Below is the current text of this policy. Please note, however, that it is due for review during the 2019/20 school year.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Background

The original version of the AUP was created on October 13th 2006 by the IT Committee, and was updated in 2012 by School Staff. All teachers were canvassed for opinions, before proceeding to consult with the ICT Committee. The draft policy was then sent to Board of Management and parents' Committee for approval.

Aim

The aim of this revised 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 and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn. A template for parents and children to read and sign will be introduced for that purpose. This form is in keeping with the Webwise: Information and Advice for Schools Template. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

Rationale

The internet is rapidly becoming an increasingly popular research and communication tool at home and at school. Due to the fact that it is an unregulated medium, and has the capacity to host any kind of material from online communities all over the world, the need for information and resources on Internet Safety and related issues has never been more essential. The internet, like other media, can have a negative impact on children's attitudes, behaviour and well-being, although it is widely believed that the potential benefits of the Internet as a learning tool far outweigh any risks involved. However, it is important to be aware of the risks and their impact from the outset in order to equip students with the necessary information and skills to navigate safely on the net.

D7ET staff find the internet to be an invaluable resource for research, differentiation, interactive educational games, reference and teacher lessons. They have also the additional benefit of providing a platform for children with an Autistic Spectrum disorder to experience self-measured educational success.

It is important, therefore that our AUP emphasises the use of web activities within a classroom-learning context, based on the school-curriculum, and not as an undirected and private activity for pupils.

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:

General

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher. Teachers must always be present in a room when children use computers.
- Pupils are not to use e-mails, chatrooms or social media, unless within a whole-class educational context, strictly supervised by teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. The school's internet use is currently under the auspices of The National Centre for Technology in Education's (NCTE) Schools Broadband Service. Changes to their Content Filtering Levels in 2010 resulted in D7ET securing a Level 4 setting. In common with the vast majority of other Primary Schools, D7ET blocks access to many 'Potentially Liable' and 'Controversial' sites. YouTube is

available, but not social network sites, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, etc. For further information, the guidelines can be accessed at www.webwise.ie.

- The school can regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage by checking History and Temporary Internet Files on Internet Explorer.
- Pupils (3rd – 6th Class) and teachers will be provided with Webwise resources for teaching proper internet etiquette to pupils. The Webwise Primary School Programme has been developed for primary school teachers who wish to introduce internet safety into their teaching of the Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum. It offers modules for pupils aged 8-12. For more information, see www.webwise.ie
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis. The School's laptops currently have Norton Symantec Anti-Virus installed, with PCs using a version of AVG.
- The use of personal floppy disks or CD-ROMs in school requires a teacher's permission.
- 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.
- Pupil access to computers at break times or as guests in other classes is not permitted.
- Computer access not extended to visitors to school without express permission of Principal/Deputy Principal.
- Other user's files will not be accessed, unless for partnered work.
- Downloading of programs, games, screensavers, pictures, files from the internet, or uploaded from discs/CD ROMS, memory sticks is forbidden, unless with express permission.
- Staff are reminded that computer time should be as a support to classwork, and not as a distraction from it. Structure of computer time should bear this in mind.
- Staff do not use computers for personal business during school-time.

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. No aimless surfing.
- 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.

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 without prior consent of the parents. Instead photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities.
- Personal pupil information including full name, home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Changes to Filtering Levels for Schools

Filtering software is used to limit the content of web pages, e-mails, chat-rooms and other electronic forums to which users may be exposed. This can be done by limiting lists of suitable websites, or by blocking any sites with predetermined keywords. The Schools Broadband Programme provides this service for National Schools by blocking illegal and unsuitable content, but also by limiting unsolicited mail and block viruses. Every school in Ireland connected to the School Broadband Programme accesses internet content through a central filtering system.

Schools are free to choose the level of content filtering that is most suitable. Level One, the most restrictive, allows only government websites. Level 6 is the most open. This level allows students access to social networking websites. The school's chosen setting, Level 6, allows YouTube, but no social networking sites. YouTube can only be operated in Safe Mode.

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.

Relevant Bodies

- NCTE (National Centre for technology in Education. A fully funded agency pf the Department of education, established in 1998. Its main tasks are to manage the implementation of the Government's ICT in Schools Programme, the development of ICT policy proposals and in providing advice to the DES.
- Webwise is an Internet safety awareness initiative, developed by the NCTE, offering information and advice for teachers, parents and students to promote safe and educational use of the Internet.
- The Internet Advisory Board (IAB), set up the Government, and comprising multiple bodies (Gardaí, NCTE, child protection organisations, internet service providers) supervises the safe self-regulation of the internet-linked organisations.
- Hotline.ie is a service run by the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland (ISPAI) to allow the public to report instances of potentially illegal web content.

Webwise Internet Tips for Parents

• Discover the internet together

• Agree rules with your child for internet use

• Encourage your child to be careful in disclosing personal information,

• Talk about the risks involves in meeting online friends

• Teach your child about 'source criticism' on the internet (not all info is correct)

• Don't be too critical of their explorations of the internet. Not all their fault.

• Repost illegal information to authorities

• Encourage respect for others.

• Know your child's internet use.

• Remember that the positives outweigh the negatives.

Important Legislation

Data Protection Act:

The DPA 1998 was passed to deal with privacy issues arising from the increasing amount of personal information contained on computers. In accordance with the Act, the school will only publish pupil information that is relevant to the context of the web page. Parents will be kept informed about the school website and about any pupil information on this site.

Other Legislation:

Teachers and parents are advised to familiarise themselves with the following legislation relating to the internet:

Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 www.dataprivacy.ie/images/Act2003.pdf

Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998

www.irishstatutebook.ie/199822.html

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/22/enacted/en/html

Sanctions

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 also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Roles and Responsibilities

The ICT post-holder has responsibility for ICT within D7ET N.S. All issues or problems should be reported to the Post-holder who will co-ordinate a response to the issue, seeking technical support among colleagues or designated IT team within the parent body or seeking additional funding from the BOM.

The BOM has responsibility for ratification of this AUP and for the provision of funding for additional resources.

Teachers are responsible in ensuring that their pupils are instructed in appropriate use of IT within the school.

The Principal has responsibility for informing parents of the policy and obtaining their consent for their child to avail of ICT resources within the guidelines of the policy.