



**Inch N.S.**

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# **ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

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## **ICT and Internet Acceptable Usage Policy.**

### **1. Introduction**

Internet use and access is a valuable school resource. The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's digital resources in a safe and effective manner and will be protected from harmful and illegal use of the Internet. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. The responsible use of internet and digital technologies, both online and offline and access is considered an integral part of teaching and learning. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to agreed sanctions will be imposed.

When using the internet students, 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.

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:

- Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP)
- Education
- Content Filtering
- Monitoring

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to

- Students who have access to and are users of the internet in Inch National School .
- Members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in Inch National School .
- All school personnel who use digital tools in remote teaching and learning.

### **2. Mission Statement**

As well as being an important education resource, the ability to use ICT effectively is a vital life skill in modern society. Our aim is to produce learners ( pupils and staff) who are confident and effective users of ICT. We strive to achieve this aim by:

- Helping all staff and pupils explore the meaning resources provided by ICT
- Helping all children to use ICT with purpose and enjoyment
- Helping all children to develop the necessary skills to exploit ICT
- Helping all children to become autonomous users of ICT
- Helping all children to evaluate the benefits of ICT and its impact on society
- Using ICT to develop partnerships beyond the school
- Celebrating success in the use of ICT

### Why does our school require ICT?

- To provide the best possible education for all our pupils
- To provide a powerful and up to date teaching resources for all our teacher
- To allow for more effective administration
- To help provide more effective communication between staff and parents
- To communicate with teachers and pupils in Europe and world wide
- To prepare children for life in a technologically advanced world and the digital literacy and IT skills which will be required of them as they advance.

### **3. Our School's Strategy**

Digital literacy skills are key life skills for children and young people today and the internet is a valuable teaching and learning tool. It can be used to develop children's independent research skills and promote lifelong learning. They need to be media savvy and know how to effectively search for and evaluate online content. They also need to know how to protect personal information and reputation and know how to get help if problems arise. The school employs several strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the internet.

#### **4. General**

- 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 students' internet usage.
- 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 external 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

#### **5. Use of the internet**

- All staff members will have access to the internet for professional use during school hours.
- Pupils will use the internet in school for educational purposes only. There may be occasions when a teacher may allow pupils to watch an age- appropriate film or short video clip
- In the event of a pupil accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the pupil will be taught to immediately minimize the page and report the incident to the class teacher without attracting the attention of other students. The teacher should report the incident to the principal.
- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene illegal or hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information, either their own or that of others.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the schools acceptable use policy
- When using Class Dojo/ Seesaw or Google Classroom, the children will be outside of the Inch National School network. Thus, it will be incumbent upon their parents and guardians to ensure adequate internet safety precautions are taken. We ask that parents exercise caution in allowing pupils to use social media accounts with minimum age requirements.

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

- To always treat others with respect
- Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute
- Respect the right to privacy of all other members of the school community

### **6. Education and Internet Awareness.**

Inch National School recognised that cyberbullying has become a significant threat for children. Through education and awareness, we aim to limit our children's susceptibility to it now and as they progress to secondary school. 21st century life presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation from which children and young people need to be protected. At the same time, they need to learn to recognise and avoid these risks- to become internet wise. Inch National School implement the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet

- Pupils are taught internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in inch National School through specific Webwise lessons
- Inch National School uses National Internet Safety Day in February to promote safer and more effective use of the internet
- From time to time there may be speakers invited to address the children/ Parents' Association on the topic of internet safety

### **7. Filtering**

The school will use the Internet provided and filtered by the PDST. "Filtering" is a term used to describe a way of limiting the content of web pages, emails, chat rooms and other electronic data to which users may be exposed. Inch National School filters

Inch National School has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network

- Devices used by the children are filtered on level 3: This level allows access to millions of websites including games but blocks YouTube, and blocks access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites belonging to the Social Networking category.
- Teachers Laptops: Level 4 Level four: Essentially the same as level three apart from allowing access to YouTube. Social Networking sites and 'personal storage websites' like Flickr, however, are not accessible at this level.

## 8. Email and Messaging

Students may be given approved school email accounts for use in conjunction with the Google Education Suite. In such an instance the following will apply

- Students should not under any circumstances share their email account login details with other pupils.
- Students should not use school email accounts to register for online services such as social networking services, apps, and games.
- Students will use approved class email accounts only under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Students should be aware that email communications are monitored.
- Students will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students 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.
- Students should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, pupils should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.
- 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.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher
- Students will not forward email messages or screenshots of emails or "reply all without the permission of the originator
- Students must only use their school email for school related activities and for registering on school based activities only. The use of personal email addresses is not allowed for school based work.
- Students should not use school email accounts to register for online services, social networking, apps or games.
- Students should 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 report any such communications to a teacher.
- All emails and opinions expressed in email are the responsibility of the author and do not reflect the opinion of the school.

## 9. Social Media and messaging services

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow us to interact and keep in touch. While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that members of your school community are expected to follow when using social media.

The principles set out in this policy are designed to help ensure that social media is used responsibly so that the confidentiality of pupils and other staff and the reputation of the school is protected.

- All members of the school community must not use social media, messaging services and the internet in any way to harass, impersonate, insult, abuse or defame others.
- Staff and students must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Inch National School community on social media.
- Staff and students must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- Staff and students must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Inch National School into disrepute.
- Staff and Students must not represent your personal views as those of the school on any social media service or message services.
- Students will be provided with guidance on etiquette regarding social media.

Teachers can read further information about the use of Social Media and Electronic Communication here:

<https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/2021/guidance-for-registered-teachers-about-the-use-of-social-media-and-electronic-communication.html>

## **10. Personal Devices**

### **a) Personal devices**

Students are not allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, smartwatches, smart phones into Inch National School .

### **b) School Devices.**

The school will have a set of tablets and chromebooks. These are timetables for use in class at teachers discretion. These devices are used solely for educational purposes. Privileges may be withdrawn for inappropriate use.

### **c) Sanctioned laptops/ devices by the department of education:**

Parents of children who have been sanctioned laptops are instructed to be vigilant in monitoring their use in the home, as per procedures for school.

## **11. Digital Learning Platforms (including video conferencing)**

- Inch National School uses Class Dojo and Seesaw for digital learning and communication. These platform should enable two-way communication.

- Prior acceptance from parents should be sought for student usage of the schools' digital learning platform.
- All school-related media and data should be stored on the school's platform.
- The use of digital platforms should be used in line with considerations set out in the school's data protection plan (GDPR).
- Each user of the platform will be provided with their own unique login credentials.
- Passwords for digital platforms and accounts should not be shared.
- Use of email addresses ( as noted above)

## **12. Remote Learning Policy: *Please refer to separate Remote Learning Policy***

### **13. Images and Video**

- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that students are not identifiable ( no names mentioned)
- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that students are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- Students and staff must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.
- Students and staff must not take or 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.

### **14. School Website**

- Students may create projects, artwork or audio- visual recording which may be suitable for publication on our school's website. Designated teachers will manage the publication of material on the school website, adhering to the stipulations below
- Personal information, home addresses and contact details will not be published in the school website
- Class lists will not be published.
- Pupils' full name will not be published beside their photograph
- Digital photographs, video clips and audio clips will focus on groups and group activities rather than on individual pupils where possible
- Pupils will be given an opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website
- Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such
- Permission to publish a student's work will be sought from the pupils/parents/ guardians. This permission can be withdrawn at any time.
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of students are published on the school website.



## **15. Cyberbullying**

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, Inch National School considers that 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.

When using the internet students, 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 another student or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

## **16. Legislation**

The following legislation governs the use of the internet.

- Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 and Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
- Children First Act 2015
- Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 (Coco's Law)
- Criminal Damage Act 1991

## **17. Sanctions**

If a child deliberately misuse the internet or email or found running searches on inappropriate topics or attempting to access inappropriate/ unsuitable websites, this will result in disciplinary action, according to the schools Code of Behaviour, including the withdrawal of access privileges. Parents/ guardians will receive notification of misuse by a pupil. Further misuse will result in a longer withdrawal of access privileges, as seen fit by school staff.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities, including An Garda Síochána.

## **18. Implementation.**

This policy will be implemented from February 2023.

## **19. Ratification and Communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in February 2023.

## 20 . Review

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.
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils, parents, and teaching staff

The policy will be reviewed in 2026, or sooner, should the need arise.

Signed: *Mark Ward* ( Chairperson)

*Kat Walsh* ( Principal)

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**Permission Form**

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the internet and digital technologies. I will use the internet and digital technologies in a responsible way and obey all the procedures outlined in the policy.

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian : \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and 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 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: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



