-generated content will be pre-moderated and checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain any inappropriate or offensive content.
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- St. Peter's National School will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips of focusing on group activities (for the most part). Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on St. Peter's National School web pages.
- St. Peter's National School will avoid publishing the first and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.
- St. Peter's N.S. uses the Aladdin Connect App and email (Outlook) to communicate with parents, staff and the Board of Management.

Sanctions
- Without prejudice to the Terms and Conditions of Employment, failure to comply with the policy and procedures outlined in this document may result in:
- The withdrawal of digital devices, email and internet facilities.
- Initiation of disciplinary procedures and disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion (for students) and dismissal (for staff members).
- Serious breaches of the policy may result in notifying the relevant authorities who may in turn initiate proceedings.

Legislation
All staff should familiarise themselves with legislation relating to Internet use on page 6 of the AUP and be cognisant at all times of their obligations under The Children First Act 2015.

The AUP places obligations on teachers to ensure pupils benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

The entire AUP should be read carefully by all teachers and school staff and particular note should be taken to the below:
☐ Sites recommended to students by teachers must be previewed by that teacher before use.

☐ Students, teachers, school staff and parents will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.

☐ Internet sessions must always be supervised by a teacher.

☐ The use of personal devices such as memory sticks, CD-ROMs or other digital storage media by pupils in school requires a teacher's permission.

☐ Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

☐ If pupils receive offensive, unpleasant, harassing or intimidating messages via email, they must immediately inform their teacher who will in turn, follow the procedures set down in the School's Anti-Bullying and in compliance with Child Protection.

Support Structures

Websites offering support and advice in the area of Internet Safety have been listed on the school website. The following is a selection:

☐ NCTE - http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety/

☐ Webwise - http://www.webwise.ie/

☐ Make IT Secure - http://makeitsecure.ie

- Safe Internet - http://www.saferinternet.org/ww/en/pub/insafe/
- Internet Safety- https://www.cybersafekids.ie/

Ratified by Board of Management

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Chairperson, Board of Management

10 December 2024

Date:

Acceptable Use Policy
Appendix 1: Permission Form

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, and sign and return this permission form to the class teacher/office.

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

Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my son or daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet. 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 for online safety but the school cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites.

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork/ image may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing students' work on the school website.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Address: _____
_____
_____
_____

Name of Student: _____ Class: _____

Name of Student: _____ Class: _____

Name of Student: _____ Class: _____

Internet Safety Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP)
Appendix 2: AUP User Agreement

As a school user of the network and internet at St Peter's N.S., I have read and understood the Acceptable User Policy (AUP) for the use of the internet in St Peter's N.S., and by signing it, I agree to abide by the policy as stated and to accept any sanctions which may be imposed due to misuse of the internet and non-adherence to the AUP.

I agree to follow the school rules on its use. I will use the network in a responsible way and observe all the restrictions explained in the AUP. I agree to report any misuse of the network to the school Principal (Mr. Ryan) or the ICT Co-ordinator. If I do not follow the rules, I understand that this may result in loss of access to the internet/computer network as well as other disciplinary action following the code of behavior when necessary.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3: Online Learning

Direct Communication using Internet (via online platforms)

Teachers in the school may choose to use a number of tools for classroom communication. Examples include Aladdin, Microsoft Teams, Webex, Zoom and ClassDojo.

Some of these tools provide synchronous video opportunities whereby a staff member directly speaks to the children live - e.g. through a webinar or online meeting. The staff member invites pupils and their families to these meetings using a code. The following are ground rules for synchronous lessons online.

- All meetings (via Zoom) will be password protected. Teams' meetings are not password protected.
- All people involved in the meeting will conduct themselves in a similar manner that would be expected in a regular class.
- The staff member has the right to "kick out" any person being disruptive from a synchronous lesson.
- A family member is expected to be close by when a pupil is engaging in a meeting. They should monitor all online interactions from the pupil.
- If there is a need for a meeting between a child with a staff member, another adult must be present at the meeting and/or the meeting must be recorded (**we are advocating that a parent must be present at the meeting**).
- While chat may be available in an online meeting, it is the responsibility of the child's family to ensure that any interaction is appropriate. Any interaction from a pupil that could be deemed as inappropriate may result in the child's removal from the lesson or, where appropriate, a referral to Child Protection services.