

Patrician Primary School Acceptable Use Policy

Introduction

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, in its largely unregulated state, the internet can also present a number of risks for children and therefore these guidelines will be followed when using the internet in school. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Behaviour, Anti-bullying Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement, Health and Safety policy, Data Protection Policy, Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy and ICT Policy. The Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils, staff members, volunteers, carers and others who have access to and are users of the internet in Patrician Primary. The Acceptable Use Policy applies to all of the school's devices including all computers, iPads, laptops, smart phones and other IT resources that connect to the school's network.

Aims

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils and staff will benefit from learning opportunities and facilities offered by the school's internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

Pupils' use of the Internet

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. If the AUP is not adhered to, this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed. Pupils are responsible for their own 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 Access to the internet may be withdrawn from pupils who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use.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 to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. However, no filtering service is completely fool-proof 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:

- o Use the internet for any illegal activity including accessing other computers.

- o Retrieve, send, copy or display offensive messages or pictures.
- o Use obscene or offensive language.
- o Cause damage to computers, computer systems or networks.
- o Violate copyright laws.
- o Disclose or publicise their own or another person's personal information.
- o Use another user's password.
- o Trespass in another user's folders, work or files.
- o Cause any form of vandalism to the machine or the work of others including the uploading or creation of viruses.

Parents consent to their child using the internet in school and agree to abide by the school policy by giving written consent on the Enrolment Forms. This consent lasts for the duration of the child's time in the school unless it is revoked by parents in writing.

Organisation and Management of Internet Use

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

Promoting Safe and Independent Use of the Internet

Internet access in school 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.

Inappropriate Usage

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school's AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

Such sanctions may include but are not limited to:

- o Verbal reprimand and Parents informed
- o Written warning
- o Temporary withdrawal of access privileges

- o In extreme cases, suspension or exclusion

The school will be obliged to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Should serious online safety incidents occur, the Principal and the Board of Management must be informed.

Staff Use of Email and the Internet

Members of staff are encouraged to use various online resources in their teaching and learning activities, to conduct research and for contact with others. Each member of staff has access to a school email address as part of his/her work, protected by the use of a confidential password which should be kept secure.

- o The use of email for personal use is acceptable outside of teaching hours.
- o When using the internet, all users must comply with all copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws.
- o School printers may be used to print downloaded materials associated with school activities.
- o All users are expected to communicate in a professional manner.
- o 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.
- o A serious breach may be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- o No person will in any way alter the filtering preferences.
- o When email communication is necessary between staff and parents/students, staff members will always make use of their official school email account and they will not communicate any school business through their personal email account.
- o It would be preferable if staff can communicate professional written/audio-visual communications via email. Other media, such as text message/WhatsApp etc. may be seen as somewhat more 'intrusive' than an email, which should be borne in mind when sending messages. This policy acknowledges however that the immediacy of text message/WhatsApp may sometimes make it a preferable means of communication. It is also the view of this policy that email is a more professional manner in which to communicate on professional matters.
- o Insofar as possible and practicable, during periods of remote teaching, work-related messages to other staff members should be made during work hours.

- o Any staff who are absent/on leave from work are not to attend any staff meetings, virtual or otherwise, on the day of their absence/leave.
- o Any staff member who is on planned extended leave will be removed from the staff's circular email, although they may still be sent pertinent emails from the school.
- o Staff members who are on brief absences will not be removed from the circular email and may still receive emails/communications from the school during their period of absence.

School Strategies

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

General

- o Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher
- o Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. The school currently avails of the PDST content filtering level four. See appendix 3.
- o Websites will be previewed and evaluated by a teacher before being integrated into lessons conducted using school devices.
- o The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- o The Principal and Management may review browsing history on school devices on a regular basis.
- o Pupils will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety through the Webwise programme
- o Teachers are advised to upskill using the Webwise website.
- o Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted
- o Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis
- o The use of external drives, memory sticks, CD-ROMS, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- o Pupils will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring themselves, their family or the school into disrepute.

Internet

- o Pupils will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- o Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials
- o Pupils will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- o Pupils will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement)
- o Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information
- o Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- o Pupils 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.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying will not be tolerated. All cases will be investigated and appropriate sanctions applied. Parents/Guardians and students should be aware that placing a once-off, offensive or hurtful internet message, image or statement on a public forum where it can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour. See school Anti-Bullying Policy.

Distance Learning

In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teacher's may use the school website, Zoom, Seesaw or other platforms approved by the Principal and management to assist with remote teaching where necessary.

See Appendix 4 on Distance Learning Guidelines for Staff and Parents/Guardians.

In the case of Seesaw, parents/guardians must grant permission for their child to have an account in the child's name. Parents/guardians will be provided with the password and will be expected to monitor their child's use of Seesaw.

If teachers are using Zoom, parents must grant permission for their child to access Zoom and participate in the meeting. The link to Zoom may be sent via Seesaw/Email/Text at the school's discretion. Parents/guardians must also monitor their child's participation in any such lessons

conducted on the Online Platforms. The following rules must be complied with through the use of Zoom:

- o For the purpose of the Zoom call, the pupil must engage from a suitable location within their home.
- o A parent or guardian must be in close proximity at all times during the call.
- o No recording, uploading or sharing of the call in any format is permitted.
- o This is a virtual classroom setting and should be treated with the same level of respect as they would if they were in school.
- o The expectations regarding the children's behaviour will be the same as if they were in and the school's behavioural policy will apply

The school will provide resources and/or advice to parents/pupils relating to internet safety.

See appendix 2 for Advice for parents on ICT in the Home.

Communication

A copy of this policy has been given to each teacher and is available for parents to view in the school.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 2020.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Chairperson, Board of Management)

APPENDIX 1

Dear Parents,

As part of the school's provision of eLearning experiences, the children will have supervised access to the internet. As you are probably aware, the Internet contains a vast amount of information but unfortunately not all of this is suitable for children and so we have produced an Acceptable Use Policy specifying our guidelines.

Before being allowed to use the Internet, all pupils must obtain parental permission. We therefore ask that both you and your child sign the detachable slip below as evidence of your approval and acceptance of the school rules on this matter. A copy of our Acceptable Use Policy is on the school's website and hard copies are available from the school office.

Please read the Acceptable Use Policy carefully.

Patrician Primary School

INTERNET ACCESS & ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

PERMISSION SLIP

I agree to follow the Patrician Primary's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the internet. I will use the internet in a responsible way and obey all of the rules set out in the Acceptable Use Policy and explained to me by the teacher.

Name of Pupil

Signature of Pupil

Date

As a parent/Guardian of the above named pupil, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my child to access the internet in school. I understand that the Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but that the school cannot be held responsible if pupils access unsuitable sites.

In relation to the school website, I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing pupil's work and photographs of school related events and accomplishments.

I give permission for my child to have access to the internet in school and accept school rules as set out in the Acceptable Use Policy on these matters. I also understand and agree

to the conditions set out relating to the use of platforms for distance learning e.g. Seesaw, Zoom etc. I understand and agree that this consent will endure for the duration of my child's attendance in Patrician Primary School.

Name of Pupil

Class

Name of Parent

Signature of Parent

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:

- o Discuss rules for using the internet with your children and decide together when, how long and what comprises appropriate use.
- o Be aware of the sites your children are visiting and discuss with them what they are learning.
- o Ensure that children do not give out personal identifying information on the internet such as a picture, full name, home address, email address, phone number, school name, financial information such as credit card or bank details or any personal codes issued by the school e.g. Seesaw access codes.
- o 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.
- o Reinforce with your child that if they do not know someone personally they should not be communicating with them online.
- O Ensure privacy settings for all messaging and social networking services are adequately set to prevent disclosure of detailed personal and/or location information.
- o 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. Consult the Webwise Parents Hub for information on online safety.

<https://www.webwise.ie/parents/>

APPENDIX 3

Content filtering levels as per PDST Technology in Education. All 6 content filtering levels are designed to block access to inappropriate material in categories such as pornography, violence etc.

Content filtering levels are detailed below.

Level 1: This content filtering level allows access to a specific list of educational and related websites and other websites commonly used by schools. Level 1 is used by a very small number of schools, as it is generally perceived as being too restrictive by most schools.

Level 2: This new level allows access to a wide range (i.e. millions) of educational and other websites but it blocks websites belonging to the 'games' category.

Level 3: This level is currently used by the vast majority of schools. It allows access to millions of websites including games but blocks 'YouTube', and blocks access to websites belonging to the 'personal websites' category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the 'Social Networking' category.

Level 4: This level allows access to the same websites as level 3 but allows access to 'YouTube', which has become widely used in schools for teaching and learning in the last few years.

Level 5: This level allows access to the same websites as level 4 but allows access to 'personal websites category', and other similar types of sites, such as blogs.

Level 6: This is the widest level of content filtering available. This level allows access to the same websites as level 5, but allows access to Social Networking sites, such as Facebook, and other similar social networking websites.

For more information about PDST's content filtering levels please visit:

<https://www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie/en/Technology/Schools-Broadband/Content-Filtering/>

APPENDIX 4

Distance Learning Guidelines for Staff

Staying safe

It is important that teachers maintain the safe and ethical use of the internet during distance learning and assist parents and guardians to be aware of their role also. There are helpful resources available at <https://www.webwise.ie/> to support teachers, parents and students

Zoom

The following precautionary measures should be taken when using Zoom with your class.

Review your account settings prior to organising your meetings.

- o Ensure that the “Waiting Room” function is activated in your account settings.
- o Ensure that password is needed for participants to join the meeting.
- o Once all participants have joined your meeting, lock the meeting.
- o Participants should not be able change their video background.
- o Ensure that participants cannot change their name.
- o Once the meeting has ended, the host/teacher must be the last to leave the meeting.
- o Familiarise yourself with the process of removing a participant from a meeting should the need arise.
- o Check your class list and ensure your students have been granted permission to partake in Zoom meetings.
- o Exercise care if enabling the “share screen” function for participants.

Consult the sites below for further information:

- o Best practices for securing your virtual classroom: <https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/03/27/best-practices-for-securingyour-virtual-classroom/>
- o Tips on security: <https://zoom.us/docs/en-us/privacy-and-security.html>

Seesaw:

The following precautionary measures should be taken when using Seesaw with your class:

- o Review your account and class settings prior to using the platform with your class.
- o Check your class list and ensure your students have been granted

permission to set up an account. Consult management if you have any questions relating to this.

- o Check your “display name” in your account settings to ensure your privacy is protected.
- o When sharing access codes with your pupils’ parents/guardians, do so through the use of email, text or sent home in the child’s journal.
- o Be sure to sign out of your account every time you have finished using your account.
- o Encourage pupils and parents to sign out of their accounts when they have finished using their account.

Review class settings to ensure that:

- o Student comments are disabled.
- o Students are unable to see each other’s work, as recommended by Seesaw.
- o “New items require approval” setting is enabled.
- o Class Blog should be disabled.

Zoom Privacy Policy: <https://zoom.us/privacy>

Weebly Privacy Policy: <https://www.weebly.com/ie/privacy>

Seesaw Privacy Policy: <https://web.seesaw.me/privacy-policy>

APPENDIX 5

Virtual Meeting Etiquette

Patrician Primary may use online meetings and lessons if we are closed for the extended periods.

To help us get the most benefit from these, we ask that the following etiquette be adhered to by pupils involved in these sessions:

1. Dress appropriately- regular daytime clothing.
2. Be aware of your surroundings- Pick a room that is not a bedroom and does not have traffic passing through. Be mindful of noise from other people or pets.
3. Mute your microphone when you are not talking- only turn on the microphone if you are asked to speak. Muting the microphone when you are not speaking gives others the ability to chime in and share their thoughts without distraction or frustration.
4. Leave the keyboard alone- the sound of your typing is distracting.
5. Be respectful- teachers and pupils are real people who are affected by words that you

say and write.

6. Using chat- do not use chat when the teacher is talking. Be respectful at all times when using chat. Remember that you are in a classroom, even if you are not wearing a uniform.

7. No food allowed- we do not want you dropping crumbs all over your keyboard!

8. Stay seated and stay present- do not leave the room or talk on your phone.

9. Be patient- this is new to a lot of people and it may take time to learn.

10. Engage in the meeting, be present and contribute when requested.