St. Olaf's N.S.
Internet Acceptable Use Policy

School Policies and Procedures

Introduction

The Internet is an essential element for education, business and social interaction. Internet use is part of the revised curriculum and a necessary tool for education. The purpose of Internet use in St. Olaf's N.S. is to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management, information and business administration systems.

This Acceptable Use Policy will address all rights, privileges, responsibilities and sanctions associated with access to and use of the Internet in St. Olaf's N.S. The AUP will be revised regularly.

Aims

The aim of our Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils, teachers and parents will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe, responsible and effective manner.

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP - will be imposed.

Staff/People employed by the school/student teachers/volunteers etc who breach the AUP may be dealt with by the Board of Management's disciplinary procedures and/or child protection procedures. *See School's Child Protection Policy.

<u>Strategies</u>

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

General

- Internet sessions will be supervised through the Classroom app.

- Filtering software, as provided by NCTE, will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.

- Students will not have access to administrator passwords.

- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.

- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.

- Students will observe good "netiquette" (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

World Wide Web

- Sites that the children use in school should be previewed by their teacher before use.

- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes and/or as deemed appropriate by the teacher -e.g. as a reward or for golden time etc.

- Teachers and students should be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.

- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.

- All Internet users in St. Olaf's N.S. should be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored.

- Students and staff (including people employed by the school/contractors etc) will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

- Children should inform their teacher if they inadvertently access information that makes them in any way uncomfortable. In the unlikely event that this should happen, the children will be reassured and their parents will be notified. Also, where possible, the offending URL will be noted and the service provider will be informed.

Email

- The teacher should set one e-mail address for classes for work online with partner schools.

- Emails will be opened by a teacher and printed for children who are participating in such projects.

- Students will not send or receive by any means any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or any material that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses, telephone numbers or pictures.

- Students will never arrange a meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.

- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

Internet Chat

- Students will only have access to closed chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.(eg Seesaw, Microsoft Teams)

- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will be supervised.

- Students will not have access to closed chat room passwords.

- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.

- Meetings with someone organised via Internet chat rooms and discussion forums is forbidden.

Mobile Phone/Smart Watch

- The use of personal mobile/smart phones and other personal devices by children who attend the school is not allowed while the children are in the care of the school staff, while at school, on trips from the school or involved in extra-curricular activities. If the child has the phone and/or smart watch in their possession at school, on trips from the school or involved in extra-curricular activities, it must be on silent mode/ switched off and kept in their bag at all times. If a child needs to contact home or a parent needs to contact their child, this can be done through the school office.

- Mobile/Smart phones, smart watches and other personal devices that cause a disturbance during the school day will be handed into the school principal who will contact the parents.

- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the School Office remains the first point of contact and can ensure that your child is reached quickly and a message passed onto them.

It should be noted that sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, TikTok, WhatsApp all have a minimum user age of 13 years or older and as such no child in the school should be using these sites / apps either in or out of school. It is the responsibility of each individual parent to ensure that their children comply with these regulations as inappropriate / illegal use of these sites can lead to upsetting / stressful situations for young children in particular.

School Website, *Social Media (X & Seesaw)*
Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork and school work on the World Wide Web with parental permission.
The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students should not be

published on the school website except with explicit permission from parents. Instead, photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities and these should be published with permission using the school's standard permission form.
Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.

St Olaf's NS participates in the **School Excellence Fund - Digital: (Digital Learning Clusters) -**
The purpose of our project is to demonstrate the innovative use of digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment, through clusters of schools collaborating in Problem Solving (Maths).

Legislation

Teachers have been made aware of the following links outlining legislation relating to use of the Internet:

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 http://justice.ie/80256E010039E882/vWeb/pcJUSQ5YUHTP-en
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 - http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/ZZA22Y1998.html
- Interception Act 1993 - http://www.acts.ie/zza10y1993.1.html
- Video Recordings Act 1989 - http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/ZZA22Y1989.html
- The Data Protection Act 1988 - http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/ZZA25Y1988.html

Support Structures

Teachers have been made aware of the following Websites offering support and advice in the area of Internet Safety:

- NCTE - http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety/
- Webwise - http://www.webwise.ie/
- Make IT Secure - http://makeitsecure.ie
- Safe Internet - http://www.saferinternet.org/ww/en/pub/insafe/
- Barnados Online Safety Programme - https://www.barnardos.ie/learning-development/training/online-safety-programme/

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet/mobile devices may result in disciplinary action according to the School's Code of Behaviour, and/or the school's Anti Bullying Policy and/or the school's Child Protection Policy. The Code of Behaviour includes written warnings, notification of parents, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.
*Please Refer to School's Code of Conduct/Anti Bullying Policy/Child Protection Policy for further information.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

This policy was last reviewed in March 2025

Signed: Donal Rochford (Chairperson)