



ICT Acceptable Use Policy

Ratified at BOM Meeting on 5th April, 2022

Signed
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed
Principal

Date of next review.....April 2025



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 Therefore, if the school's AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

This policy was devised in 2006 using the guidelines from the National Centre for Technology in Ireland, NCTE, the body set up by the Department of Education and Science to oversee the use of IT in schools. It was revised in 2007, in October 2013 and in October 2014. The policy was then updated in February 2020.

School's Strategy

The school will employ 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 pupils' Internet usage.
- Children 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.
- Children and staff will observe good 'netiquette' (i.e., etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Teachers are required to regularly scan external storage devices (USB sticks etc) and if pupils are presenting work on such devices it is the responsibility of the teacher to scan it before use.
- All teachers have password-protected USB keys.

World Wide Web

- Children must sign up to the Internet Acceptable Use Policy and adhere to its guidelines at all times.
- Children will only use the Internet under the direct supervision of a teacher / tutor



- Children will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Children will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Children will be familiar with copyright issues related to online learning.
- Children will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Children 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.
- Staff will only use the Internet in school for educational purposes.
- Children will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the World Wide Web.

Personal Devices: Children

The school does not allow children to access the Internet on school premises using personal devices, such as mobile phones.

In particular, connecting personal devices to the school network is strictly prohibited.

Children are not permitted to wear smart watches into school. If a child is found to be wearing a smart watch, it will be confiscated and will only be returned to a parent.

The school recognises that a parent or guardian may wish a child from 3rd to 6th class to have a personal mobile phone. Please note that mobile devices must be kept in the child's bag. The school cannot take any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of any device brought into school.

In this case:

- The phone must not be switched on without a teacher's permission while on the school premises.
- If a child uses a personal device such as a mobile phone without permission, it will be confiscated and will only be returned to a parent. The parent will be contacted to inform them that the phone has been confiscated.

Parents

We understand that parents may wish to take photos/videos of their children at organised school events. A lot of the time, families taking photos at events, such as school plays or concerts, are done with no intent to post or publish the



photos formally. This type of activity falls under the "household exemption" under the GDPR, which provides that GDPR does not apply when a person takes a photograph in the course of a purely personal or household activity, e.g. with no connection to a professional, business, official or commercial activity. Photographs taken by parents in this circumstance do not come within the school's data protection policy, and the school are not considered to be the data controllers of this media. The "household exemption" can include social networking, and the publishing of photos at these events online is not strictly prohibited under GDPR legislation. However, we ask that parents do not share these images on any social media platform as many of these photos/videos will have other children in them.

Staff

Staff members do not give out their phone number or that of any other staff member to pupils or parents/guardians. Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff in working with children, it is vital that staff be engaged with children at all working times.

The "household exemption" does not apply to schools themselves taking photographs or videos at their events. In this instance, schools are acting as data controllers and GDPR applies i.e. they must have a legal basis to process the personal data and they must provide clear and concise information about what it is that they are doing with this personal data.

In terms of data, staff is advised to use any mobile devices responsibly. Staff may use their devices to record any school-related work if they wish. Staff are trusted that they will use these recordings responsibly for school-related activities, e.g. on the website/class news notice board. Photos may be taken on a teacher's mobile phone; these photos must be uploaded to Google Drive as soon as possible and then deleted from the mobile phone. All teachers have a password-protected USB if they wish to store anything confidential that is not on Google Drive.

Staff should also note that no unauthorised recordings of school business must take place. This includes all meetings and events. If a meeting needs to be recorded for any reason, all participants must agree to the recording before it can take place. Any unauthorised recordings of meetings will be dealt with as a breach of disciplinary procedures.

Teachers may choose to show TV programmes/movies from time to time in the classroom, usually with a "U" certificate. However, at times they will also show programmes/movies with "PG" certificate. These will be shown if the teacher feels that they are appropriate for the whole class to watch. If, at any time, a



teacher wishes to show a programme/movie with a certificate higher than "PG", they will send an email to parents of that class in advance informing them of what the teacher intends to show. Parents will only respond to this email if they do not wish their child to watch it. By not replying, a teacher will assume consent is given.

Work Calls

Calls to parents/guardians should be kept as short as possible during the school day. Where a lengthy conversation with parents/guardians is required, appointments should be made to meet parents. Calls to other professionals and organisations should be made in consultation with the Principal and classroom supervision will be arranged where appropriate.

Personal Calls

In general, personal calls should be carried out outside of teaching time. In cases of urgency, a staff member should use discretion in making calls and ensure that their classroom is supervised during the call. Incoming personal calls should be reserved for urgent matters.

Email

- Children may send emails as part of a class-project and under the supervision of a teacher / tutor.
- This aspect of policy will only change following consultation between teachers, the Policy Committee and the parent body.

Chat-Rooms

- Children will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity on public forums that are accessed by others outside our school community.

School Website

- The publication of children's work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- No material will appear on the school website without prior consultation with the teacher involved and with the Principal.
- Children's work will appear in an educational context on web pages. It is prohibited to copy any material from the website without express permission from the school.
- Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual children will not be published on the website. Instead, photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities. Video clips may be password protected.



- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- Children 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 and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- Data Protection Acts 1988-2018
- EU General Data Personal Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988.

Support Structures

The school will inform children and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet. Each year, pupils receive class-based lessons on Internet Safety. At times, the school brings in external speakers to give lessons to children and parents about Internet safety.

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.



Internet Use Permission Form

Please review the School Internet Acceptable Use Policy (available on school website www.ralet.ie and in the school office), sign and return this permission form to the class teacher.

Name of Pupil: _____

Class: _____

Pupil

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school.

Pupil's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent / Guardian

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for the child named above to access the Internet. 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 pupils access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph _____. I do not accept the above paragraph _____.
(Please tick as appropriate)

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's work may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing children's work and photographs on the school website.

I accept the above paragraph _____. I do not accept the above paragraph _____.
(Please tick as appropriate)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

