



## Holy Cross School Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy (AUP)

### **Aims of the AUP**

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

Pupils are not allowed to have any device (mobile phone or any other device which can access the internet) of their own switched on while on the school premises or on any school activity away from the premises. This policy therefore pertains to school equipment that can access the internet.

### **School 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.
- Pupils' internet usage will be monitored at all times through supervision by class teachers. This is on the understanding that our Mobile Phone Policy is being adhered to and therefore children are not using phones on the school premises.
- Pupils will be given lessons in the area of Internet safety (within the SPHE programme).
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software is not permitted.
- Virus protection software is used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal digital storage items (memory sticks, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media) in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Pupils will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring children and/or the school into disrepute. This is dealt with further in the following policies:

- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Cyber Bullying Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy

## **World Wide Web**

Each class teacher will go through the following guidelines with the pupils from time to time during the school year:

- Pupils are not permitted to visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils must report (to the teacher in charge) accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Pupils use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Pupils are encouraged not to copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Pupils shall 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.
- Pupils 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**

- Pupils will use approved email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher if required.
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Pupils will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

## **School Website and Blogging**

- From time to time, pupils may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web in accordance with clear guidelines and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.
- Pupils commenting on material posted on class blogs or website will be encouraged to do so in a respectful and positive manner.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- The publication of pupil 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 expressing written permission.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual pupils will not be published on the school website without parental permission. Video clips may be password protected.
- Personal pupil information such as 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 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.

## **Legislation**

If a teacher/parent would like further information on the legislative background to internet safety in school, they can refer to the following legislation:

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Acts 1988 - 2018.

## **Sanctions**

Appendices 1 and 2 give examples of acceptable use and unacceptable use of the internet in school.

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal/inappropriate activities to the relevant authorities.

## **Appendix 1: Examples of Acceptable Use**

I will:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities and research.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behaviour online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert teachers if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational purposes only.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research; ensure there is no copyright infringement.
- Recognise that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others and will never share personal information or the information of others.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Pupils should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

## **Appendix 2: Examples of Unacceptable Use**

Pupils who:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful to oneself or others.
- Search inappropriate images or content.
- Engage in cyber-bullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Agree to meet someone one met online in real life.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Open or edit any files / documents unless authorised to do so.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Pupils should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

### **Ratification:**

Ratified by the Board of Management on 27.11.24

Review date November 2028