

## **Internet Acceptable Usage Policy St Ronan's NS**

Educationalists believe in the benefits of curriculum-based internet use. The purpose of the Internet Acceptable Usage Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources, and will be protected from harmful and illegal use of the Internet.

St Ronan's NS will employ a number of strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet.

### **These strategies are as follows:**

1. Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP)
2. Education
3. Filtering/Monitoring

### **Sanctions**

If a pupil deliberately misuses the internet or email, this will result in disciplinary action, including the withdrawal of access privileges. Parents/guardians will receive written notification of misuse by a pupil.

### **Internet**

1. Internet will be used for educational purposes only
2. Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher
3. Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher
4. Filtering software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material
5. The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage
6. Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety
7. Pupils will be taught to evaluate the content of internet sites
8. Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues
9. Uploading and downloading of non-approved material is banned
10. Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis
11. Pupils will observe good "netiquette" (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring a school into disrepute

12. 'YouTube' (and similar sites) can be accessed only under the supervision and direction of the teacher.

### **Communication**

1. Electronic communication will be used for educational purposes only.
2. Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person
3. Pupils will not send messages to or from school online platforms.
4. Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details e.g. addresses, telephone numbers, or pictures via school online platforms.
5. Pupils will never arrange to meet someone via school online platforms.

### **School Website**

Designated teachers will manage the publication of material on the school website.

1. Personal pupil information, home addresses and contact details will not be published on the school website
2. Class lists will not be published
3. Pupils' full names will not be published beside their photograph
4. Digital photographs, video clips and audio clips will focus on groups and group activities rather than on individual pupils
5. Pupils will be given an opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website
6. Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such
7. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

## Education

St Ronan's will undertake an education programme to educate children on the safe, responsible use of the Internet.

21<sup>st</sup> century life presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation from which children and young people need to be protected. At the same time, they need to learn to recognise and avoid these risks – to become internet wise.

### Resources that may be used to implement this programme include

- NCTE Internet Safety Awareness Video
- Use of the 'Kids' section on the [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) website
- SAFT Internet Safety Awareness Education Programme and exemplars
- Twinkl Resources

## Filtering

'Filtering' is a term used to describe a way of limiting the content of web pages, emails, chat rooms and other electronic data to which users may be exposed. No filter is 100% accurate. **The most effective filtering tool is adult vigilance.**

Many browsers have their own built in filtering tool e.g. Google. Google's search engine has a built-in "Safe Search". This filter eliminates sites that contain pornography and explicit sexual content from search results. It is easily applied by clicking on the **Preferences** link on any Google page. Unfortunately it is also easily removed.

St Ronan's has filtering software. The access to websites from all school computers is monitored and regularly reviewed by the NCCA. Websites are only allowed through following a verification of their suitability.

## Firewalls

Windows XP has a built-in firewall. Firewall software can be purchased or downloaded free from the Internet. St Ronan's has installed firewall software.

Page down for a sample of the following:

- Letter to Parents
- Responsible Internet Use Pupil Undertaking Form
- Internet Permission Form
- A section of our enrolment form contains parental consent section.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Dan Kennely (Chairperson BoM St Ronan's NS)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As part of the school's education programme we offer pupils supervised access to the Internet. This will allow pupils vast educational opportunities by helping them for example, locate material for projects, communicate with students from different cultures, become independent in controlling their own research and become independent learners.

While we as educationalists recognise the value of the Internet as a resource, we must also acknowledge the potential risks to students. We feel that the answer is not to ban the use of the Internet in school but to teach pupils to recognise the risks and to become **Internet Wise**. We also allow limited access to 'YouTube' on a strictly supervised basis. This is to allow access to a huge range of educational material. The filter to prevent access to unsuitable material on YouTube is also in operation.

**This process is the responsibility of the school and the parent/guardian.**

For this reason we have compiled a school policy on Internet safety. Parents must also set and convey standards of usage to their children.

It is important that you read the school's Internet Policy and sign the attached document.

There is also a document for pupils to sign. Parents should discuss this document with their children to ensure that they clearly understand the school rules with regard to Internet usage.

Mise le meas,

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Principal

## **Responsible Internet Use Pupil Undertaking**

We use the School computers and Internet connection for learning.

These rules will help us to be fair to others and keep everyone safe.

- I will ask permission before entering any website, unless my teacher has already approved that site
- I will not bring external storage devices such as pen drives (or memory sticks/USB keys etc.) into school without permission
- The messages I send will be polite and sensible
- When communicating on a school platform, I will not give my home address or phone number or arrange to meet anyone
- If I see anything I am unhappy with or if I receive a message I do not like, I will tell a teacher immediately
- I know that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the sites I visit
- I understand that if I deliberately break these rules, I could be stopped from using the Internet and computers and my parents will be informed.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Pupil(s)

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Internet Permission Form**

Name of Pupil(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Class(es): \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent or legal guardian of the above child, I have read the Internet Acceptable

Use Policy and grant permission for \_\_\_\_\_  
(name(s): son/daughter) to access the Internet. I understand that school internet usage is for educational purposes only and that every reasonable precaution will be taken by the school to provide for online safety.

I accept my own responsibility for the education of my child(ren) on issues of Internet Responsibility and Safety.

I understand that having adhered to all the enclosed precautions the school cannot be held responsible if my child tries to access unsuitable material.

**Signature:** 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Legal Guardians

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

