

## **INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY** **Ransboro National School, Sligo.**

### **Introduction**

This policy has been devised by staff and Board of Management of Ransboro National School in the first term of 2012.

### **Rationale**

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.

### **Pupils' use of the Internet**

Pupils are responsible for good behaviour on the internet. Access to the Internet may be withdrawn from pupils who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use. Internet access in the school includes a filtering service. However no filtering service is completely foolproof and therefore pupils will be supervised during the use of the internet.

Staff will ensure to the maximum extent possible, that pupils know and understand that no internet user is permitted to:

- Use the internet for any illegal activity including accessing other computers.
- Retrieve, send, copy or display offensive messages or pictures.
- Use obscene or offensive language.
- Cause damage to computers, computer systems or networks.
- Violate copyright laws.
- Use another user's password.
- Trespass in another user's folders, work or files.
- Cause any form of vandalism to the machine or the work of others including the up loading or creation of viruses.

### **Organisation and Management of Internet Use**

Staff will select sites which will support pupils' learning. Pupils may be given with details of suitable sites to extend their learning at home as and when appropriate.

### **Internet Safety Lessons**

These lessons from the NCTE "Webwise" programme will be taught in each class, covering all aspects of internet safety.

### **Promoting Safe and Independent Use of the Internet**

Internet access will be supervised. Teachers will ensure that pupils understand appropriate use of the internet and are aware of the rules. Pupils will be encouraged to tell a teacher immediately if they encounter any material that makes them feel uncomfortable.

### **Children's Use of Email**

Children in school must only use email for educational purposes and e-mails will be checked before being sent. Pupils will not be allowed to send personal emails from the school system

without permission. In-coming email will be regarded as public and may be examined by any staff member. The use of chat rooms is forbidden.

### **Hardware in use in Ransboro National School**

Currently, there are computers and interactive whiteboards in all classrooms. There are 16 laptops housed on a mobile laptop trolley and timetabled for use in classrooms. At times, under the supervision and direction of the teacher, students may access the internet on these laptops to access certain sites of educational value. We are also fortunate to have a class set of iPod Touches timetabled for use in classrooms. Teachers research and download relevant applications which are of educational value to the iPods and children work on the apps. Occasionally, children may access the internet on the iPods, under the careful direction and supervision of the teacher.

### **School Blog**

Our school's website is in the form of a blog and can be accessed by conducting a Google search for Ransboro NS or typing in the address **www.ransboro.ie** Classes post material on the blog at different times under the direction of the teacher. Pictures are also posted on the blog, however children's names are never attached to a picture. In the context of the Data Protection Act, 1998, the school will only publish pupil information that is relevant to the context of the blog pages. Pupil's home address, phone number or any other personal information will not appear on the blog. Pupil's work will only appear in an educational context on the blog. Podcasting and digital videoing may also be posted on the blog in an educational context.

### **Social Networking Sites**

On occasion, under strictly controlled conditions and solely under the management of the teacher, classes may access sites such as Twitter. This will be strictly in an educational context while keeping links with schools abroad or for similar purposes.

Pupils will not be allowed to access personal profiles on Twitter or Facebook as it is illegal for children under the age of 13 to set up personal accounts on these social networking sites.

### **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones are not permitted and are not to be brought to school by children. In exceptional circumstances where a mobile phone may be necessary, please consult with class teacher who will, in turn, discuss the individual case with the Principal. Pupils will not be permitted to access the internet on smartphones within school as teachers are unable to supervise internet access.

This Internet Acceptable Use Policy remains under review as the Internet Use develops within Ransboro N.S.

**Ratified by Board of Management on 17.09.2012**

**Signed: Mr. Dan Scannell**

**Chairperson, Board of Management**

**APPENDIX 1**

Dear Parents,

As part of the school's ICT programme, we have updated our school's Acceptable Use Policy, which specifies our guidelines.

Before being allowed to use the Internet, all pupils must obtain parental permission. We therefore ask that you sign the enclosed form as evidence of your approval and acceptance of the school rules on this matter. A copy of our Acceptable Use Policy is attached.

Please read the AU Policy carefully.

**Name of Pupil** ..... **Class:**.....

**I allow my child/children (*Name/s*):** ..... **to use the Internet in school and accept school rules on this matter.**

.....

**Signature of Parent** .....

**Signature of Pupil** .....

## APPENDIX 2

### **Advice for Parents on ICT in the Home**

During school hours, teachers will guide pupils toward appropriate materials on the internet. Outside school, parents or guardians should bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they normally would with other information sources, such as television, magazines etc.

Parents or guardians should be aware that the internet service provider at home may not be filtered.

It is therefore important that these guidelines are followed:

- Discuss rules for using the internet with your children and decide together when, how long and what comprises appropriate use.
- Be aware of the sites your children are visiting and discuss with them what they are learning.
- Ensure that children do not give out personal identifying information on the internet such as a picture, address, phone number, school name or financial information such as credit card or bank details.
- Encourage your children not to respond to any unwelcome, unpleasant or abusive messages and to inform you if they receive any such messages or images.
- Appropriate home use of internet can be educationally beneficial and can make a useful contribution to home and school work. It should however be supervised and parents be aware that they are responsible for their children's use of the internet resources at home.

## **1. B. STAFF INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

### **Staff Use of Email and the Internet**

Members of staff are encouraged to use various resources in their teaching and learning activities, to conduct research, and for contact with others.

Each member of staff has access to the school email address as part of his/her work, protected by the use of a confidential password, which should be kept secure.

The use of email for personal use is acceptable outside of teaching hours.

When using the internet, all users must comply with all copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws.

All users are expected to communicate in a professional manner.

It will not be usual practice to read staff emails but the school reserves the right to do this in the case of a suspected breach of these policy guidelines.

A serious breach may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

No person will in any way alter the filtering preferences.

**Ratified by Board of Management on 17.9.2012**

**Signed: Mr. Dan Scannell**

**Chairperson, Board of Management**