



St. Vincent's Convent Primary School Acceptable Use Policy

Rational

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 Therefore, if the school Acceptable Use Policy is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions as outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy will be imposed.

Vision

St. Vincent's Convent Primary School will employ a number of strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet.

These strategies are as follows:

1. Acceptable Usage Policy
2. Education
3. Filtering/Monitoring

Compliance with School Ethos

This policy complements the school ethos of nurturing potential in a safe environment, where children are given the opportunity to grow and develop to their full potential.

Compliance with other School Policies

This policy runs in conjunction with the following policies of St. Vincent's Convent Primary School:

- ✓ Child Protection and Safe Guarding Policy
- ✓ Data Protection and Record Keeping Policy
- ✓ Health and Safety Statement
- ✓ Anti-Bullying Policy

Internet Usage in Classrooms

1. Internet will be used for educational purposes only.
2. Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
3. Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher.
4. Filtering software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
5. The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage.
6. Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety.
7. Pupils will be taught to evaluate the content of internet sites.
8. Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues.
9. Uploading and downloading of non-approved material is prohibited.
10. Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
11. The use of personal external storage devices or CD-ROMS in classroom computers by pupils requires a teacher's permission and supervision.
12. Pupils will observe good "netiquette" (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring a school into disrepute.
13. 'YouTube' (and similar sites) can be accessed only under the supervision and direction of the teacher.



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14. Pupils may not log into social or media sites

15. Pupils may not access the Internet from mobile phones or smart phones while on the school grounds, during school hours or on school trips.

Email

If pupils are allowed to use email, the following rules will apply:

1. Email will be used for educational purposes only.
2. Students will only use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher. Personal email accounts may not be used in school.
3. Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
4. Pupils will not send text messages to or from school email.
5. Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details e.g. addresses, telephone numbers, or pictures via school email.
6. Pupils will never arrange to meet someone via school email.
7. Sending or receiving email attachments is subject to teacher permission.

Internet Chat

Students are not permitted to use internet chat rooms, instant messaging sites or social media services for "chat" purposes at any time in school.

Sanctions

If a pupil deliberately misuses the internet or email, this will result in disciplinary action, including the withdrawal of access privileges. Parents/guardians will receive written notification of misuse by a pupil.

School Website

Designated teachers will manage the publication of material on the school website. The following guidelines apply:

1. Personal pupil information, home addresses and contact details will not be published on the school website
2. Class lists will not be published
3. Pupils' full names will not be published at any time.
4. Digital photographs, video clips and audio clips will focus on groups and group activities rather than on individual pupils.
5. Pupils will be given an opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website.
6. Teachers will select work to be published.
7. Permission to publish a student's work will be sought from pupils/ parents/ guardians. This permission may be withdrawn at any time.
8. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

School Social Media Pages

St. Vincent's Convent Primary School operates a school Facebook Page which is an information tool for our school community as well as the wider school area. The same protocols as outlined in the *School Website* section above will apply.



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Education

St. Vincent's Convent Primary School will educate children on the safe and responsible use of the Internet as part of our S.P.H.E. programme.

21st century life presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation from which children and young people need to be protected. At the same time they need to learn to recognise and avoid these risks by becoming internet wise.

Resources that may be used to implement this programme include:

- NCTE Internet Safety Awareness Video
- Use of the 'Kids' section on the www.webwise.ie website

Filtering

'Filtering' is a term used to describe a way of limiting the content of web pages, emails, chat rooms and other electronic data to which users may be exposed. No filter is 100% accurate. The most effective filtering tool is adult vigilance.

Many browsers have their own built in filtering tool e.g. Google. Google's search engine has a built-in "Safe Search". This filter eliminates sites that contain pornography and explicit sexual content from search results. It is easily applied by clicking on the **Preferences** link on any Google page. Unfortunately it is also easily removed.

St. Vincent's Convent Primary School has filtering and anti-virus software. The access to websites from all school computers is monitored and regularly reviewed by the NCCA. Websites are only allowed through following a verification of their suitability.

Please note the following sample letters:

- Letter to Parents
- Responsible Internet Use Pupil Undertaking Form
- Internet Permission Form
- School Website/Facebook Permission Form

Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2023.

Ratification

Chairperson



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Letter to Parents

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As part of St. Vincent's Convent Primary School education programme we offer pupils supervised access to the Internet. This will allow pupils vast educational opportunities by helping them for example, locate material for projects, communicate with students from different cultures, become independent in controlling their own research and become independent learners.

While we as educationalists recognise the value of the Internet as a resource, we must also acknowledge the potential risks to students. We feel that the answer is not to ban the use of the Internet in school but to teach pupils to recognise the risks and to become **Internet Wise**.

This process is the responsibility of the school and the parent/guardian.

For this reason we have compiled a school policy on Internet safety. Parents please also set and convey standards of usage to their children.

It is important that you read the school's Internet Policy and sign the attached document. There is also a document for pupils to sign. Parents should discuss this document with their children to ensure that they clearly understand the school rules with regard to Internet usage.

Niamh O' Sullivan, Principal



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Responsible Internet Use

Pupil Undertaking

We use the School computers and Internet connection for learning. These rules will help us to be fair to others and keep everyone safe.

- I will ask permission before entering any website, unless my teacher has already approved that site
- I will not bring external storage devices such as pen drives (or memory sticks/USB keys etc.) into school without permission
- I will not use email for personal reasons
- I will only use email for school projects and with my teacher's permission and the messages I send will be polite and sensible

- When sending e-mail, I will not give my home address or phone number or arrange to meet anyone
- I will ask for permission before opening an e-mail or an e-mail attachment
 - I will not use internet chat rooms
- If I see anything I am unhappy with or if I receive a message I do not like, I will tell a teacher immediately
- I know that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the sites I visit
- I understand that if I deliberately break these rules, I could be stopped from using the Internet and computers and my parents will be informed.

Signed: _____ Pupil

Signed: _____ Parent/Guardian

Date: _____



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Internet Permission Form

Name of Pupil: _____

Class: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above child, I have read the Acceptable Usage Policy and grant permission for _____ to access the Internet. I understand that school internet usage is for educational purposes only and that every reasonable precaution will be taken by the school to provide for online safety.

I accept my own responsibility for the education of my child on issues of Internet Responsibility and Safety.

I understand that having adhered to all the enclosed precautions the school cannot be held responsible if my child tries to access unsuitable material.

Signature: _____

Parents/Legal Guardians

Date: _____

School Website/Facebook

I understand that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the school's website or Facebook page. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Usage Policy in relation to publishing pupils' work and photographs of school activities on the website.

Signature: 1. _____ 2. _____

Parents/Legal Guardians

Date: _____



Tips for Children

(To be displayed in each classroom)

The Internet is an exciting way for you to find out about the world. It can be a pretty cool way of getting help with homework as well! To help you to get the most out of it have a look at the following tips:

- ✓ Always get permission from your teacher/parents/guardian before using the net.
- ✓ Agree with your teacher/parent/guardian the time you can be on-line and the sites you can visit.
- ✓ Never give personal details such as name, address, telephone number, school name or location, parent's names, photographs, password, credit card number or any identifying information while on-line without your teacher/parents/guardians permission.
- ✓ If anyone asks you for personal information or if you feel uncomfortable in any way when chatting, log off and tell an adult.
- ✓ Always tell an adult if you receive a message that is scary, threatening or rude, do not respond and log off.
- ✓ Be aware that people on-line may not be what they seem adults can pretend to be children with similar interests as yourself.
- ✓ Never arrange to meet anyone I have met virtually/online without your parents/guardians permission and supervision.
- ✓ Avoid opening e-mail from unknown sources.
- ✓ Learn your 'netiquette'. Widely accepted rules of behaviour include some of the following. Typing in capital letters looks like you are shouting, use *asterisks* for emphasis.
- ✓ Be polite when engaging in social networking, check out what people are talking about before participating. Be careful not to use bad language, providers will terminate your account. Never engage in trolling behaviour online. Remember your digital footprint!
- ✓ Finally enjoy your time on the Internet but don't forget about all the other things you can do: share time with your family and friends. Read a good book.