



## **St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar, Co. Mayo**

### **Acceptable Use Policy & Internet Safety**

#### **Mission Statement**

St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar, Co. Mayo is a voluntary Catholic Secondary School for girls under the trusteeship of **CEIST** (Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust). We aim to provide a holistic Christian Education in co-operation with staff, students, parents/guardians, Board of Management and the community. We work to create equality for all in an atmosphere of mutual respect. We strive to excellence in learning and endeavour to help each student to reach her full potential in a positive, caring and happy environment.

#### **CEIST - Core Values**

The core values of CEIST are:

- Promoting Spiritual & Human Development
- Achieving Quality in Teaching & Learning
- Showing Respect for Every Person
- Creating Community
- Being Just and Responsible

#### **Mission Statement**

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#### **School Ethos**

The characteristic spirit of St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar is based on the Mercy Philosophy of Education which espouses the core values of respect, justice, care and joy. The School's Ethos is holistic and person centred. The school encourages students to use and share their talents to their full potential, to recognise God's presence in their lives, to celebrate their Christian faith and to show respect to all persons in all areas of life and work. Students are encouraged by school staff to



strive for excellence in learning and to participate to the best of their ability in all aspects of school life.

### **Aim of Policy:**

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

Internet use and access is considered a school resource. Therefore, if the school's AUP is not adhered to this resource will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions as outlined in the AUP will be imposed.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 annually.

Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

### **Rationale**

- To ensure that students benefit from the learning potential of the internet as a valuable educational resource in a safe and effective manner
- To inform students that internet use and access is considered a valuable school resource
- To define the parameters of behaviour regarding the appropriate use of the internet and specify the consequences of violating these parameters
- To provide schools with legal protection from liability

### **School's Strategy**

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and to reduce risks associated with the digital technology and the internet. These strategies are as follows and apply to use of digital technology and the internet in school

#### **General**

- Students will be issued with a school email account which may only be used for school business.
- Internet sessions will only take place with teacher permission and under teacher supervision
- Filtering software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material ( NCTE Websense/Level 4 )
- The school will monitor pupil's internet and school email usage
- All students will be issued with a student computer account ( username and password)



- Student's password details will be held by the teacher issuing the account ( this will be held confidentially by the teacher)
- Students may not use or access another individuals computer account
- Teachers and students will be provided with training in the area of internet safety
- Uploading and down loading of non approved software will not be permitted
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis
- The use of memory sticks or other digital storage devices require the teacher permission to be used in school (it is essential that such devices are scanned by virus software before use)
- Students will treat the use of school computers and digital devices with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions through their use of technology that may damage or interfere with the schools computer system
- Students are prohibited from interfering or changing computer settings, desktops, software, hardware or any peripheral digital devices
- Students users are responsible for the back up of their own data in their assigned folder

### **Student Awareness**

- Students will be taught how to evaluate websites as part of improving their digital literacy skills
- Students will be asked to ignore marketing banners that may appear on certain websites
- Students will be advised that if they encounter illegal material to immediately switch off their monitor and inform their class teacher or someone in school authority
- Students will observe good netiquette (i.e. good etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that will bring the school into disrepute
- Students will use the school's computer resources and the internet for educational purposes only
- Students must familiarise themselves with copyright issues relating to online material and learning
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information or information on other students or school personnel on the internet
- 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 management reasons
- Students are forbidden to use the internet to send and/or receive text messaging services



- Students are forbidden to access social media websites unless they have been created with school permission and for school use only

### **E-Mail**

- Students will only use approved class/school e-mail accounts under supervision or by permission from a teacher
- Students will not 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 addresses or telephone numbers or pictures
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet
- The sending or receiving of emails or email attachments is subject to permission from the teacher
- Students will be advised that if the sender of an email is unknown to avoid opening the email or any attachments as they may contain viruses that would be harmful to the school's computer system

### **Internet chat**

- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums and other communication forums that have been approved by the school with their teacher's permission
- Chat room discussion forums or other electronic communications will only be used for educational purposes and under supervision
- Face to face meetings with a person or persons organised via internet chat is forbidden.



**Communication**

A wide range of rapidly developing communications technologies has the potential to enhance learning. The following table shows how the school currently considers the benefit and risks/disadvantages of using these technologies for education:

Communication Technologies	Allowed	Allowed at certain times	Allowed with teacher permission	Not allowed
Mobile phones may be brought to school	√			
Use of mobile phones in lessons			√	
Use of mobile phones in social time			√	
Taking photos on mobile phones or other camera devices			√	
Use of hand held devices e.g PDA's, tablets			√	
Use of personal email addresses in school or on school network				√
Use of school email for personal emails				√
Use of chat room facilities				√
Use of instant messaging				√
Use of social networking sites				√
Use of blogs			√	



## **Inappropriate Activities**

### **User Actions**

#### **Illegal and unacceptable activities**

Users shall not visit internet sites, make, post download, upload, data transfer, communicate or pass on, material remarks, proposals or comments that contain or relate to:

- Child sexual abuse images
- Promotion or conduct of illegal acts e.g. under the child protection, computer misuse and fraud legislation
- Racist material

#### **Unacceptable activities**

Users shall not visit internet sites, make, post, download, upload, data transfer, communicate or pass on, material remarks, proposals or comments that contain or relate to:

- Pornography
- Promotion of any kind of discrimination
- Promotion of racial or religious hatred
- Threatening behaviour, including promotion of physical violence or mental harm
- Any other information which may be offensive to other students or staff or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the school or brings the school into disrepute
- Using the schools computer systems to run a private business
- Use systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards used by the school
- Uploading, downloading or transmitting commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, without the necessary licensing permissions
- Revealing, or publicising confidential or proprietary information (e.g. financial/personal information, databases, computer/network access codes and passwords)
- Creating or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files
- Carrying out sustained or instantaneous high volume network traffic (downloading/uploading files) that causes network congestion and hinders in their use of the internet
- On –line gaming
- On-line gambling
- On-line shopping/commerce



## **Personal Devices**

Students using their own technology in school should follow the rules set out in this agreement. They will only use hand held/external devices (mobile phones/USB devices/digital cameras/video recording devices) in school with school permission (refer to communications section)

## **School Website**

- Students may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the world- wide- web in accordance with clear policies and approval process regarding the content that can be loaded o the schools website
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of students or staff
- Website using facilities such as comments and user-generated content will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain personal details
- The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual activities will only be published on the school website with parental permission
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages
- The school website will avoid publishing the first and last names of individuals in a photograph
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named and will not use students' names in an image file or ALT tags if published on the Web
- Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published

## **Legislation**

Information on the following legislation relating to the use of the internet which school, staff, students and parents should familiarise themselves will be available in school

- Data protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Bill 1997
- 1993 interception act 1988
- Video Recording Act 1998



- 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 exceptional cases, suspension or expulsion.

The school reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities, to involve the Gardai and other legal bodies should the need arise in the case of a serious breach of this AUP

Parents may be asked to furnish the school with an IP address of any home internet account that is used in a malicious or offensive manner regarding communications from the school

**Related policies**

- Code of Behaviour
- Social, Personal & Health Education
- Pastoral Care of Students
- Bullying Policy

**Consultation**

All partners in the school community i.e. staff, students, parents and the BOM are consulted in the drawing up of this AUP

**Implementation**

This policy will be implemented by the BOM and teachers of St. Joseph’s Secondary School, Castlebar.

**Monitoring & Review**

Reviewed and Ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on:

\_\_\_\_\_

This policy is operational from: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. John Caulfield

\_\_\_\_\_

Ms. Marie Mac Cabe

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal





**Permission Form**

Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, and sign and return the completed permission form to the Principal.

**School Name:** St. Joseph’s Secondary School, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

**Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class/Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Student**

- I agree to follow the school’s Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet.
- I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school.

**Student’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Parent/Guardian**

- As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my son or daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet.
- 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.

**I accept the above paragraph  I do not accept the above paragraph**

**(Please tick as appropriate)**

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

**I accept the above paragraph  I do not accept the above paragraph**

**(Please tick as appropriate)**

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

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_