



## **St. Patrick's Primary School Internet Acceptable Usage Policy 2024/2025**

### **Contents:**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Guidelines for Internet Usage**
- 3. Email**
- 4. School Website**
- 5. Google Workspace**
- 6. Internet Safety & Education**
- 7. Social Media**
- 8. Filtering & Firewalls**
- 9. Monitoring & Review**
- 10. Permission/Consent**
- 11. Ratification & Review**

**Appendices 1, 2 & 3**

## **1.Introduction**

This policy has been developed by the In-School Management Team, in consultation with the teaching staff & the Board of Management. The aim of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources in a safe and effective manner, and will be protected from harmful and illegal use of the internet. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed. St. Patrick's Primary 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

## **2. Guidelines for Internet Usage**


1. Any time spent on school devices that require internet usage will always be supervised by a teacher.
2. Pupils will be directed to which internet sites to visit when a learning session involving the internet is in progress.
3. All iPads & Chromebooks in the school are governed by an educational licence, to ensure that inappropriate & unsuitable material/websites cannot be accessed.
4. Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety as part of the Webwise & Stay Safe Programme
5. Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues, and report these to the Principal.
6. Uploading & downloading of non-approved material is banned.
7. The use of memory/USB sticks in school requires a teacher's permission
8. Pupils will observe good etiquette on the internet at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring the school into disrepute.
9. YouTube & similar sites can be accessed only under the supervision and direction of the teacher
10. Students are not permitted to use internet chat rooms.

## **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 be notified by staff in the event of internet misuse by a pupil.

All sanctions will fall in line with the school's Code of Behaviour -

 [Code of Behaviour June 2023.docx](#)

## **3. Email**

The school's e-mail address [saintpatricksgalway@gmail.com](mailto:saintpatricksgalway@gmail.com) which is strictly confidential, shall be used for administrative purposes only. None apart from the Principal, Deputy Principal, members of the ISL team, Chairperson of the B.O.M. and Secretary shall have access to the school's email.

Each staff member has their own staff email account assigned to them ([firstname.surname@saintpatricksgalway.ie](mailto:firstname.surname@saintpatricksgalway.ie)). Staff members are advised to interact with fellow staff members, parents, the school community & any other school related outside agencies through this email address. Teachers are encouraged to ensure that the contents of personal e-mails are inaccessible to children in their classes.

Teachers & pupils should not interact directly via email, and vice versa.

The use of personal email accounts by pupils is not allowed at St. Patrick's Primary School. Pupils must not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person. Pupils should immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication.

#### **4. School Website**


The school website is [www.saintpatricksgalway.ie](http://www.saintpatricksgalway.ie). 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' work will be displayed on the school website from time to time.
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.

#### **5. Google Workspace**

Each child from 3rd - 6th class has an individual Google login. This login uses the school domain ([firstnamesurname.student@saintpatricksgalway.ie](mailto:firstnamesurname.student@saintpatricksgalway.ie)). Pupils can access the school's Chromebooks with these login details, and it gives them access to Google features such as Drive, Docs, Sheets, Slides and Excel. Email and chat functions are disabled.

Parents are issued with a Google Workspace Notice -

 Google Workspace Notice 2024/2025.docx - upon their child entering 3rd class, or enrolment further up the school. The notice to parents outlines the following:

- What personal information does Google collect?

- How does Google use this information?
- Will Google disclose my child's personal information?
- Does Google use student personal information for users in K-12 schools to target advertising?
- Can my child share information with others using the Google Workspace for Education account?

Parental consent is required, and in a case where it is not granted, a Google Workspace account is not created for the child.

## **6. Internet Safety & Education**

St. Patrick's N.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:

1. HTML Heroes - 1st & 2nd class (Welcome to the Internet)
2. HTML Heroes - 3rd & 4th class (An Introduction to the Internet)
3. Be Kind Online - 3rd & 4th class (Garda Schools Programme)
4. MySelfie & the Wider World - 5th & 6th class (Anti-Cyber Bullying)
5. All Aboard for Digitown - appropriate for 9-12 year olds

## **7. Social Media**

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in St. Patrick's Primary School:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, Whats App, G Chat etc. is not allowed on school devices. Pupils are not permitted to access these apps on their own devices during school hours (unless in exceptional circumstances).
- Use of blogs such as WordPress is allowed (with permission from teaching staff).
- Access to YouTube is turned off on pupil devices, and permission must be sought from teaching staff.

Staff and pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff or any other members of the St. Pat's community.

Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the St. Pat's community on social media.

Staff must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring St. Pat's into disrepute.

Staff must not represent their own personal views as those of being St. Pat's on any social medium.

## **8. Filtering & Firewalls**

'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.

Teachers will direct pupils to the websites which they wish them to use during a session. The devices which children use in the school are protected by an educational licence, therefore they are deemed safe to use in the classroom. 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.

Windows XP has a built-in firewall. Firewall software can be purchased or downloaded free from the Internet. Our school's devices are protected by educational licences.

The school from time to time may send out permission forms/letters to parents for them to consent to their children using the internet at school on school devices. Sample information notes/permission slips are included at the end of this policy in the appendices.

- Letter to Parents (See Appendix 1)
- Responsible Internet Use Pupil Undertaking Form (See Appendix 2)
- Internet Permission Form
- School Website Permission Form

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.
- Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).
- Internal monitoring data for network activity.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the Principal should be informed. The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the Principal and Digital Learning Co-Ordinator. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed as necessary, and in light of experience by the following stakeholders: Board of Management, teaching staff, and support staff

## **10. Permission/Consent**

The following Parent/Guardian consent will be collected and retained by electronic means by the school.

Parents/Guardians 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.

Parents/Guardians agree to their child's engagement with SeeSaw/Google Classroom for the purposes of maintaining a Digital Learning Journal and distance learning.

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, Parents/Guardians have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for their son/daughter or the child in their care to access the Internet. Parents/Guardians understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. Parents/Guardians 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.

In relation to the school website, Parents/Guardians accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, their child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. Parents/Guardians understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing students' work on the school website.

Teachers, students and parents should familiarize themselves with the following legislation relating to use of the Internet:

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

## **11. Ratification & Review:**

A copy of the Acceptable Use Policy is readily accessible on the school website. This policy will be reviewed as necessary by the staff and Board of Management of St. Patrick's Primary School.

This policy was ratified on 16th October 2024.

Signed: *Fr. Tony Finn (Chairperson of the Board of Management)*

Signed: *Róna Donoghue (Acting Principal)*



Date: **16/10/2024**

*\* Please note that the signed copy of this policy is in the school office*

APPENDIX 1:

**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

## APPENDIX 2:

**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 ask for permission before using my USB stick in school.
- 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:** \_\_\_\_\_