Holy Family Community School

Education is Opportunity

Acceptable Use Policy

Title:	Acceptable Use Policy
Approved by:	The Board of Management
Date:	29th May 2019
Responsibility for implementation:	The Board of Management and All Staff
Policy Review Date:	13th May 2024

Holy Family Community School

Internet Safety – Acceptable Use Policy

Adopted by the Board of Management on 29th May, 2019

1. **Introductory Statement**

   This document sets out the policy of the school in respect of computer and internet acceptable use – the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). It also addresses issues relating to the use of other electronic forms of communication.

2. **Scope of this Policy**

   This policy applies to all users of computer and internet facilities in Holy Family Community School – students, teachers, other members of school staff and visitors using the school facilities.

   The internet is considered an information source for students and staff. It is used as part of curriculum instruction, administration and research. The Local Area Network allows students and staff to communicate and share information within the school. These technology resources and facilities, both hardware and software, are the property of Holy Family Community School and should be used solely for legitimate and authorised instructional, administrative and public service purposes.

3. **Relationship of this Policy to the Characteristic Spirit of the school**

   The policy reflects the school's ethos. The Vision Statement of Holy Family Community School is set out as follows:

   Holy Family Community School is committed to the development of a community of learners concerned for each individual in our care. We believe that education provides opportunity for all. We strive for excellence in all areas. We nurture the well-being of all so that they may grow in knowledge, integrity and compassion. We aim to provide a school which promotes academic excellence and enables all students to realise their full potential. We provide a programme, curricular and extra-curricular, which develops the whole person. We provide a Christian value system encompassing respect, responsibility, co-operation, honesty, fairness and friendship. We provide a partnership with parents, primary schools and the local community.

4. **Rationale for this Policy**

   This policy is designed

   - To comply with the requirements of the Education Act 1998 and the Educational (Welfare) Act 2000
   - To conform to best practice as designated by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE)
   - To provide reference points for students, staff and parents

- To provide transparency and accountability

- To clarify procedure in implementing best practice

Goals / Objectives of this Policy
- To protect and maintain the integrity of the facilities and make communication reliable.
- To support teaching and learning.
- To implement best practice in the appropriate use of the computer, the network and the Internet.
- To ensure that users engage only in the appropriate uses that meet the needs of staff and students.
- To provide for the professional development needs of staff.

5. **Implementation Strategies**

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet.

- Students will always treat others with respect and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Internet sessions will be supervised by a teacher.
- Students and teachers will be afforded the opportunity to engage in training/information in the area of Internet safety.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material in conjunction with PDST Broadband.
- Personal websites, Blogs, Gaming and Social Networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram are blocked, as are all inappropriate websites.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software is not possible due to security systems and must not be attempted.
- The use of personal digital storage media should be made available for inspection at any time.
- Using school printers for printing of inappropriate or offensive material is not permitted and will be considered a violation of this policy.
- Printing is discouraged to preserve resources. However, students may print coursework with the permission of a teacher.

6. **Roles and Responsibilities**

Board of Management

- To ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated over time.
- To approve the policy at a meeting of the Board.

- To consider reports from the Principal and other relevant parties on the implementation of the policy.

Principal, Deputy Principal and relevant Post Holders

- To oversee implementation of the policy.
- To establish structures and procedures for the implementation of the Acceptable Use Policy.
- To provide all staff – including teachers, resource teachers, supply staff, SNA's and administrative staff – as well as parents - with the school's Acceptable Use Policy and to explain its importance
- To ensure that users understand that failure to adhere to this Acceptable Use Policy will result in sanctions being applied.
- To monitor the implementation of the policy.

Teachers and Other Staff

- To accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy before using any internet resource in the school.
- To instruct students in the appropriate use of computer and internet resources.
- To use school email correspondence for work related purposes only.
- To ensure that all email communication is for the purpose of disseminating information and not to express anger or cause distress to others.
- To monitor the use of computer and internet resources.
- To impose appropriate sanctions for violations of the Acceptable Use Policy, as outlined in the Code of Behaviour & Discipline.

Students

- To accept responsibility for having a fully charged iPad each school day.
- To agree to exhibit responsible behaviour in the use of all resources.
- To accept that wasting or abusing resources through excessive use of bandwidth or unauthorised system use (e.g. Internet radio, online gaming, downloading media files) will result in sanctions being applied.
- To take personal responsibility for not accessing inappropriate material in the Internet.
- To accept that Holy Family Community School is not responsible for materials, or information of any kind, found or acquired on the network.
- To agree not to share their iPad password or account information with any other students or individuals.
- To accept that disabling, bypassing, or attempting to disable or bypass any system monitoring, filtering or security measures is unacceptable conduct and will result in sanctions being applied.
- To accept that maliciously altering data, the configuration of a computer, accessing restricted network files, interfering with files belonging to another user or engaging in any form of technological vandalism will result in sanctions being applied.

- To accept that violation of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in sanctions being applied in line with the Code of Behaviour & Discipline.
- To accept that violation of this Acceptable Use Policy may constitute grounds for legal action against the user, including, but not limited to, a criminal prosecution.

Parents

- To become familiar with the school's Acceptable Use Policy and discuss it with their son/daughter.

- To accept responsibility for supervision when a student's use of their iPad, e-mail and the internet is not in a school setting.

7. Focused Areas of Concern

8.1 The Internet

- Students will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Students will not intentionally visit sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable material.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials to the relevant teacher.
- Students will be taught to understand the concept of plagiarism, to acknowledge the sources of information and to respect copyright when using Internet material in their own work. Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source, as to do so would be a copyright infringement.
- Students will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school - related or personal, may be monitored to safeguard the security of the systems in the school and the good name of the school.

8.2 Email

- Students will be provided with a school email account under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Access in school to pupil's external personal email accounts will not be permitted.
- When sending emails, messages should be polite and sensible. Emails sent to external organisations should be written carefully and authorised before sending.
- Students will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will not disclose personal information – such as home address, telephone number or pictures/photos - about themselves, other students, relatives or school staff in emails.

- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Pupils may download email attachments only with the teacher's permission and will first run a virus check.
- Students will never organise a face to face meeting with someone they know through the Internet or through emails.
- The school reserves the right to block access to a student email account if inappropriate actions are being investigated.

8.3 Internet Chat

- Skype, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will be used for educational purposes only and will be supervised.
- Students will have access to Skype, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication only if they have been approved by the school.
- Private, pre-arranged, direct conferencing between the school and another school or organisation will be permitted only under supervision.
- Face to face meetings with someone organised via internet chat is forbidden.
- Pupils are not allowed access to public or unregulated chatrooms.

8.4 School Website

- The website of Holy Family Community School will reflect the school's ethos.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of students or staff.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio and/or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will not be published without parental consent.
- The school website will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- Personal information relating to students including home address and phone number will be omitted from school web pages.

8.5 Personal Devices

- Students are responsible for their own technology within the school and on all school linked events. For example, leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text or voice messages or the unauthorised taking of still or moving images with a mobile phone camera, are all direct breaches of the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

8.6 Cyber Bullying

- Cyber bullying is defined as using social network sites, internet, email etc. to demean, humiliate, exclude, or otherwise undervalue another person through direct or indirect methods.
- Any incident involving a student as perpetrator or victim is of concern, but especially concerning is when both perpetrator and victim are students. Equally, social comment about a member of staff which falls under the categories listed above will not be tolerated.
- Holy Family Community School draws a distinction between incidents which originate from within the school environs and those which occur outside. While the same standards apply in all places at all times, it needs to be recognised that the school cannot be held responsible for students' actions when not on the premises and not participating in a school related activity.
- The school will regularly inform students about internet protocol and best practice in the area of internet usage. The school values parental support in reinforcing best practice in this area.

8. **Structures Supporting the Acceptable Use Policy**
   - This Acceptable Use Policy will help students benefit in a safe and effective manner from the IT facilities offered by the school. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. If the school AUP is not adhered to, the privilege may be withdrawn, and sanctions may be applied.
   - Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.
   - The school reserves the right to examine and delete any files, email messages and their attachments that may be held on its computer system and to monitor any internet sites visited. The Principal and/or Board of Management may view computer logs where misuse is detected.
   - The school reserves the right to report any illegal activity to the appropriate authorities.

9. **Ratification & Communication**

   This Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) of Holy Family Community School has been ratified by the Board of Management. The AUP will be published on the school website.

10. <u>Monitoring the Implementation of the Policy</u>

Parents/guardians and all members of staff will be involved in monitoring the implementation of this policy. It will be included on agenda for teaching staff meetings/policy meetings at least once a year.

11. <u>Reviewing and Evaluating the Policy</u>

The AUP will be a regularly evaluated and reviewed.