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## **Information and Communication Technology Policy/ ICT Acceptable Use Policy**

### **Introduction**

This document is a statement of the aims and objectives, principles and strategies for implementing the acceptable use of ICT in St Paul's N.S., Mountmellick. It applies to all of the school's devices which means computers, laptops, smartphones and other IT resources that connect to the school's network.

### **Rationale**

It is envisaged that ICT usage will enhance and support the teaching and learning in the school.

### **Relationship to School Ethos**

In accordance with our school ethos, ICT has a significant role to play in each pupil's academic and intellectual development. ICT usage complements the learning in the classroom.

### **Aims**

- To provide guidelines regarding the acceptable use of ICT
- To enhance pupils learning of ICT
- To support classroom learning through the use of ICT

### **Timetabling**

ICT is integrated across the curriculum and can be used to aid and develop teaching and learning in other curriculum areas.

### **Learning Outcomes**

It is hoped that during each pupil's primary school years he/she will achieve the following with regard to ICT

- Become familiar with using laptops
- Navigate software and internet sites by entering, exiting, closing, choosing options, clicking, double clicking and dragging the cursor.
- Navigate the interactive whiteboard with their hands.

- Turn on and safely shut down the laptop.
- Learn to use Microsoft Word to draft, edit and publish creative writing: using upper and lower-case letters, full stops, commas and question and exclamation marks; using the spacebar, the return, shift and caps lock keys; highlighting text and deleting; changing font, adjusting font size and using the Bold, Italic and Underline tools.
- Develop further use of Microsoft Word tools such as WordArt, Copy and Paste, Centre/Align Left, Print.
- Log on to educational websites to explore content, play interactive games and search for information at an age-appropriate level.
- Learn to store and file work in different locations and retrieve it when necessary.
- Learn to use an Internet browser to search for information.
- Use Internet to deepen and enhance learning across the curriculum, particularly for projects.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Board of Management**

- To ensure that laptops and the office computer are serviced annually.
- To make funds available for ICT when necessary.
- To ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to protect pupils from gaining access to inappropriate websites. The filtering software provided by the NCTE is used throughout the school.
- To ensure virus protection is updated regularly.
- To ensure that a back-up system is in place for all administrative documents.
- To encourage staff development in the area of ICT by grant aiding professional development courses.

### **School Staff**

- To ensure that laptops and interactive whiteboards are used appropriately, to support teaching and learning in the classrooms.
- To ensure that pupils are exposed to the Webwise Internet Safety programme annually.
- To provide opportunities for the pupils to use the laptops and interactive whiteboards.
- To up-date the office hard-drive back-up system regularly.
- To take responsibility for the teacher's laptop which accompanies each interactive whiteboard and to ensure that these laptops are kept safely, particularly when taken from the school premises.

### **Pupils**

- Pupils will not knowingly attempt to visit Internet sites on school devices that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials and the school will not be responsible for any attempts taken in this regard.
- In the event of accidentally accessing any of the above sites, the pupil will be expected to immediately turn off the monitor and report the incident to a teacher or supervisor.

- Pupils will not examine, change or use another person's files, username or passwords. Pupils should observe good 'netiquette' and not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- The school takes every reasonable precaution to provide for online safety, but it cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites either deliberately or inadvertently.
- Pupils may not use any personal device with recording or image taking capability while in school.

### **Special Education Needs**

As a school we are deeply committed to providing the best possible learning experiences for children with special educational needs. ICT has an important role to play in this commitment as it facilitates deep engagement with the curriculum and caters for a variety of learning styles. An interactive whiteboard and laptops are available in the Learning Support room as well as the classrooms.

### **E-Mail/Social Media:**

- Photos/Videos may be used for events such as the school musical. These photos/videos should not be copied or posted to any social media or other website or published in any way.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested not to 'tag' photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school. Parents are also asked not to send or post material that could damage the school's image or reputation.

### **Distance Learning**

- In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers may use Zoom, whatsapp or other platforms approved by the Principal as platforms to assist with remote teaching where necessary.
- If teachers are using Zoom, parents/guardians must consent to their child having a school email address as above to allow their child access to the lessons.
- Parents/guardians must also agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons conducted on the Online Platforms.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying refers to bullying which is carried out using the internet or other technological devices. It can take the form of sending nasty, mean or threatening messages, emails, photos or video clips, silent phone calls, nasty posts or pictures on a website or chat room, pretending to be someone else in a chat room or accessing someone else's account to make trouble for them. Any form of cyberbullying is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Pupils should report any form of cyberbullying to their teacher. The school will take any report of cyberbullying seriously and will investigate credible reports immediately. Pupils who make a report are requested to preserve evidence by keeping a screenshot or picture. Parents will be expected to co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with the school in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy. Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action such as withdrawal of ICT access privileges and in extreme cases suspension.

### **Implementation and Success Criteria**

- Positive pupil and staff attitudes towards acceptable ICT usage.
- All ICT equipment being maintained appropriately.
- Pupils attaining the Learning outcomes as outlined in this policy.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the ICT Acceptable Use Policy in the school. This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the three-year school development plan.

### **Modification Clause**

The Board of Management reserves the right to modify details of the ICT Acceptable Use Policy at short notice. Such modification may be needed in an ever-changing environment and social context.

**Policy Ratified on:**

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**Signed by:**

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**Chairperson**

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_