Internet Acceptable Usage Policy: RUSHEEN N.S.

Educationalists believe in the benefits of curriculum-based internet use. The purpose of the Internet Acceptable Usage Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources, and will be protected from harmful and illegal use of the Internet both in school and at home where distance learning is utilised.

Rusheen 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. 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 banned

10. Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis

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11. The use of personal external storage devices or CD-ROMS in school requires a teacher's permission

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.

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.

School Website

Designated staff 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. 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 and decide on the appropriateness of such

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.

Social Media

Maintaining an online presence is vital for schools, not only in terms of keeping the school community up to date with what's happening in the school, but also in terms of attracting potential enrolment. Having a school website is an essential part of this, but web users must specifically visit the school website regularly to receive the information. By having Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or other social media pages the school is feeding school information, news and notices directly into the personal news feeds of parents and the wider school community.

Aims: The purpose of having a school Facebook page, Twitter page or other social media pages is:

- ➢ To continue to advance our school communication system with information shared via Facebook and/or Instagram, along with the existing methods of text messages, email, the school website etc.
- ➢ To publicise school events and increase awareness about school fundraising.
- ➢ To announce any updated information that appears on our website via Facebook, Instagram and/or other social media pages.
- ➢ To highlight positive school achievements in a forum where they can be shared by the school community.
- ➢ To make school announcements (e.g. school closures)
- ➢ To use Facebook, Instagram and/or other social media as means of marketing the school to a wider audience.
- ➢ To have Facebook, Instagram and/or other social media feeds embedded on the homepage of the school website.
- ➢ To facilitate communication and networking opportunities between parents especially new or prospective parents.
- ➢ To maintain contact with past parents and past pupils.

Designated teachers will manage the publication of material on the school website and social media page adhering to the stipulations below:

- ➢ Personal pupil information, home addresses and contact details will not be published on the school website or social media page
- ➢ Class lists will not be published
- ➢ Pupils' full names will not be published beside their photographs
- ➢ Digital photographs, video clips and audio clips will focus on groups and group activities rather than on individual pupils when possible
- ➢ Pupils may be given an opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the school website or social media page
- ➢ Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such
- ➢ Any messages written on social media are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.

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➢ The principal will review the content of the website and the social media sites regularly. The Principal and the Board welcome any suggestions about how the content may be improved.

Terms of Use of Rusheen National School's Facebook, Instagram or other social media pages:

➢ Users cannot advertise products or services on our school Facebook, Instagram and other social media pages.

➢ Users should not post anything on the pages that could be deemed as offensive – inappropriate or harmful. Such comments/content will be removed immediately.

➢ Users should not engage in giving negative feedback on Facebook, Instagram or other social media pages - it is more appropriate to deal with the school directly on such matters.

➢ Users will not mention individual staff members in a negative light on the school's Facebook, Instagram or other social media pages.

➢ Users should not ask to become "friends" with staff as failure to respond may cause offence.

➢ Users cannot tag or post photographs of children on the pages.

➢ Users should not add comments that can identify children.

➢ If any parent or guardian has any concern about the appropriateness of the content of the website or social media sites, then the Board asks that the matter be brought to the attention of the Principal as a matter of urgency.

Education

Rusheen 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
• SAFT Internet Safety Awareness Education Programme and exemplars

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.

Rusheen 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 10 has a built-in firewall.

<u>Personal Devices:</u>

Students should not have their own personal devices (E.g. Phones, iPads, tablets etc.) in school except in permitted circumstances. For example, if a child is staying with a relative for the weekend and will not be returning home after school on Friday. In such circumstances the following procedure **<u>must</u>** be followed.

1. The principal and class teacher **<u>must</u>** be informed by email **<u>before</u>** the child brings their device to school.
2. The device should be **<u>powered off</u>** before entering the school grounds.
3. The child should present the device to the teacher **<u>upon arrival</u>** to the classroom.
4. The child will be given a sealable plastic bag to place the device into for the day and it will be stored in the classroom.
5. It is the responsibility of the child to collect the device from the teacher at home time.

However, we ask that bringing a device to school is only used as a last resort when a parent/guardian has explored all other possibilities. Children are not permitted to have personal devices on school trips under any circumstances.

Distance Learning

In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted in the school premises, teachers may use online learning platforms like Seesaw, Google or Zoom or other online platforms approved by the Principal, to assist with remote teaching where necessary.

The school has signed up to the terms of service of the online platforms used by the school. The school has enabled the most up-to-date privacy and security features which these platforms provide.

Parents will sign up to the use of the Online Platform through e-mail.

In the case of Seesaw, parents are provided with an access code to the Seesaw app, and must monitor its use by their children.

In the case of Zoom meetings, the link will be sent to the e-mail address provided by the parent.

If possible, it is expected that at least 2 staff members will be hosting any "live" calls with pupils.
Special Education Teachers and Special Needs Assistants may place individual calls or video-chats but only if the pupil's parent is present at the beginning and the conclusion of the call.

See the separate guidelines on "Virtual Meeting Etiquette", which all pupils will be expected to follow.

Under an EU law called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), in order for your child to us these online platforms, the school must get your consent. For more information on GDPR, please visit
https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection/reform/rights-citizens

For further advice on internet safety visit www.webwise.ie

Virtual Meeting Etiquette

Rusheen National School use online teaching when required. To help us get the most benefit we ask that the following etiquette be adhered to.

For Parents:

1. Parents consent to their child attending virtual meetings through e-mail.
2. An adult must be present during the meeting.
3. A pupils may be locked out of a meeting for disrespectful behaviour and parents will be informed.

For Pupils:

1. Dress appropriately. Regular clothes – no PJs.

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 it on if you are asked to speak. Muting your microphone when you are not speaking gives others the ability to chime in and share their thoughts without distraction or frustration.

4. Do not record the meeting or take photos or screenshots.

5. Leave the keyboard alone.

6. No headphones allowed.

7. No food allowed.

8. Stay seated and stay present.

9. Do not leave the "classroom" or talk/text on your phone, while class is going on.

For Teachers:

For Zoom Classes, teachers should:-

1. Enable Waiting Room Function.
2. Passcode protect a class with a random Passcode and change it for every meeting.
3. Use random (not personal) Meeting I.D.
4. Control Screen Sharing and Annotation.
5. Disable "Join before Host" option.
6. Be aware of how to remove a participant.

This plan was ratified by the BOM of Rusheen National School at its meeting on:
the 24th January, 2023 and is subject to change, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

Signed: *Joseph O'Mahony*

Chairperson BOM