**Internet Usage Policy**

**Internet Safety**

**Acceptable Use Policy**

**School Name: Kilrossanty National School.**

**Address**: Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford

The **aim** of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that students 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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

**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
* 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
* Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety
* 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 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
* Websites will be previewed / evaluated by a teacher using a filtering system, before being integrated into lessons conducted on school Devices.
* It is important to note that the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with this Policy. Parents/guardians and students should be aware that placing a once-off, offensive or hurtful internet 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.

**Internet**

* 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 to the class teacher or principal.
* Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only
* 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 by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school’s acceptable use policy
* 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.
* The safety of our children on the web is of utmost importance so the following rules apply to the school and parents. The internet is open to potential dangers when used inappropriately.

The school asks:

* Many social media sites have minimum age requirements. While the school will not monitor this, we would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Twitter, etc. until they are the appropriate age.
* Please ensure that online messages and comments to the school are respectful. Any messages written on social media are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
* Avoid any negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts. If you have an issue with something in the school, social media is not the place to raise it. Comments of this nature will be deleted.

**Email**

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

**The following Communication Technologies are not allowed to be used by pupils in the school.**

* Mobile Phones
  + Bringing, using during lesions or at break times.
  + The taking of photos.
* Use of personal email addresses in school or on school network
* Use of school email for personal use.
* Use of chat rooms/facilities.
* Use of instant messaging.
* Use of social networking sites.

**User Actions**

Users shall not visit internet sites, make, post, download, upload, data transfer, communicate or pass on, material remarks, proposals or comments that contain or relate to the following;

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| --- | --- |
| **Usage** | **Action** |
| Child sexual abuse images | Unacceptable and Illegal |
| Promotion or conduct of illegal acts e.g. under the child protection, obscenity, computer misuse and fraud legislation | Unacceptable and Illegal |
| Racist material | Unacceptable and Illegal |

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| **Usage** | **Action** |
| Pornography | Unacceptable |
| Promotion of any kind of discrimination | Unacceptable |
| Promotion of racial or religious hatred | Unacceptable |
| Threatening behaviour, including promotion of physical violence or mental harm. | Unacceptable |
| Any other information which may be offensive to colleagues or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the school or brings the school into disrepute. | Unacceptable |

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| **Usage** | **Action** |
| Using school systems to run a private business | Unacceptable |
| Use systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards employed by the school. | Unacceptable |
| Uploading, downloading or transmitting commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties without the necessary licensing permissions. | Unacceptable |
| Revealing or publicising confidential or proprietary information e.g. financial/personal information, databases computer/network access codes and passwords. | Unacceptable |
| Creating or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files. | Unacceptable |
| Carrying out sustained or instantaneous high volume network traffic (downloading/uploading files) that causes network congestion and hinders others in their use of the internet | Unacceptable |
| On-line gaming | Unacceptable |
| On-line gambling | Unacceptable |
| On-line shopping/commerce | Unacceptable |
| File sharing | Unacceptable |
| Use of social networking sites | Unacceptable |

**School Blogsite**

* Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school’s website.
* The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of students or staff
* Website using facilities such as comments and user-generated content will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain personal details
* The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher
* The School will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school blogsite with parental permission
* Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages
* The school website will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph
* The School will ensure that the image files are appropriately named and will not use students’ names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web
* Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published

**Direct Communication using the Internet**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Distance (Remote) learning has had to take place via email during lockdown. Should we need to engage in Distance Learning again, due to school closure, the school shall be using SeeSaw, a secure online journal for continuity of learning which is one of the online platforms recommended by the Department of Education. Children will be able to view work assigned by their Teacher and add work to their SeeSaw journal and gain feedback from the teacher. Parental consent is required before using the platform and parents /guardians can withdraw consent at any time. Pupil’s work is private to the classroom by default. SeeSaw only uses information like children’s names to provide the service and does not advertise, create profiles of students or share or sell a child’s personal information or journal content. Should teachers speak to the children live through a webinar or online meeting, the following are ground rules for synchronous lessons on line.

* All meetings will be password protected
* Students may not share home usage codes and passwords
* All people involved in the meeting will conduct themselves in a similar manner that would be expected in a regular class.
* The staff member has the right to “kick out” any person being disruptive from a synchronous lesson.
* A family member is expected to be close by when a pupil is engaging in a meeting. They should monitor all online interactions from the pupil.
* Staff will not meet any child alone using an online meeting. If there is a need for a meeting between a child with a staff member, another adult must be present at the meeting and/or the meeting must be recorded.
* While chat may be available in an online meeting, it is the responsibility of the child’s family to ensure that any interaction is appropriate. Any interaction from a pupil that could be deemed as inappropriate may result in the child’s removal from the lesson or, where appropriate, a referral to Child Protection services.
* The Online Platforms are used to communicate directly with the pupils, therefore, only teachers and pupils post messages on it. This gives pupils a voice in a safe, secure learning environment. Parental communication is provided for via email and school phone number. These are available on the school website.

**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 to 2018
* Children First 2017

**Support Structures**

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

**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.