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Mackney, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
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Acceptable Use Policy

for the use of Information

Communication Technology

and the Internet

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Acceptable Use Policy for the use of Information Communication Technology and the Internet

Ardscoil Mhuire, Mackney, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

(Adopted by the Board of Management on January 28th 2013)

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.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 regularly. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

School strategy

Ardscoil Mhuire, through the use of the ICT facilities, employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the internet. These strategies are as follows:

General

- Students may use the IT facilities for educational purposes only as instructed by a staff member.
- Students should not use the IT facilities in any way that bullies, belittles or mocks a fellow student or member of staff.
- Internet sessions will always be supervised or monitored 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 may monitor pupils' 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 memory sticks, CD ROMs or other digital storage media is not permitted in the school.
- Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Eating and drinking is not allowed while using a computer.
- User passwords for computers/e-mail accounts should not be shared.
- Students are not allowed to use teachers' computers without permission.

Cyber bullying

- Cyber bulling is defined as 'actions that use information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to degrade, harass, threaten or intimidate someone'.

- Students should not use the IT facilities in any way that bullies, belittles or mocks a fellow student or member of staff.

- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

World Wide Web

- Students may not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

- Students must report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.

- Students may use the internet for educational purposes only.

- Students may not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).

- Students may never disclose or publicise personal information unless instructed by a teacher.

- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

- Students are 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 setting up of false facebook accounts/websites is strictly forbidden.

- Uploading of pictures/videos showing students in school uniform inside or outside of school engaging in behaviour that is damaging to the school's reputation is strictly forbidden.

- No student has permission to write about the school/staff in a manner that undermines the school ethos.
- Facebook is designed for aged 13 and over. It is our recommendation that no student under 13 have a facebook account and we strongly recommend active parental involvement for any students under 16 who are on a social networking site.

Email

- Students may use approved class email accounts under supervision by or with permission from a teacher.
- Students may not send or open any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students should not use the IT facilities in any way that bullies, belittles or mocks a fellow student or member of staff.
- Students may not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures unless instructed by a staff member.
- Students may never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or internet chat.
- Students should note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

Internet chat

- Students may only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums may only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.

School website

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web only in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the schools' website or class sites.

- The website will be regularly checked by school authorities to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.

- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.

- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.

- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will not be published on the school website without parental permission. Video clips may be password protected.

- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from the 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 image files are appropriately named – will not use pupils' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.

- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Personal devices

- Pupils using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending inappropriate text messages or the unauthorised taking of images with a mobile phone camera, still or moving, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy and pupils doing so will face sanctions as outlined.

Legislation

- The school draws the attention of all to the following legislation relating to use of the internet:
- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

Sanctions

- Misuse of the ICT facilities and the internet may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the school's code of conduct, including written warnings, withdrawal of privileges and in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Re: Internet Permission Form

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As part of the school's education programme we offer supervised access to the internet. This allows students to access a large array of online educational resources that we believe can greatly enhance their learning experience. However, access to and use of internet requires responsibility on the part of the user and the school. These responsibilities are outlined in the school's Acceptable Use Policy (enclosed). It is important that this enclosed document is read carefully, signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the school.

Although the school takes active steps to promote safe use of the internet, it recognises the possibility that students may accidentally or deliberately access inappropriate or objectionable material.

A student may be requested to research an educational topic at home. In view of this you may like to take time to consider how the internet is used in your home, and see if there is any way you could make it safer for your own family. The following websites may prove useful:

www.internetsafety.ie

www.webwise.ie

www.ThatsNotCool.com

www.commonsense.org

The school respects each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their children access to the internet as defined by the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

Yours sincerely,

_____

Patricia Kilgallen

Secretary to the Board of Management

Acceptable Use Policy for the use of Information Communication Technology and the Internet

Permission Form

Please review the attached Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this form to:

The Principal, Ardscoil Mhuire, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

Name of pupil: _____

Class/Year _____

Pupil

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of ICT facilities. I will us the ICT and internet facilities in a responsible way and obey all the rules as outlined in the school's A.U.P.

Pupil's signature: _____

Parent's/Guardian'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 my daughter or the child in my care 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.

By not accepting this paragraph the above pupil will not be permitted to access the internet on school computers. The school cannot be held responsible if the pupil does so without permission.

☐   ☐

I accept the above paragraph   I do not accept the above paragraph

(Please tick as appropriate)

In relation to the school's websites, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork/photograph/achievements may be chosen for inclusion on these sites. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy as outlined above.

☐   ☐

I accept the above paragraph   I do not accept the above paragraph

(Please tick as appropriate)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Telephone: _____