

## Acceptable Use Policy for the Internet

### **Introduction and Aim of Policy**

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood. The Acceptable Use Policy is available for parents. If parents/guardians have concerns about the Acceptable Use Policy they are advised to contact the School Principal or Muinteoir Mairéad, the ICT co-ordinator, in order to have their concerns addressed.

### **School's Strategy**

Gaelscoil Mhuscraí 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. This filtering system is used in connection with the PDST Technology in Education/ National Centre for Technology in Education(NCTE) ([www.ncte.ie](http://www.ncte.ie)).
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- Students and teachers will be provided with training and resources in the area of Internet safety ([www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie))
- 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.

#### **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 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 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.

### **Email and Chat Rooms:**

- Email should only be used as a whole class activity, not individually, for particular educational purposes e.g requesting information for a project.
- Pupils will only be allowed email in the presence of the teacher.
- Pupils will never be allowed to access Internet Chat Rooms.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity in educational websites with electronic communication fora.

### **School Website**

Pupils may create projects, artwork, writing or audio-visual recordings which would be suitable for publication on our school's website. Múinteoir Mairéad will manage the publication of material on the school website adhering to the stipulations below:

- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- Personal pupil information, home addresses and contact details will not be published on the school website.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages. Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities rather than on individual pupils when possible.
- The school website will avoid publishing the full name of individuals in a photograph.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

### **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

### **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. These

organizations can be accessed through the following sites:

- [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) : A guide to safe internet usage for children.
- [www.hotline.ie](http://www.hotline.ie) : Reporting illegal or harmful content on the internet.
- [www.makeitsecure.org](http://www.makeitsecure.org) : National security site for children.
- [www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com) : Family guide to internet safety.
- [www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org) : Safety, spam, privacy and security site.
- [www.ncte.ie](http://www.ncte.ie) : PDST – Technology in Education. Government support agency.

### **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.

### **Timeframe**

This version of the Acceptable Use Policy was created in January 2014 by the ICT Co-ordinator and Principal.

This policy will be reviewed after any incident in which the guidelines are used.

### **Ratification and Communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 13/01/2014.

The policy will be made available to the school community on the school website.