

Acceptable Use Policy

Villiers School, North Circular Road, Limerick

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the School's Internet and network resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access as well as access to ICT resources are 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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions — as outlined in the AUP — will be imposed.

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.

This version of the AUP was created on 23rd of February 2006 by The ICT Planning Committee.

School's Strategy

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:

1. General

- Internet sessions will always be monitored by special software.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school reserves the right to regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- 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.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Storage Media such as memory stick, zip and floppy disks, CD-ROMs etc. are blocked for student use. Should students wish to send files from outside the School LAN, they are advised to email same as appropriate virus checks will be done automatically from the servers.
- 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.

2. World Wide Web

- Students will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- 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 network management reasons.

3. Email

- Students will use their approved class email accounts by permission only.
- Students will not send or 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.
- Students will take care when sending and receiving email attachments and will make sensible use of same.

4. Internet Chat

- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will be monitored.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat is strictly forbidden.

5. School Website

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web.
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
- Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website. Instead photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities. Video clips may be password protected.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

6. Legislation

The following legislation relates to the use of the Internet of which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

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

7. 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.

8. Sanctions

Misuse of the School's ICT resources including the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including 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.