**ACCEPTABLE USE OF INTERNET POLICY**

**St. Oliver Plunkett’s N.S., Heywood Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. E91 NW22.**

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Mission Statement:

“St. Oliver’s respects difference, cares for all,

nurtures individual talents and develops self confidence

in a safe and caring environment”.

**General Approach:**

The aim of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the St. Oliver Plunkett’s N.S. internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed. When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected:

* To treat others with respect at all times.
* Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
* Respect the right to privacy of all other members of the school community.
* Respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S.

* Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.
* St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of pupils or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions.

St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet.

* Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
* Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. through pastoral care and mentoring.
* Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
* St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annuallyby the Board of Management, teaching staff, support staff and parents of St. Oliver Plunkett’s N.S.

This policy has been developed by a group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, parents, and representatives of the Board of Management.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

* Logs of reported incidents.
* Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).
* Surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils, parents, and teaching staff.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the Principal should be informed.

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the Principal, ICT Coordinator and the Board of Management.

**Content Filtering:**

Content filtering is an essential and integrated element of the broadband service that is provided to schools by the Schools Broadband Programme. The purpose of Content Filtering is to ensure (in so far as possible) that inappropriate websites and content are not accessible from within the schools.

Content filtering systems classify websites into different ‘categories’, and these categories are used to control which category of website is allowed for schools on the different filtering levels.

St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

* Level 4, this level allows access to millions of websites including games and YouTube but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the Social Networking category.

Pupils taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

**Web Browsing and Downloading:**

* Pupils/Users will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
* Pupils/Users will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
* Pupils/Users will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
* Pupils/Users will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom/school to the supervising teacher.
* Pupils/Users should immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication.
* Pupils/Users will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content.
* Pupils/Users will use the school’s internet connection only for educational and career development activities.
* Pupils/Users should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, pupils should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.
* Pupilswill not engage in online activities such as uploading or downloading large files that result in heavy network traffic which impairs the service for other internet users.
* Pupils/Users 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.
* Use of file sharing and torrent sites is allowed with staff permission.
* Downloading by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is allowed with staff permission.
* Pupils will use approved class email accounts only under supervision by or with permission from a teacher.
* Pupils/Users should be aware that email communications are monitored.

**Social Media:**

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow us to interact and keep in touch. While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that members of our school community are expected to follow when using social media.

The principles set out in this policy are designed to help ensure that social media is used responsibly so that the confidentiality of pupils and other staff and the reputation of the school is protected.

This policy applies to personal websites such as social networking sites (for example Facebook), blogs, mircoblogs such as Twitter, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us and content sharing sites such as Flickr and YouTube. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media.

* Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, Whats Apps, and G Chat etc. is allowed at certain times in St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S.
* Use of blogs such as Word Press, Tumblr etc. is allowed in St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. with expressed permission from teaching staff.
* Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is with expressed permission from teaching staff.
* Staff and pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, other members of the St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. community.
* Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. community on social media.
* Staff and pupils must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
* Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. into disrepute.
* Staff and pupils must not represent personal views as those of being St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. on any social medium.

**Personal Devices:**

Pupils using their own technology in school should follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if they were using school equipment.

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, and digital music players in St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S.:

* Pupils are only allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. with expressed permission from teaching staff.
* Pupils are only allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during lessons under supervision from a teacher.
* Pupils are only not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during social time.
* Teachers, pupils and parents are informed about the use of mobile devices on school grounds**.**
* A strict procedure is applied by staff to deal with violations of the policy on mobile devices and the confiscation of devices.
* St Oliver’s will not accept any responsibility for damage to, loss or theft of personal devices.

**Mobile Devices:**

When using mobile devices, (including but not limited to laptops and memory sticks).

* Staff should not save sensitive data on removable devices.
* Staff and pupils are required to always run a virus scan when using removable devices on school machines.
* Staff and pupils should report incidents to the Principal or ICT Coordinator. (e.g. the loss of device, malware infection etc.

**Images and Video:**

The development of digital imaging technologies has created significant benefits to learning, allowing staff and pupils instant use of images that they have recorded themselves or downloaded from the internet. However, staff, parents / carers and pupils need to be aware of the risks associated with publishing digital images on the internet. Such images may provide opportunities for harassment or breaches of privacy to take place. Digital images may remain available on the internet forever and may cause harm to individuals in the short or longer term.

* Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
* At St. Oliver Plunkett’s N.S. pupils/users must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without permission (yearly contact sheet/image consent).
* Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.
* Written permission from parents or careers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website.
* Pupils/Users must not share images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.
* Sharing explicit images and in particular explicit images of pupils and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other pupils automatically incurs suspension as a sanction.

**Cyber-Bullying:**

This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying.

Access to technology means that cyber-bullying can happen around the clock and the pupil’s home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Pupils are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. The nature of these technologies means digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and is almost impossible to delete permanently. While cyber bullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can also be felt in school.

When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times. The prevention of cyber bullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

* Engaging in online activities with the intention to harm, harass, or embarrass and another pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.
* In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. considers that a once-off offensive or hurtful public 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.
* Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.
* Measures are taken to ensure that staff and pupils are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated. This definition includes cyber-bullying even when it happens outside the school or at night.

**School Websites:**

* Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school’s website.
* The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.
* Webpages allowing comments or user-generated content will be pre-moderated and checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain any inappropriate or offensive content.
* The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.
* St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. will only use digital photographs, audio or video clips of group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.
* Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. web pages.
* The St. Oliver Plunkett's N.S. will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

**Legislation:**

The school provides information on the following legislation (by way of the school website) relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003, Data Protection Act May 2018.

Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998

Interception Act 1993

Video Recordings Act 1989

The Data Protection Act 1988

Consent allowing the use of the internet and agreement with the school’s Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet is sought annually.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_