

POLICY NO: 18

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The purpose of Internet use in school is to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management information and business administration systems. The Internet is fast becoming an essential element in 21st Century life for education, business and social interaction.

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school Acceptable Use Policy is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy – will be imposed.

It is envisaged that the Principal, Deputy Principals and the IT Department will revise the Acceptable Use Policy annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

This version of the AUP was created in March 2005 by Olive Costello in consultation with Management, the IT dept and the SDP Committee.

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School's Strategy

The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

General

Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.

Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.

The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.

Students and teachers will be provided with information/training in the area of Internet safety.

Uploading and downloading of music, games or any non-approved software will not be permitted.

Virus protection and /or equivalent software will be used and updated on a regular basis.

The use of personal floppy disks or CD-ROMs in school requires a teacher's permission.

Students will observe good "netiquette" (i.e., etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

World Wide Web

Students will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.

Students will be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.

Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.

Students 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.

Email

Students will only use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.

Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.

Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.

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

Internet Chat

Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.

Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.

Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.

Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat will be forbidden.

School Website

Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the Schools Website.

The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.

Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.

Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website. Instead photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities.

Video clips may be password protected.

Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.

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

Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998

Interception Act 1993

Video Recordings Act 1989

The Data Protection Act 1988

Sanctions

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

Permission Form

Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this permission form to:

Mr Kevin Duffy
Principal
Moate Community School
Church Street, Moate, Co Westmeath

Name of Pupil: _____

Class/Year: _____

Pupil

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.

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 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 pupils access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph I do not accept the above paragraph
(Please tick as appropriate)

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 Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing children's work on the school website.

I accept the above paragraph
I do not accept the above paragraph
(Please tick as appropriate)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Letter to Parents/Guardians

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Internet Permission Form

As part of the school's education programme we offer pupils supervised access to the Internet. This allows students access to a large array of online educational resources that we

believe can greatly enhance students' learning experience.

However, access to and use of the Internet requires responsibility on the part of the user and the school. These responsibilities are outlined in the school's Acceptable Use Policy (enclosed). It is important that this enclosed document is read carefully, signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the school.

Although the school takes active steps to promote safe use of the Internet, it recognises the possibility that students may accidentally or deliberately access inappropriate or objectionable material.

The school respects each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their children access to the Internet as defined by the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

Having read the terms of our school's Acceptable Use Policy, you may like to take a moment to consider how the Internet is used in your own home, and see if there is any way you could make it safer for your own family.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Duffy
Principal