



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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the Code of Behaviour and this policy will be imposed.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 2018 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,
- GDPR 2018

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
- Data Protection Policy
- Photograph Guidelines

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 or social media accounts.
- 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.
- 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. (See School's Photograph Guidelines- Appendix A)
- 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 and for the posting of photographs on the school's social media accounts.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.



SCHOOL FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM PAGES

- 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 (See school's photograph guidelines- Appendix A)
- The purpose of the school Social Media accounts 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.
- Users cannot advertise non-school products or services on the school's Facebook page

MOBILE PHONES / ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- Pupils in Inch School are not allowed to bring mobile phones or any other type of electronic device during school 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 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.

It was reviewed in 2018 in line with GDPR legislation and again in October 2022.

RATIFICATION

This policy was ratified by the BOM on the 8th March 2017.

The reviewed policy was ratified by the Board on the 1st of October 2018 and again in October 2022

Chairperson: *Olina Durcan*

Date: 12.10.2022



Permission Form

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

Name of Student: _____

Class: _____

Parent/Guardian

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.

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

In relation to the school website and Facebook page, 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 students' work on the school website.

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

Signature: _____ Date: _____



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

Conor McKenna



Principal

AUP checklist

For an AUP to be robust it needs to be reviewed and updated regularly, taking into consideration implementation issues that may arise. The following is a checklist that may be used when developing or revising an AUP.

1. Have AUP implementation issues arisen since the AUP was designed/revised?

2. Have these issues been discussed with parents, students and teachers and incorporated into an updated AUP?

3. Given that an AUP is in place, can the school confidently address the following scenarios?
 - A student is found using a chat room to arrange a face-to-face meeting with a friend.
 - The school uses filtering software but a student accidentally accesses a pornographic website while in your care.
 - A student publishes defamatory information on a personal website about a peer.

4. Has the AUP had a positive impact on curriculum delivery?

5. Has internal or external expertise assisted the formulation or reformulation of the AUP?

6. Has the school discussed the use of the Internet with parents and guardians?

7. Has the AUP as a code of Internet use transferred to home use?

8. Does an open dialogue exist between students and teachers relating to Internet misuse and safety issues?

9. Are teachers' and students' Internet safety training needs being met?



Appendix A

Photograph Guidelines for Inch National School

16186G

Schools need and welcome positive publicity. Children's photographs add colour, life and interest to photographs of the school activities and initiatives. Making use of photographs in school publicity materials can increase pupil motivation and staff morale and help parents and the local community identify and celebrate the school's achievements.

However, photographs must be used in a responsible way. Schools need to respect children's and parents' rights of privacy and be aware of potential child protection issues.

CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

Risk can occur when individual pupils can be identified in photographs. Providing the name and the photograph of a pupil in a publication or on a website allows for the possibility of people outside the school identifying and then contacting pupils directly.

The School has a Child Protection Policy and Parents, children other adults who are aware of any abuse / inappropriate contact with children that may be connected with publicity material should report this immediately to the Principal or Designated Liaison Person.

APPROPRIATE USE OF IMAGES.

Inch National School adopts the following guidelines when using the photographs of children in school publicity materials, including use of images / names on the school website, newsletters, and displays

- 1) Teachers will not identify children by name in photographs displayed, in particular when they are provided for publication. The principal will make an informed judgement about what constitutes publication.
- 2) Only photographs of children appropriately dressed are used. This normally means school uniform. Care is taken when using photographs of children participating in sports activities. We do not use photographs of children participating in swimming events.
- 3) We never use the image of a child who is known to be the subject of a court order.
- 4) On some occasions, e.g. a child winning a competition or team playing in a tournament, or a photograph of 'Junior Infants', the local / national newspaper may wish to publish a



photograph with the accompanying children's names. By signing the school consent form at the beginning of the year, you as parents or guardians are giving the school permission to name your child in such pictures.

- 5) Staff must ensure that press are made aware of the School Policy and that the Photographer complies with the School Policy.
- 6) Providing parental consent is secured, there is no breach of the Data Protection Act in simply passing on a child's name to a journalist. If the school / parents are concerned that a newspaper has used the photograph and name of a child inappropriately, they should contact the Press Complaints Commission.
- 7) The School Website: When using photographs on the school website, the school follows the same rules as other publicity materials. Parents are asked to consent to their child's image being included in pictures for the website at the start of each academic year. We do not name individual children and identify them in photographs.
- 8) Facebook: When using photographs on the school Facebook account, the school follows the same rules as other publicity materials. Parents are asked to consent to their child's image being included in pictures for the school's Facebook account at the start of each academic year. We do not name individual children and identify them in photographs.
- 9) Pupils must not be approached or photographed while at school without the permission of the school authorities.
- 10) PARENTS FILMING / TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS – Parents or other spectators may want to photograph or video at an event such as sports day or the performance of a service or an assembly. This is a valuable part of school life and can be very rewarding for both the family and school. The school reserves the right to ask parents / visitors not to take photographs of children / use videoing equipment if it disrupts an event or the school feels the images may be used inappropriately. Parents are asked to respect the views of others.
- 11) PARENTAL CONSENT – Inch National School respects the right of parents / guardians to withhold consent from their child's / children's photographs being used in school publicity materials.