

St. Louis Secondary School, Carrickmacross

An Acceptable Use Policy for the Internet

General

The Internet is an increasingly popular research and communications tool. It has many educational benefits, allowing pupils to rapidly access a wide variety of information and resources in a range of formats. However, due to the fact that it is largely an unregulated medium, there are certain potential dangers associated with its use. Just like elsewhere in society, the Internet has access to people and certain kinds of information that are unsuitable for young people and may potentially have a negative impact on their attitudes, behaviour and well-being. For this reason, the school must take steps to ensure that access to and use of the Internet is regulated in a way that provides a safe and acceptable learning environment for all pupils.

1. Broadband is provided by the Schools Broadband Service overseen by the National Centre for Technology in Education. This broadband is filtered for content into 6 levels where level 1 is most restrictive and level 6 least restrictive. All 6 content filtering levels are designed to block content unsuitable for schools. St Louis Secondary school has filtering of content at level 4. Filtering does not provide total protection from unsuitable material so staff and pupils should be alert to this possibility and immediately report any such occurrences to management.
2. Wireless broadband in the school is password protected. All such passwords must never be disclosed and will be subject to regular change.
3. Virus protection software will be used and will be updated on a regular basis.
4. The use of personal memory sticks, CD-ROMs or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
5. Pupils may not access computer rooms outside of timetabled classes without the permission of a teacher. Any pupil wishing to access a computer room must complete a *Computer Use Slip* for each session. These are available in the Main Office.
6. All Internet sessions will be subject to supervision by a teacher.
7. The level of supervision will vary depending on the age and stage of the pupils concerned.
8. No pupils up to Transition Year may access the Internet without a teacher being present. Senior pupils may be given limited access at the discretion of a teacher.
9. A pupil granted access outside of class time must signify compliance with the school's *Acceptable Use Policy* by signing the declaration on the *Computer Use Slip*.
10. A teacher who grants access to a pupil will undertake to monitor that pupil's use of the Internet. This may include retrospective examination of sites visited.
11. Pupils will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
12. Pupils will not access or download materials or images that are not directly related to their studies.
13. Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information relating to themselves or to other pupils.
14. Pupils will observe good "netiquette" at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

15. Personal pupil information including home addresses or other contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
16. Photographs of individual pupils with names attached will not appear on the school's website.
17. Pupils will not visit chat rooms except at the discretion of a teacher.
18. No material may be uploaded to the web without the prior approval of a staff member.
19. Pupils will not copy information from the web into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source.
20. Pupils using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages, or the unauthorised taking of images with a mobile phone camera either still or moving is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
21. 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.

Appendix 1.

Computer Use Slip

This document must be completed by any student wishing to use the Internet in any situation where there is not a teacher present in the room.

Name of Student: _____

Class: _____

Name of teacher

granting access: _____

I have read the school's Acceptable Use Policy for the Internet and am willing to abide by its regulations. I wish to use the Internet solely for reasons associated with my studies.

Signed: _____

Date: _____