



Athy Model School

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Acceptable Usage of Internet and Media Policy

The Acceptable Usage Policy was created on 27th February 2009 by the teaching staff. This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Athy Model School on 24th June 2009. This policy was updated by the In School Management team on **19th October 2020** to include Distance Learning and was forwarded to the BOM for their input. This updated policy was ratified by the BOM in November 2020.

The aim 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 and privilege. If the school policy is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the policy – will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP regularly. Before enrolling, this policy should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood. It is assumed that the parent accepts the terms of the AUP unless the school is specifically notified.

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

General Strategies

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher and will always have an educational focus.
- Filtering software (PDST Department Firewall) and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. These will be configured to update automatically.
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- Pupils and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety. Lessons are covered every year in the school through the SPHE programme.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal memory sticks, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Pupils will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Model School 'Rules for Responsible Internet Use' in school will be posted in 3rd-6th Classrooms and near computers

World Wide Web

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

Email

- Teachers may set up a designated school email address that can be used for making direct contact with families of pupils in his/her class. This correspondence will normally be made using the parent's email address.

Senior pupils (4th -6th class) who may wish to set up their own email address to submit work or make contact with his/her teacher must only do so with written parental consent. A copy of this will be forwarded to the Principal and retained as part of school data protection records.

- For some online platforms used in the school parents/guardians must grant access to their child to have a school Gmail address such as pupilname.student@schoolname. Pupils will only use these approved class email accounts under the supervision by or permission from a teacher
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Pupils will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

Internet Chat

- Students will not have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication

Internet

The internet has become a two way communication system for the school and the wider community. Services such as YouTube, ClassDojo, SeeSaw, Twitter and other social media are being used by the school to communicate with parents and also for parents to communicate with the school. These services, although not owned by Athy Model School, form part of our web services and all content that is placed on these falls under this policy. Please refer to the school's Data Protection Policy for further information on how the school utilises 3rd party services.

The safety of our children on the web is of utmost importance so the following rules apply to the school and parents. The Internet is open to potential dangers when used inappropriately.

The school asks:

Many social media sites have minimum age requirements. While the school will not monitor this, we would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc until they are age appropriate.

Avoid any negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts. If you have an issue with something in the school, social media is not the place to raise it.

Parents/guardians should not post any school photographs on any social media sites/platforms.

School Website

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the School website in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website
- The staff can only upload content onto the school website with approval from the administrator (i.e. principal and teachers) to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- The publication of pupils' 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 written permission.
- Because the website is a learning resource for the children in the school, the school will put emphasis on educational matters. The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. **Individual photographs of children will be discouraged and photographs will never contain names, addresses or any personal details of the children.**
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named and will not use pupils' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Direct Communication using Internet

A variety of Online Platforms are also used regularly in teaching and learning including Seesaw, typing club, iknowit, Adobe Spark, Book Creator, Kahoot, topmarks and other platforms approved for Primary School pupils.

The individual teacher using the Online Platform has signed up to the terms of service of the Online Platform on behalf of the school and has enabled the most up to date security and privacy features which these Online Platforms provide. The staff member may invite pupils and families to these platforms using a code. The same ground rules apply for these platforms as mentioned in the distance learning section of this policy.

Distance Learning

In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers may use a number of tools to assist with remote teaching where necessary. Examples include Zoom, Seesaw, Google Classroom, Google Meet or other platforms approved by the Principal as 'Online Platforms'

The individual teacher using the Online Platform has signed up to the terms of service of the Online Platform on behalf of the school and has enabled the most up to date security and privacy features which these Online Platforms provide.

Teachers approved links to some YouTube videos that are deemed useful to explain or compliment work set may also be used as part of teaching and learning.

The following are ground rules for these learning platforms:

All meetings will be password protected.

All people involved in the meeting will conduct themselves in a similar manner that would be expected in a regular class.

The staff member has the right to exclude any person being disruptive from a lesson using the online platform. Parents/guardians must also agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons conducted on the Online Platforms and should be close by when a pupil is engaging in the lesson.

While chat may be available in an online meeting, it is the responsibility of the child's family to ensure that any interaction is appropriate. Any interaction from a pupil that could be deemed as inappropriate may result in the child's removal from the lesson or, where appropriate, a referral to Child Protection services.

Personal Devices

- The use of pupils' own technology in school, such as mobile phones, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy. The school discourages children from bringing mobile phones to school. However if a parent/guardian feels that their child needs to have a phone in school a note should be handed in at the beginning of the school year explaining the reason for having a mobile phone in school. This should be addressed to the Board of Management.
- Mobile phones must be handed up to the teacher in the morning **(in light of COVID-19, mobile phones will now remain in pupil's school bags)**
- Pupils are not allowed use their phone until they are out of school and only to contact a parent/guardian.
- Pupils are not allowed use their phone on the bus unless it is to contact a parent/guardian.

Legislation

The school will provide information, if requested, on the following legislation, relating to use of the Internet, which teachers, pupils and parents may familiarize themselves with:

Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998

Interception Act 1993

Video Recordings Act 1989

The Data Protection Act 1988

Children First 2018

EU General Data Protection Regulations 2018

These Documents are available from <http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety/Advice/Legislation>

Support Structures

Parents can report websites /organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet to www.hotline.ie. Further information regarding Internet Safety is available from: <http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety/Publications>, www.webwise.ie

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.

