

St. Mary's Secondary School, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary

I. T. and Internet Acceptable Usage Policy

Introduction

St. Mary's Secondary School, Nenagh provides a comprehensive and modern ICT infrastructure to its staff and students to create a technology-enabled teaching and learning environment. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence in the school by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. The aim of this ICT Acceptable Usage Policy is to ensure that staff and students benefit from the learning opportunities offered by those facilities in a safe and effective manner.

St. Mary's is committed to making ICT an integral part of its teaching and learning environment. Aims are as follows:

- To enhance the curriculum by using ICT to raise standards.
- To encourage creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking by using technology.
- To prepare students to meet the demands of a technology based society.
- To use technology to gather and share information in real time so as to meet the personalised needs of each student.
- To enable teachers to support and instruct their student in the safe, effective and appropriate use of technology.

Internet and ICT usage is considered a school resource. Therefore, it is necessary to provide guidelines on effective usage and to prohibit certain illicit activities.

This **Acceptable Usage policy** covers the following areas:

1. Usage Guidelines
2. Network Storage
3. Internet Access & Email
4. School-issued devices

To gain access to the school's ICT resources all students under the age of 18 must obtain parental permission and must sign and return this form. Students 18 years of age and over may sign their own forms. Before signing this form, the ICT Acceptable Usage Policy should be read carefully so that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

If you breach any of these conditions, the school may regard this as misconduct. In appropriate cases the school will deal with such breaches under the school's Code of Behaviour and Discipline.

1. Usage Guidelines

The ICT facilities in the school have been established for educational purposes, which includes classroom activities, career development and limited high quality self-discovery activities, such as project work and research. Students are responsible for good behaviour while using the school's ICT facilities.

The school reserves the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material you access or post through the system in line with legislation. You are also expected to follow the rules set forth by the law in your use of the ICT facilities.

Key Guidelines

- Students should use school facilities for educational purposes
- All users must keep their passwords private
- All users must log off or lock their machines if they leave a computer unattended.
- All users must log off when they are finished with a computer
- All users should be aware that all actions on computers are monitored and can be recorded
- Users should not attempt to bypass the filters, or gain inappropriate access to content or servers.

2. Network Storage

Network storage areas are to store educational material only. All stored material is liable to inspection at any time. School network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on St. Mary's servers will always be private.

3. Internet and email

Communications on the network are often public in nature. The school's Code of Behaviour and Discipline governs such behaviour and communications. A content filter also controls Internet access in the school. This filter is designed to protect students from harmful material as well preventing inappropriate or personal internet access during school time.

Students using the Internet and email are expected to abide by the generally-accepted rules of network etiquette.

The use of the Internet to harass or bully other members of the school community is considered a serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour and will be dealt with accordingly (please refer to the school's Anti-bullying Behaviour Policy).

The following are not permitted:

- Posting, displaying or approving of offensive messages or pictures on social networking sites
- Using obscene language in emails or on social networking sites
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others via email / social networking sites
- Violating copyright laws (illegal downloading of Software / Music / Movies)
- Using another's user id/password
- Illegal use of data in folders or work files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources (Printing without permission from teacher)
- Employing the network for commercial purposes

Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honoured. During school, teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, parents / guardians bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, mobile phones, movies, radio, electronic devices and other potentially offensive media.

4. School Issued Devices (including Mobile Devices and Laptops)

The school may issue devices to students for use during their schooling. These devices remain St. Mary's property at all times and must be returned to the school on request. Students must have read and accepted the I.T. and Internet Usage Policy before a device is issued to them.

The school provides instruction on how to back-up the data on the devices but takes no responsibility for data loss. Students should ensure that they have an adequate backup of their data (e.g. save all documents to their server). Devices may be monitored remotely and students may be required to remove some applications that are not educational in nature. All devices will work through the school web filtering system.

5. Students' Personal Devices

When students use their own digital devices, it is their own responsibility that the content adheres to the standards in the I.T. policy. Students' personal devices are subject to the same rules and regulations.

The taking of images/video while in school using the student's own devices or school-issued devices is strictly forbidden within this policy except where deemed appropriate by a teacher/staff member.

The following is expected:

- Students will take all reasonable precautions to ensure the physical safety and security of school-issued devices.
- School-issued devices may only be used in the school or at home. They will not be used while travelling to or from school.
- Students will ensure that school-issued devices are charged and ready for use at the start of each school day.
- Students will use devices for educational purposes only.

Consequences for unacceptable usage

Users who engage in any of the above-referenced activities (or who are deemed not to be using the facilities in a responsible way), will have their access privileges revoked and other disciplinary measures will result. The Code of Behaviour and Discipline applies to students' usage of I.T. and the Internet.

Final note to Parents / Guardians

The Internet is a powerful learning tool, but it should not be used indiscriminately or without supervision. While your child is at school, the staff will make every reasonable effort to ensure that this resource is used appropriately. As parents / guardians, it is your responsibility to monitor this resource at home. It is not advisable for children to engage in long hours of unsupervised time on-line.

Policy Review

This ICT Acceptable Usage Policy may be amended from time to time as is deemed necessary by the school. A copy will be made available to all new students and their parents / guardians. It is the responsibility of the students and their parents / guardians to ensure familiarity with the current version.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USAGE of I.T. and the INTERNET

- Do not engage (while in school or elsewhere) in any of the unacceptable online activities described above and remember that the school's Code of Behaviour and Discipline applies to your usage of I.T. and the Internet.
- Never give out personal information (for example: your full name, home address, date of birth, telephone number, your parents' / guardians' work address or telephone number, credit card numbers, bank details) without your parents' / guardians' permission.
- Never give out the name and location of your school without the permission of a member of staff for the purpose of learning and teaching.
- Always tell your parents / guardians or teachers immediately if you see or receive anything on the Internet that makes you feel uncomfortable or threatened; this includes e-mail messages, Websites, or anything in the regular mail from Internet friends. Above all, do not reply or respond and do remember to save copies of such material as evidence.
- Never agree to meet anyone in person that you have met online, without your parents' / guardians' permission.
- Never send pictures of yourself through the Internet or regular mail without your parents' / guardians' permission, or of anyone else without their permission.
- Never share your Internet passwords with anyone (even your best friends) other than your parents / guardians / I.T. teachers.
- Behave appropriately while online and do not do anything that could hurt or anger other people or that is against the law.
- Never download, install, or copy anything from disks, data storage devices or the Internet without proper permission.
- Never do anything on the Internet or mobile device that costs money without your parents' / guardians' permission
- Never use a bank or credit card without the express permission of the owner of that card.

. **LEGISLATION** : Teachers, Students and Parents should familiarise themselves with :-

The Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998.

Interception Act 1993.

Video Recordings Act 1989.

The Data Protection Act 1988.

AFTER READING THE I.T. & INTERNET USAGE POLICY WITH YOUR DAUGHTER, PLEASE SIGN THE ATTACHED '*ETHICAL USE OF I.T. POLICY CONTRACT*' AND RETURN IT TO SCHOOL. PLEASE NOTE THAT IT IS A CONDITION OF ADMITTANCE TO ST. MARYS'S SECONDARY SCHOOL, NENAGH, THAT EACH STUDENT SIGN AN *ETHICAL USE OF I.T. POLICY CONTRACT* AND HAVE IT COUNTERSIGNED BY A PARENT /GUARDIAN.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 22nd February 2016

St. Mary's Secondary School, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

ETHICAL USE OF I.T. POLICY CONTRACT

I, _____, hereby declare that I will not use Internet technology irresponsibly, unjustly or disrespectfully at any time.

I recognise and accept that while using Internet technology I am responsible for the information, pictures, etc. that I post or approve of.

I furthermore accept that if I post or approve of information that is defamatory, disrespectful or damaging to any member, past or present, of the school community of St. Mary's Secondary, Nenagh, or post or approve of material that might bring the good name of the school into disrepute, that I will be sanctioned for such action in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour and Discipline, its Anti-bullying Behaviour Policy, its Mobile Phone / Electronic Equipment Policy and other associated policies.

Name of student: _____ *Class:* _____

Student Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ *Date:* _____