



Internet Acceptable Use Policy

1. Introduction

The internet is a valuable teaching and learning tool. It provides information and allows people to communicate with others and share information. It can develop children's independent research skills and promote life-long learning. However, some material available on the internet is unsuitable for children and therefore these guidelines will be followed when using the internet.

2. Aim of Policy:

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

3. Parental Approval:

The Acceptance Use Policy is available for parents. If parents/guardians have concerns about the Acceptable Use Policy they are advised to contact the school principal in order to have their concerns addressed.

4. Internet Safety Strategy:

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximize learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems are used in order to minimize the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. This filtering system is used in connection with the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) (www.ncte.ie).
- Pupils and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety through (www.webwise.ie)
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal memory sticks, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Pupils will treat others with respect at all times.

5. World Wide Web:

- The School has restricted access to the World Wide Web and only sites of General and Educational interest are accessible.
- Pupils will be supervised by the teacher when using the web.
- Pupils will use the web for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information.

6. Email and Chat Rooms:

- Email should only be used as a whole class activity, not individually, for particular educational purposes eg requesting information for a project.
- Pupils will only be allowed email in the presence of the teacher.
- Pupils will never be allowed to access Internet Chat Rooms.

7. School Website (glenswilly.com)

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork, or school work on the World Wide Web in accordance with approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated with the class teacher.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on groups rather than individuals.
- Personal pupil information including surnames, home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.

8. Staff Use of Computer Facilities:

- School Personnel should use the web for educational and professional purposes only during the school day 9.20 – 3.00.
- If a staff member wishes to access the web for personal purposes it should be done outside of pupil-teacher contact time.
- Special Needs Assistants can use the computer facilities in the school with the permission of, and under the supervision of, the class teacher.
- Any students on placement from the teacher training Colleges, transition year pupils or students on a work experience placement can only have access to the computer facilities under the supervision of the class teacher. Permission should be sought from the class teacher prior to use.
- Use of the internet by staff members to access inappropriate material whether it be pornographic, racist or offensive, is strictly prohibited at all times. No person will in any way alter the filtering preferences.

9. Support Structures:

There are a number of organizations who deal with internet safety and can prove to be a source of support for Parents and Teachers alike. These organizations can be accessed through the following sites:

- www.webwise.ie : A guide to safe internet usage for children.
- www.hotline.ie : Reporting illegal or harmful content on the internet.
- www.makeitsecure.org : National security site for children.
- www.safekids.com : Family guide to internet safety.
- www.getnetwise.org : Safety, spam, privacy and security site.
- www.ncte.ie : Government support agency.

10. Sanctions:

Misuse of the Internet by members of staff or the school is not expected but if it occurs it may result in disciplinary action, including verbal and 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. Staff misuse of the Internet will be dealt with through disciplinary action procedures by the Board of Management.

11. Timeframe:

This version of the Acceptable Use Policy was created in _____ by the teaching staff and parents of Glenswilly N.S..

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in _____

This policy will be subject to regular review according to the Department of Education and Science and the safety guidelines of the school community.