

# Inch National School

## Acceptable Usage Policy

### Aim

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the Code of Behaviour and this policy will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP regularly. Before enrolling, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood. It is assumed that the parent accepts the terms of the AUP unless the school is specifically notified.

This AUP was developed by staff, parents and BOM of Inch National School in January 2017 with reference to the following legislation

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 and 2014
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1998

This policy also refers to and is cross referenced with the following school policies

- Code of Behaviour
- Anti- Bullying Policy
- SPHE Policy
- School Tours Policy

The policy is divided into three sections

- 1) The school's strategy
- 2) Sanctions
- 3) Support Structures

## 1) School's Strategy

The school employs 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.
- Internet will be used for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher
- Usernames will be used by pupils to avoid disclosure of identity.
- YouTube' (and similar sites) can be accessed only under the supervision and direction of the teacher.
- Filtering software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety through the Stay Safe Programme.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal memory sticks, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- It is important that parents/guardians and pupils are aware of our Anti Bullying Policy in relation to social media;
  - ***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 should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.***
  - ***However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour***

### World Wide Web

- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.

- Students may use the Internet for educational purposes only during class time. However, all web sites will be vetted by the class teacher.
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable usage policy. If a pupil deliberately misuses the internet or is found running searches on inappropriate topics or attempting to access inappropriate/unsuitable websites, this will result in disciplinary action, including the withdrawal of access privileges. Parents/guardians will receive notification of misuse by a pupil. Further misuse will result in longer withdrawal of access privileges, as seen fit by the school staff.

### **Email / Internet Chat**

- Some pupils may have personal email accounts. Pupils are not allowed to access these accounts in school or from a school laptop.
- Pupils will not be issued with school email accounts.
- Pupils are not permitted to use internet chatrooms in school or from a school laptop.

### **School Website**

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school's website.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips of focusing on group activities. Photographs, audio and video clips will be used. Video clips will not be password protected.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website will avoid publishing the names of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use pupils' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
- Parental consent will be sought at the beginning of each school year for the inclusion of pupils or their work on the school website.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

### **School Facebook Page**

- Inch National School operates a school Facebook page. The purpose of this page is to enhance home-school- community communication and to promote the school as a dynamic, progressive community of learning and holistic development. Parental permission will be sought at the beginning of each school year for the inclusion of pupils or their work on the school Facebook page.

- The Facebook page will focus on upcoming school events, school achievements, work displays, group photos.
- Like the website pupils will not be named or individually identified on Facebook postings.
- Users should not add comments that identify children.
- The purpose of the school Facebook is to promote all that is positive in the school. Contributors/ commenters should ensure that online messages and comments about the school are respectful.
- Negative comments by individuals about children, staff, parents or the school on the school's page or other pages will result in a permanent ban to our social media account and may result in legal action by the Board of Management if the comment is deemed to be unfounded or slanderous in nature.
- Requests to "friend" a member of the staff in the school should be avoided. The staff would like to keep their personal lives personal. It may be awkward for a staff member to ignore such friend requests.

## Mobile Phones / Electronic Devices

- Pupils in Inch School are not allowed to bring mobile phones or any other type of electronic device during class time or on any school activities e.g. school tours. (Refer to the school's School Tour Policy)
- Any pupil found to be taking photographs or recording with a mobile phone or any other electronic device is in direct breach of the school's acceptable usage policy and will be dealt with as per the school's Code of Behaviour.

## Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, as outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour.

Sanctions can include written warnings, withdrawal of access and privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

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

## 2) Support Structures

Inch National School endeavours to have support structures in places to ensure

- 1) The successful implementation of this AUP
  - 2) the appropriate use of electronic devices in school
  - 3) staff, parents and pupils feel supported in same.
- The school will provide Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying lessons (including participation in National Internet Safety Day) annually for pupils from 2nd to 6th class. Resources that may be used to implement this programme include:  
Use of the 'Kids' section on the [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) website

The Stay Safe Programme as part of the SPHE curriculum.

- The school will provide Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying talks for parents and guardians biannually to all parents in the school.
- Community Gardaí link in with classes re Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying annually.
- Staff will regularly partake in Continuous Professional Development in relation to AUP, internet safety and Cyber Bullying.
- The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

## Review

This policy was reviewed in February 2017 and will be updated in line with department guidelines.

## Ratification

This policy was last ratified by the BOM on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017