Internet Acceptable Usage Policy

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.

Caheragh National School 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. The use of personal iPads, external storage devices, USBs or CD-ROMS in school requires a teacher's permission

12. 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

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

Email

If pupils are allowed to use email, the following rules will apply:

1. Email will be used for educational purposes only

2. Students will only use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher

3. Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person

4. Pupils will not send text messages to or from school email

5. Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details e.g. addresses, telephone numbers, or pictures via school email

6. Pupils will never arrange to meet someone via school email

7. Sending or receiving email attachments is subject to teacher permission.

Internet Chat

Students are not permitted to use internet chat rooms.

Designated staff members 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. Permission to publish a student's work will be sought from pupils/ parents/ guardians. This permission may be withdrawn at any time.

8. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Education

Caheragh National School will undertake an education programme to educate children on the safe, responsible use of the Internet.

21st 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 website
- SAFT Internet Safety Awareness Education Programme and exemplars

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.

Caheragh National School 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. Caheragh National School has installed firewall software.

See Appendices for a sample of the following:
- Letter to Parents
- Responsible Internet Use Pupil Undertaking Form
- Internet Permission Form
- School Website Permission Form

Acceptable Use
Caheragh National School computers and networks are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner and must be in support of the educational objectives of Caheragh National School. Management reserve the right to monitor this usage.

Unacceptable Use
This includes but is not limited to the following:
1. Accessing, transmitting, or receiving obscene or pornographic material
2. Engaging in cyber cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is material created by others and presenting it as if it were one's own

3. Accessing the Internet for non-school related activities, such as chat rooms, engaging in instant messaging, posting or filling out forms with private or personal information about yourself or another person

4. Downloading or loading software or applications without permission from the Principal

The above provide general guidelines and examples of prohibited uses for illustrative purposes, but do not attempt to state all required or prohibited activities by users. Persons who have questions regarding whether a particular activity or use is acceptable should seek further guidance from the Principal.

Consequences
The use of technology resources inside Caheragh National School is a privilege. Inappropriate or unethical use or failure to adhere the guidelines may include, but are not limited to limitation or cancellation of user privileges, possible disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action.

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management annually, or as new legislation dictates. All partners will be informed of any amendments necessary after such a review.

Signed:_____ _____   **Signed:**_____

             Chairperson   Principal

Date:_____   **Date:**_____

Sample Letter to Parents

Insert Date

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,

_____

 Principal

Responsible Internet Use
Pupil Undertaking

We use the School computers, iPads 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 stick drives (or memory sticks/USB keys etc.) into school without permission

- I will not use email for personal reasons

- I will only use email for school projects and with my teacher's permission

- The messages I send will be polite and sensible

- When sending e-mail, I will not give my home address or phone number or arrange to meet anyone

- I will ask for permission before opening an e-mail or an e-mail attachment

- I will not use internet chat rooms

- 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: _____

_____

School Website

I understand that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the school's website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Usage Policy in relation to publishing pupils' work and photographs of school activities on the website.

Signature: 1. _____   2. _____

            Parents/Legal Guardians

Date: _____