ICT & Internet Acceptable Usage Policy

Introduction

Balaghlea N.S. recognises that access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gives our students enhanced opportunities to learn, engage, communicate and develop skills that will prepare them for many aspects of life.

To that end, we provide access to ICT for student use. We are on Facebook Ballaghlea NationalSchool and maintain our school website www.ballaghleans.ie.

This Acceptable Usage Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviours that our students are expected to follow when using school technologies for school activities of any nature.

Technologies Covered

Ballaghlea N.S. may provide students with Internet access, desktop computers, digital imaging equipment, laptop or tablet devices, virtual learning environments, and more.

The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all online technologies used in the school, not just those specifically mentioned.

Ballaghlea National 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 (AUP)
2. Education
3. Filtering/Monitoring

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.

Internet

1. Internet will be used for educational purposes only
2. Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher
3. Filtering software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material
4. The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage
5. Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety
6. Pupils will be taught to evaluate the content of internet sites
7. Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues
8. Uploading and downloading of non-approved material is banned
9. Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis

10. The use of personal memory sticks, external storage devices or CD-ROMS in school requires a teacher's permission
11. 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
12. 'YouTube' (and similar sites) can be accessed only under the supervision and direction of the teacher.

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
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/Facebook/ Instagram and similar social media sites.

School Website

Designated teachers will manage the publication of material on the school website.

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 beside their photograph

4. Pupils will be given an opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website

5. Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such

6. Permission to publish a student's work will be sought from pupils/ parents/ guardians on enrolment form. This permission may be withdrawn at any time.

7. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Education

Ballaghlea National School will undertake an education programme to educate children on the safe, responsible use of the Internet.

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 – to become 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
- Schoolwebsites.ie Internet Safety Awareness Education Programme and exemplars
- Parents' Guide to a Better Internet Handbook

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.

Ballaghlea National School has filtering 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.

Firewalls

Windows XP has a built-in firewall. Firewall software can be purchased or downloaded free from the Internet. Ballaghlea National School has installed firewall software.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: _____