St. Senan's N.S.

Acceptable Usage Policy

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Introduction

The purpose of the Internet Acceptable Usage Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources, and will be protected from harmful and illegal use of the Internet.

St. Senan's N.S. will employ a number of strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Education
- Filtering/Monitoring

Pupil Access to the Internet in School

The school is pleased to offer the internet as an available resource to both pupils and teachers for reference purposes, researching project materials, playing interactive educational games, learning to touch-type and for lesson reinforcement. Access to online resources will enable pupils to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards throughout the world.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation for living and working in this information age. The school will integrate such information as appropriate within the curriculum, and staff will provide guidance and instruction to pupils in the appropriate use of such resources, as outlined in this policy.

1. Pupils will not be given access to the Internet without teacher supervision
2. Internet will be used for educational purposes only
3. Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher
4. Filtering software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material
5. The school will monitor pupils' internet usage
6. Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety
7. Pupils will be taught to evaluate the content of internet sites
8. Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues
9. Uploading and downloading of non-approved material is banned
10. Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis
11. The use of memory sticks in school requires a teacher's permission
12. Pupils will observe good 'netiquette' (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring a school into disrepute
13. 'YouTube' (and similar sites) can be accessed only under the supervision and direction of the teacher.

School Website

1. Personal pupil information, home addresses and contact details will not be published on the school website
2. Class lists will not be published
3. Pupils' full names will not be published beside their photograph
4. Digital photographs, video clips and audio clips will focus on groups and group activities rather than on individual pupils when possible
5. Pupils will be given an opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website
6. Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such
7. Permission to publish a student's work will be sought from pupils/parents/ guardians. This permission may be withdrawn at any time
8. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Education and Internet Awareness

St. Senan's N.S. will undertake an education programme to educate children on the safe, responsible use of the Internet. 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.

Resources that may be used to implement this programme include:

- NCTE Internet Safety Awareness Video
- Use of the 'Kids' section on the www.webwise.ie website
- SAFT Internet Safety Awareness Education Programme and exemplars

Filtering

The school will use the Internet provided and filtered by the NCTE (National Centre for Technology). '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. No filter is 100% accurate. The most effective filtering tool is adult vigilance. At St. Senan's we believe that the advantages to pupils having access to information resources and increased opportunities for collaboration far exceed the risk of disadvantages.

Online learning

Children may be issued with unique IDs and passwords to access and use sites such as Google Classroom, Class Dojo … These sites can be used by the children to research and publish work. Access to these sites will cease when the children finish their time in St. Senan's.

Distance Learning

In the event of prolonged school closures procedures will be implemented to support distance learning. They include:

- Class teachers emailing parents directly with work schedules. This will be an open communication channel between the parent and teacher to support the child's learning during school closure.
- Online platforms may also be used by teachers to set work and give feedback (Google Classroom, Seesaw .....)
- Video Conferencing may be used by teachers in a group or class setting to support the children in their learning and also to provide a sense of normality / routine for the children.

Laptops

Every site that is accessed within the school network or by a school machine is monitored. Each laptop has a number and the children of each class will be designated a specific laptop. Teachers check computer logs of all information accessed by pupils. An audit of internet usage may be run at any time.

Use of laptops that travel between home and school are subject to all stipulations, procedures and sanctions outlined in this policy 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. 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. Parents of all children are advised to keep laptops in a common area (i.e. kitchen or living room) with the screen visible to others while a child may be on the internet. The use of laptops by children in their bedrooms is not recommended.

Sanctions

If a pupil deliberately misuses the internet or email, 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.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____   Signed: _____

    Chairperson of BoM   Principal/Secretary to the BoM

Date: _____   Date: _____

Responsible Internet Use - Pupil Undertaking

We use the School computers and Internet connection for learning. These rules will help us to be fair to others and keep everyone safe.

- I will ask permission before entering any website or application, unless my teacher has already approved it.
- I will not bring external storage devices such as pen drives (or memory sticks/USB keys etc) into school without permission.
- If I see anything I am unhappy with, or if I receive a message I do not like, I will tell a teacher immediately.
- I know that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the sites I visit.
- I understand that if I deliberately break these rules, I could be stopped from using the Internet and computers and my parents will be informed.

Signed: _____ Pupil

Signed: _____ Parent

Date: _____