### Internet Use Policy

Introduction

The Internet is an essential element for education, business and social interaction. Internet use is part of the revised curriculum and a necessary tool for education. The purpose of Internet use at Kildare Town Educate Together National School is to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school’s management, information and business administration systems.  
  
This Acceptable Use Policy will address all rights, privileges, responsibilities and sanctions associated with access to and use of the Internet in Kildare Town Educate Together National School.

The AUP will be revised regularly. This version was revised in September 2020, to reflect the place of ICT during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is available to all staff members, BOM and parents for suggestions and feedback.

This policy is also closely linked with the following school policies:

* Child protection policy
* Positive Behaviour (Code of Behaviour)
* Stay Safe Programme (SPHE)
* Anti-Bullying policy
* Code of Professional Conduct

Aims

* The aim of our Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils, teachers and parents will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school’s Internet resources in a safe, responsible 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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP - will be imposed.

Staff/People employed by the school/student teachers/volunteers etc who breach the AUP may be dealt with by the Board of Management's disciplinary procedures and/or child protection procedures. **\*See Child Protection Policy**

**During the school closure due to Covid-19, ICT became a vital tool with maintaining the connection between school and home. We rapidly responded to the sudden school closure to ensure that children felt reassured and their educational needs continued to be bet. Email addresses were set up for children from 3rd - 6th classes and they communicated through Google Classroom. Junior classes utilised See-Saw as their primary communication method. Regular contact was maintained with parents through emails and phone calls. Many teachers hosted Zoom meetings to provide face to face support via video meetings. This provided children with an opportunity to see each other and discuss how they were feeling. Zoom meetings were also utilised to provide support to children with additional needs, such as EAL and literacy and numeracy support. A number of school laptops and equipment was distributed to children who were unable to access these online supports due to lack of equipment. At all times, children were reminded of internet safety and teachers operated within our AUP.**

**As of September 2020, the children have returned to school, however all teachers are mindful that we may return to distance learning in the future and as such, they are ensuring that children develop skills in using technology for learning.**

Strategies

The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet.

**Students Use of the Internet**

General

These strategies are as follows:

* Students should follow Kildare Town ET Computer Rules and BE SMART Internet rules at all times when using any device in the school. These rules will be displayed in all classrooms and library and will be taught each year.
* Students will only be allowed access to the Internet when parents have signed the Kildare Town Educate Together National School Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement / eSafety Rules. This will be sent out to all Parents and Guardians once the policy has been ratified this year. This will be sought during enrolment during subsequent years.
* Students should receive lessons on acceptable internet use and internet safety as per SPHE plan, using resources from websites such as [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) and [www.kidsmart.org.uk](http://www.kidsmart.org.uk)
* Students should observe good “netiquette” (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
* Students are encouraged to use class emails to transport data from home to school. Students who do not have Internet at home will require permission from staff to use External Hard Drives, USB drives, CD-ROMs or DVDs in school. All external hardware and software will require permission from staff and *must be scanned with anti-virus software* before use by the teacher.
* Uploading and downloading of non-approved software/games will not be permitted.
* Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
* Filtering software, provided by the NCTE schools broadband scheme, will be used on student computers and laptops to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.

World Wide Web

* Students should always have an adult in the room supervising them when using the internet.
* Students should use internet sites that have been previewed by their teacher before use.
* Students should use the Internet for educational purposes and/or as deemed appropriate by the teacher -e.g. as a reward or for golden time etc.
* Students should be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.
* Students should not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
* Students should inform their teacher if they inadvertently access information that makes them in any way uncomfortable. In the unlikely event that this should happen, the children will be reassured and their parents will be notified. Also, where possible, the offending URL will be noted and the service provider will be informed. These incidents must be reported to the e-learning co-ordinator.

Email

* Students from 3rd - 6th  have a class email address which can be used in a variety of ways. These may include photo sharing between home and school, pen-pals, attaching project work done at home for use in school, keeping in contact with past pupils etc.
* Students should only use their approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
* Students should not send or receive, by any means, any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or any material that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
* Students should not reveal their own or other people’s personal details, such as addresses, telephone numbers or pictures.
* Students should never arrange a meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.

Social Media

* Students should not have access to social media on the school network and they are forbidden to access all social networking sites on personal electronic devices on the school campus.
* Students are not permitted to refer to any member of the school community or the school on social networking sites and students’ usage of social media, at all times, and must protect the reputation of Kildare Town Educate Together National School.
* Students are not permitted to follow or view any staff member of Kildare Town Educate Together National School on their personal Twitter, Facebook or any other personal social media forum.
* If students are found to be in breach of the above, the KTETNS Code of Good Behaviour will be strictly adhered to.

School Website

* Students should be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork and school work on the World Wide Web. The publication of this work will be co-ordinated by a staff member. Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
* Students’ *individual*digital photographs, audio or video clips should not be published on the school website. Instead, photographs, audio and video clips should focus on group activities and these should be published, with parents’ permission, using the school's standard consent on the registration form on enrolment. Personal pupil information, including name, home address and contact details should be omitted from school web pages. Special parental permission will be sought if the school would like to publicise an individual child’s achievement.

Personal Devices

* Students using their own technology (such as laptops or tablets) in school should follow the rules set out in this agreement. **The use of a pupil’s own devices will be by prior arrangement only.**

Discussion and Communication Forums

* Students should only have access to discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.
* Students should use these discussion forums and other electronic communication forums for educational purposes and should always be supervised.
* Student usernames should be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
* Students should never organise face-to-face meetings with someone via discussion forums or other electronic communication forums.

Legislation

Internet users have been made aware of legislation relating to use of the Internet.

* Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 <http://justice.ie/80256E010039E882/vWeb/pcJUSQ5YUHTP-en>
* Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 - <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/ZZA22Y1998.html>
* Interception Act 1993 - <http://www.acts.ie/zza10y1993.1.html>
* Video Recordings Act 1989 - <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/ZZA22Y1989.html>
* The Data Protection Act 1988 -<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/ZZA25Y1988.html>

Support Structures

The following is a selection of websites offering support and advice in the area of Internet Safety -

* <http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety/>
* Webwise - <http://www.webwise.ie/>
* Make IT Secure - [http://makeitsecure.ie](http://makeitsecure.ie/)
* Safe Internet - [http://www.saferinternet.org](http://www.saferinternet.org/ww/en/pub/insafe/)
* The following guides/manuals are available in school:  
  Be Wise on the Net …Information and Advice for Schools NCTE  
  Internet Safety Awareness Education Programme Teachers’ Handbook SAFT Project (NCTE)

Sanctions

* Failure to comply with the policy and procedures outlined in this document may result in disciplinary action according to the School's Code of Conduct, and/or the school's Anti Bullying Policy and/or the school's Child Protection Policy. The Code of Good Behaviour includes written warnings, notification to parents, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.
* Please refer to School's above polices for further information.  
  The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Staff use of the Internet

As employees of Kildare Town Educate Together, all staff at Kildare Town Educate Together are expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to this AUP, which is available on Staff Teams and in the master policy folder in the office.

Organisation and Management of Internet use

* Staff members are encouraged to use resources available on the internet in their teaching and learning activities.
* Staff will ensure, to the best of their ability, that students are not exposed to obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials via their teaching computer, IWB or projectors.
* Staff will select and preview sites which will support pupils’ learning before lessons are taught.
* Staff intending to use search engines with students will have performed the search themselves and opened any links they intend to use prior to accessing them with the children to evaluate their suitability.
* Staff may give students details of suitable sites to extend their learning at home as appropriate.
* Staff are aware that up-loading and downloading of non-approved software is not permitted.
* Staff must comply with copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws.
* Staff or student complaints on the use or misuse of the internet will be brought to the attention of the principal.
* Staff will be aware of issues in relation to safety on the net. The following websites are useful in this regard.
* www.safeinternet.org
* www.ncte.ie/internetsafety
* [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie/)
* www.[makeitsecure.ie](http://makeitsecure.ie/)
* [www.kidsmart.org.uk](http://www.kidsmart.org.uk)

Email

* Staff email accounts are provided to staff for use relating to school business.
* Staff email accounts should never be used to store or distribute unsavoury materials or to send or forward games or jokes.
* Staff’s occasional and reasonable personal use of email is permitted provided that this does not interfere with the performance, work duties and responsibilities at Kildare Town Educate Together and does not in any way embarrass Kildare Town Educate Together and otherwise, complies with this policy.
* References to any member of the school community made via electronic means should be made in a strictly professional and business-like manner.
* References to any child, past or present, via electronic means, should be made in a strictly professional and business-like manner and use the student's initials.
* Staff emails will be disabled within a month of staff leaving the school.

Social Media

* Kildare Town Educate Together understands that staff may have private social media accounts. However, all staff are expected to use these accounts in a responsible manner, including ***ensuring adequate privacy settings are employed***. It is imperative that references to any member of the school community or the school on social networking sites should be made in a strictly professional and business-like manner. Staff usage of social media, at all times, must protect the reputation of Kildare Town Educate Together and its community.
* **Staff must NEVER follow or befriend students on media forums such as Twitter or Facebook and will only view students’ profiles in relation to school business.**
* **Staff must NEVER follow or befriend parents or guardians in the school (unless they are friends in a personal capacity) on media forums such as Twitter or Facebook.**

World Wide Web

* Staff should not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
* Staff should inform the e-learning co-ordinator if they or a student inadvertently access sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials. The e-learning co-ordinator will record these incidents in the E-learning Safety Incident Log and inform the principal. Where possible, the offending URL will be noted and the service provider will be informed.
* Staff should use the Internet, during teaching time, for educational and professional purposes only.
* Staff should 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.

Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which all staff should familiarise themselves with:

* Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
* Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
* Interception Act 1993
* Video Recordings Act 1989
* The Data Protection Act 1988

Sanctions

* Failure to comply with the policy and procedures outlined in this document may result in;
  + the withdrawal of computer, email and internet facilities
  + Initiation of disciplinary procedures and disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
* Serious breaches of this policy may result in the initiation of criminal or civil proceedings.

Ratification and Review

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| --- | --- |
| Date Created | January 2017 |
| Date of Review | September 2020 |
| Date for Next Review | September 2022 |

Kildare Town E-learning Incident Log

Details of **ALL** e-learning incidents to be recorded by the e-Learning Co-ordinator. This incident log will be monitored by the Principal

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date & Time** | **Name of pupil or staff** | **Computer**  **or Class** | **Details of incident**  **(including evidence)** | **Actions** |
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**Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement / E-Safety Rules**

**Name of Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Dear Parents & Guardians,

ICT including the Internet, email and mobile technologies etc. has become an important part of learning in our school. Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this permission form to the class teacher. This form will be kept on file until your child is finished in Kildare Town Educate Together.

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and grant permission for my child to access the Internet. I have read and discussed the eSafety rules with my child and they agree to follow these rules.

I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but the school cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites intentionally or unintentionally. On the rare occasions that this happens, students should inform their teacher if they inadvertently access information that makes them in any way uncomfortable. The student will be reassured and you will be notified. Also, where possible, the offending URL will be noted and the service provider will be informed. These incidents will be reported to the e-learning co-ordinator and recorded in an incident log.

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child’s schoolwork or a group photograph including my child may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing children’s work on the school website.

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

**Print name: ( )**

