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Acceptable Use Policy (A.U.P.)for Information and Communication Technology (I.C.T.)

June 2020

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■ **Introductory Statement**

The following policy is being circulated as we recognise the importance of I.C.T. in many aspects of school life for learning and communication. The Policy has been reviewed (May 2020) to include Distance Learning where teaching cannot take place in the classroom. In the development of I.C.T in our school, we outline the guidelines and behaviours expected to be followed when using school technologies e.g. internet for any school activities.

■ **Rationale**

This policy was developed in line with the Acceptable Usage Policy (A.U.P.) Guidelines. It will be implemented in line with our

1. Child Protection Policy
2. Code of Behaviour
3. Anti-Bullying Policy

■ **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School**

In keeping with the school's ethos of communication, the appropriate use of the internet is outlined to the school community.

■ **Aims**

The aim of this A.U.P. is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

This Policy also aims to establish minimum standards for, and let the students, parents/guardians know of the school's administration and monitoring of, the schools devices, equipment and networks. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school A.U.P. is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

● **Guidelines**

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 include, but are not limited to the following:

- Ahane N.S.'s computers are maintained by our I.T. company and are intended for educational purposes.
- The School has an ICT staff group to monitor and oversee use and safeguards on devices.
- A teacher will always be present during internet sessions.

- Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher
- Filtering software is in use to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Students and staff are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the web.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use in school of personal equipment e.g. tablets, DS, iPads etc. will be permitted only in certain situations at the discretion and under the direction of the class teacher. Mobile phones are not permitted in school. Pupils are not permitted to take photos at school with any technology. Students may not use personally-owned devices in school (including and not limited to tablets, smartphones) for educational purposes unless explicitly stated in notes read and signed by parents and written by their classroom teacher.
- Students are expected to follow the same positive behaviour on line and off line that is expected through the Stay Safe, Anti Bullying and Code of Behaviour. Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of internet safety. They 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. They will tell their teacher if they have any concerns, as usual, following the Stay Safe rules. Training in cyber bullying was provided to pupils and parents in 2017 and 2019.
- It is important to note that the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with this Policy. Parents/guardians and students should be aware that placing a once-off, offensive or hurtful internet message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour

Use of the Internet

- Students will be taught specific lessons on online safety by teachers.
- Students will not knowingly attempt to visit Internet sites on school Devices that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials and the school will not be responsible for any attempts taken in this regard.
- In the event of accidentally accessing any of the above sites, the student will be expected to immediately turn off the monitor and report the incident to a teacher or supervisor. Teachers will alert the principal if they see threatening/bullying, inappropriate or harmful content online e.g. images, messages, postings
- The internet will be used to enhance learning and will be used for educational purposes.
- All websites used by the teacher will be vetted in advance by the teacher.
- Students will not upload, download or otherwise transmit material that is copyrighted on school Devices.
- Students will not disclose or publicise personal or confidential information to others online. Examples of this are, but not limited to, their own or classmates’ home addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, online profile information or name and location of their school.

- The teacher has discretion of use of the Internet in relation to the timetable and the children who access it.
- Teachers have full editorial rights over the school website and students will not have access to the relevant passwords.
- Students will not examine, change or use another person's files, username or passwords.
- Students will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving any information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security, and/or network management reasons.
- The school takes every reasonable precaution to provide for online safety, but it cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites either deliberately or inadvertently.

Email

- Students will use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the Internet.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Students or their parents will not set up Facebook or any other social media accounts using the schools name.

Distance Learning

- In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers may use Google Classroom, Google Meet, Class Dojo, SeeSaw, Zoom or other platforms approved by the Principal as platforms (the "Online Platforms") to assist with remote teaching where necessary.
- The school has signed up to the terms of service of the Online Platforms in use by the school.
- The School has enabled the most up to date security and privacy features which these Online Platforms provide.
- Parents/guardians will be provided with the password and will be expected to monitor their child's use of Online Platforms.
- In the case of Zoom, parents will be given guidelines on safe usage before they are sent the link to the live meeting room.
- Parents will also be expected to monitor their child's usage during the meeting to ensure they are adhering to the rules set out in advance of the meeting.
- All information outlines in Ahane N.S "Video Call Code of Conduct" must be adhered to. (See Appendix 4)

Internet Chat

- Internet chat is forbidden.
- Pupils will at all times adhere to our Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Child Protection Policy will be adhered to at all times.

School Website

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the World Wide Web via our school website, coordinated by the class teacher.
 - The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
 - Parental permission for photograph is gathered annually by the school. Staff will consult these permission slips before putting photographs online. Names of pupils will be restricted.
 - In general digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website. Instead photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities.
 - Personal pupil information including names, home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
 - Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
- **Legislation**

Teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with school policies and legislation. For further details see www.webwise.ie. There are many resources and up-to- date advice for parents, teachers and pupils on this website.

- **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.

Information sessions presented by Zeeko Internet Safety were provided to pupils and parents by the Board of Management in 2018.

Parental permission is a requirement for children to access the internet. A permission slip for parents and children will be required before any child accesses the school internet. (Appendix 1)

Sanctions

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including sanctions under the anti-bullying policy and including

- Suspension of computer privileges
- Notification to parents
- In school suspension
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Misuse of any social media site or chat room by any student will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti Bullying Policy (2016), relevant legislation and in consultation with the Gardaí. Any incidents of defamation and setting up of false social media accounts using the school, its' staff or pupils' names will be treated as above.

■ Success Criteria

It is envisaged that the BoM will review the A.U.P. annually. Before signing, the A.U.P. should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

That staff and students are comfortable and safe using technology for educational purposes at school.

■ Roles and Responsibility

It is the role of each teacher to use the internet appropriately as a tool for teaching and learning. Teachers are responsible for implementing the A.U.P. standards of internet use with their class. The principal has overall responsibility for this policy and the updating of this policy, in conjunction with the BoM.

■ Timeframe for Implementation

Immediate

■ Timeframe for Review

May 2021

■ Responsibility for Review

The principal, in consultation with the staff and B.O.M., will review the policy.

■ Ratification and Communication

The policy was revised in May 2020.

The BOM ratified the policy at its meeting on **11.06.20** The policy has been communicated to all staff and has been uploaded on to the school web-site.

Chairperson: Tony Harnett

Principal: Siobhán Kennedy

This policy was reviewed by David Ruddy, Lawyer of Mason Hayes and Curran Solicitors on March 4th 2021. The policy was re ratified by the Board at a meeting (**18.03.21**) following the review.

Chairperson: Tony Harnett

Principal: Siobhán Kennedy

Appendix 1



Ahane N.S. A.U.P. Permission Form

Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this permission form to the Principal.

Name of Pupil: _____

Class/Year: _____

Pupil

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school. I will alert teacher if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate or harmful content online e.g. images, messages, postings. I recognise the use of school technologies as a privilege and treat it as such. I use the equipment for school-related activities only. I follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behaviour that I am expected to follow offline at school.

Pupil's Signature: _____

Date:

Parent/Guardian

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my son or daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet. I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but the school cannot be held responsible if pupils access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing children's work on the school website.

I accept the above paragraph

Signature: _____

Date:

Address: _____

Telephone:

Appendix 2



Publicity / Photographs / Web-site

We regularly take photographs / videos of pupils in order to record our work here at the school. From time to time these photographs are used for publicity or project work.

Please complete the following document in respect of your children attending our school.

I _____ parents of

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

give permission for :	Photographs to display in school	Yes / No
	Photographs for local papers or projects	Yes / No
	Photographs or videos for school web site	Yes / No.
	Photographs for our school Facebook page	Yes / No

Please note only group photos are put on Facebook no names are assigned and no pupil can be tagged.

Appendix 3



Advice for Parents on ICT in the Home

During school hours, teachers will guide pupils toward appropriate materials on the internet. Outside school, parents or guardians should bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they normally would with other information sources, such as television, magazines etc.

Parents or guardians should be aware that the internet service provider at home may not be filtered.

It is therefore important that these guidelines are followed:

- Discuss rules for using the internet with your children and decide together when, how long and what comprises appropriate use.
 - Be aware of the sites your children are visiting and discuss with them what they are learning.
 - Ensure that children do not give out personal identifying information on the internet such as a picture, address, phone number, school name or financial information such as credit card or bank details.
 - Encourage your children not to respond to any unwelcome, unpleasant or abusive messages and to inform you if they receive any such messages or images.
 - Appropriate home use of internet can be educationally beneficial and can make a useful contribution to home and school work. It should however be supervised and parents be aware that they are responsible for their children's use of the internet resources at home.
-
- 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. Comments of this nature will be deleted.
 - Please do not request to "friend" a member of staff in the school. The staff would like to keep their personal lives personal. It may be awkward for a staff member to be asked to ignore a social network request

Appendix 4



Code of Conduct for Video Calls

Ahane National School uses Class Dojo and Seesaw as learning platforms to deliver distance learning to pupils. As part of this process, we have decided that it may be necessary for our teachers/special needs assistants to communicate with pupils through the use of video calling as part of the pupil contact process. Ahane National School will use the Zoom for Education licensed platform for video calls and they will only be scheduled for the purposes of learner contact so pupils and staff can check in and see each other.

Parent/guardians and pupils should note carefully the following information in relation to the above:

- Zoom video calling is new to Ahane National School and classroom rules will still apply including our Code of Behaviour.
- Ahane National School Child Protection Policy continues to remain in place during this period, and where a child protection concern may arise in/during on-line classes or contact, staff members will follow the normal practice, in relation to dealing with such concerns.
- As a matter of good practice, video calls should only take place during normal school hours and it requires that a parent/guardian be present during such calls. However, it will not be possible for the school to enforce this and take no responsibility for doing so. It is recommended that a quiet place be provided for the call so it can proceed without undue interruption, but one which is in an area of the home that is open and accessible to a parent/guardian (i.e. not in a bedroom behind a closed door).
- It is expected that pupils engaging in Zoom video calls observe acceptable standards of appropriate behaviour and etiquette, as they would in a classroom setting, along with appropriate dress code during video calls.
- It is strictly prohibited for any pupil, parent/guardian or staff member to record and/or share in any manner a live video call, either through recording that may be available on the platform, or using any other device e.g. mobile phone, without the express written consent of all parties to the call being obtained in advance and the advance approval of the principal teacher. All parties should note that to record a call without consent is a serious issue which may be subject to disciplinary action under the relevant code of behaviour/disciplinary policy.

Video calling will be facilitated via invitations through email and consent will be sought using email.

Consent for Video Call

I have read and agree to Ahane NS Code of Conduct for Video Calls. I give permission for my child/children _____ to take part in a class Zoom video call under the supervision of the School Principal and Class Teacher.

Signed: _____ Date: _____