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Mountmellick GNS

Green-Schools

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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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.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 enrolling, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood. It is assumed that the parents accepts the terms of the AUP unless the school is specifically notified.

This version of the AUP was updated in September 2023

by St. Josephs Digital Learning Team;

SCHOOL'S STRATEGY

The internet and digital media can help our pupils learn, create and communicate in ways that we would never have imagined previously. The online world is very much a part of their lives, with technology embedded in many aspects of their lives. Digital literacy skills are key life skills for children and young people today. They need to know how to effectively search and evaluate online content; know how to protect personal information and reputation; know to respect copyright and intellectual property and know where to get help if problems arise.

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 provided by the Schools Broadband Programme is used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. School has split level filtering, teachers devices set to level 4 and student devices to level 3.

- The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.

- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety. This is embedded in our SPHE curriculum and draws on materials provided by Webwise, the PDST and others. During Internet Safety Week, special attention will be spent on this.

- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software or apps will not be permitted.

- The virus protection software, Windows Defender, will be used and updated on a regular basis. This will be in conjunction with the filtering software provided by the Schools Broadband Programme.

- The use of personal memory sticks and other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.

- Children are expected to respect computers, hardware, and software.

- Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

USE OF THE INTERNET

- Students will use the Internet in school for educational purposes only.
- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- In the event of a child accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the student will immediately minimize the page and report the incident to the class teacher without attracting the attention of the other students. Teacher should report the incident to the ICT co-ordinator.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only. All websites will be vetted by the class teacher. Children cannot use social media accounts or record images, audio or video of other pupils or staff.
- Students will not copy information or images 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.

USE OF SCHOOL IPADS AND LAPTOPS

- Students should never leave their iPad or laptop unattended when in use.
- Students should follow teacher's instructions accessing only the applications to which the teacher has agreed.
- Students require permission before sending any form of electronic message.
- Audio/Video taken at school cannot be transmitted, broadcast or transferred without the teacher's permission.
- The camera and audio recording functions may only be used under a teacher's direction.
- Identity theft (pretending to be someone else) is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy
- IPads and laptops must be handled with care at all times.
- Any damage to the device must be reported immediately to the teacher.

EMAIL/INTERNET CHAT

- Students will not be given access to email. However, they will be provided with Google credentials for accessing other communication tools such as Google Classroom/Seesaw.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as passwords, addresses or telephone numbers or pictures
- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.
- Students will note that sending and receiving files is subject to permission from their teacher
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know online

- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.

INTERNET

The safety of our children on the web is of utmost importance so the following rules apply to the school and parents. The internet is open to potential dangers when used inappropriately.

- Many social media sites have minimum age requirements. While the school will not monitor this, we would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok etc. until they are the appropriate age.
- Please do not 'tag' photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- Please ensure that online messages and comments are respectful. Any messages written on social media are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
- Avoid negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts. If you have an issue with something in the school, social media is not the place to raise it.
- Please do not request to 'friend' a member of staff in the school. Most staff would like to keep their personal lives personal.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff or any personal details
- 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.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website will avoid publishing the full name of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the 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.

BLENDED LEARNING

Google Workspace for Education

At St. Josephs GNS we use Google Workspace for Education which is operated by Google. Google Workspace restricts participation in the environment to staff and students on the domain. Our students and teachers are given a Google account login that is specific to the school's domain. This may look something like 12janesmith@stjosephsgns.ie.

Students would use their Google Workspace for Education account for the following:

- **Login to their own account on iPads/laptops:** each child will have their own Google Workspace credentials (username and password) to allow them to access their own personal account on our school iPads/laptops.

This allows them to save their work to the cloud after each lesson making it accessible to them from other devices within the school. With these credentials they can also use other Google tools such as Google docs, sheets, forms and Drive.

- **Digital portfolio:** students will keep the same credentials for their time in St. Josephs GNS. This means that by the time they graduate they will have a store of learning to look back on from their time in primary school.

- **Access Google Classroom:** Google Classroom is a virtual learning space. This learning space would be led by the class teacher. Google Classroom allows the teacher to set activities for the class to work on either individually or collaboratively both in school and at home.

- **Learn 21st century digital citizenship skills:** our aim is to provide students with the skills required to develop good digital citizenship skills.

The following two tools will be used in our school to support blended learning.

Google Classroom is the tool that we will use to support our blended learning with our pupils from 3rd to 6th classes. It is part of the Google Workspace range of tools and is a free web service, developed by **Google** for schools, that aims to simplify creating, distributing, and grading assignments in a paperless way. The main purpose of Google Classroom is to streamline the process of sharing files between teachers and students and to facilitate communication between teachers and students.

Google Classroom simplifies the distribution and collection process of student work. The teacher is able to compile a collection of documents, videos and resource links into an assignment. The students can view the document, edit the document, or receive a copy of the document.

Google Classroom restricts participation in the environment to staff and students on the domain. Students and teachers need to be logged into and utilise their school account to participate in the Classroom environment.

Seesaw is the tool that we will use to support blended learning with our pupils in Junior and Senior Infants up to second Class. Seesaw is a secure online journal where students can document and reflect on what they are learning in class. Children will be able to add their work (including photos, videos, worksheets, drawings and voice recordings) to their Seesaw journal from school and from home.

Seesaw is a safe and private environment for teachers and students. Only the student themselves, their families, and their connected teachers or school leaders can see a student's profile and portfolio. SeeSaw is compliant with GDPR and is also certified under the EU-US and Swiss-US Privacy Shield.

To set up class on Seesaw teachers will use children Google Workspace log ins that will be issued to children from the school.

Direct Communication using Internet

Teachers in the school may choose to use a number of tools for classroom communication. Examples include Google Classroom, SeeSaw, and Zoom. Some of these tools provide synchronous video opportunities whereby a staff member directly speaks to the children live - e.g. through a webinar or online meeting. The staff member invites pupils and their families to these meetings using a code. The following are ground rules for synchronous lessons online.

- All meetings will be password protected

- All people involved in the meeting will conduct themselves in a similar manner that would be expected in a regular class.
- The staff member has the right to "kick out" any person being disruptive from a synchronous lesson.
- A family member is expected to be close by when a pupil is engaging in a meeting. They should monitor all online interactions from the pupil.
- Staff will not meet any child alone using an online meeting. If there is a need for a meeting between a child with a staff member, another adult must be present at the meeting and/or the meeting must be recorded.
- While chat may be available in an online meeting, it is the responsibility of the child's family to ensure that any interaction is appropriate. Any interaction from a pupil that could be deemed as inappropriate may result in the child's removal from the lesson or, where appropriate, a referral to Child Protection services.

PERSONAL DEVICES

Pupils using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages, communication via social media or apps within school or the unauthorized taking of images with a mobile phone camera, still or moving is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The school Assistive technology plays a vital role in promoting equal educational and inclusivity within our school community. It is intended to support individuals with diverse learning needs, ensuring they can access the curriculum, participate in school, and succeed in their education. As such, the use of assistive technology is encouraged and welcomed within our school.

It is important that all users adhere to the guidelines established within this Acceptable usage policy for it's usage. This included respecting the privacy and consent of individuals using assistive teachnology, ensuring that it is employed solely for educational purposes and avoiding any misuse or harm to the equipment, software or digital resources. By adhering to these guidelines, we can create an inclusive and supportive atmosphere where assistive technology serves it's intended purpose effectively.

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

- Children First 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 students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

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.