

# *Ardcoil Ris Internet Acceptable Use Policy*

## **Introduction**

The Internet is a worldwide network of computers that contains millions of pages of information. Users are cautioned that many of these pages include offensive, sexually explicit material and inappropriate material. Additionally, having an e-mail address on the Internet may lead to receipt of unsolicited e-mail containing offensive content.

**Users accessing the Internet do so at their own risk and the school is not responsible for material viewed or downloaded from the Internet.**

Risks associated with the Internet can be minimized or prevented through education, awareness and by creating an infrastructure that facilitates the safe and acceptable use of the Internet for all members of the school community. This is the aim of our Internet Policy. Your use of the Internet at Ardcoil Ris is governed by this Acceptable use Policy (AUP). The aims of the Policy are :

- i) to ensure that pupils will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner.
- ii) To protect the users and the school.

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions as outlined in the Policy will be imposed.

This version of the AUP was created on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2004 by the school's Board of Management.

## **Policy**

The Policy explains what the school expects in terms of e-mail and Internet usage.

The Policy states some general rules do's and don't's, and then identifies six areas (pornography, harassment, copyright, contracts, defamation and confidentiality) where legal or criminal problems may arise, Under each section there is an explanation of the potential problems and some rules to help avoid these problems.

## **General Rules**

- The school has installed, on ALL computers, a monitoring and filtering system which records all users use of the Internet. This system is installed to protect both the individuals who use the Internet and also the school.
- All users will be issued with their own unique password. Keep all passwords secure. You are responsible for all uses, including illicit use of e-mail and Internet under your password.
- Internet sessions by students will always be supervised by a teacher.
- The school's Internet system is primarily for school business.
- All users of the WWW should be aware of breaching of copyright relating to online learning. Copyright refers to the downloading of documents, articles, books, plays, films recordings and musical compositions without the consent of the copyright owner. Failure to comply with this Policy is a criminal offence and will be dealt with accordingly .... May result in being sued and /or exclusion from school.
- Virus protection software is installed and will be updated on a regular basis. If you send an e-mail with attachments you MUST include the following statement in your message :

“we cannot accept any liability for any loss or damage sustained as s result of software viruses. It is your responsibility to carry out such virus checking as is necessary before opening any attachment”
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software is not permitted.
- The use of personal floppy disks or CD-ROMs in school computers requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will observe good “netiquette” (etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

## **World Wide Web**

- Students will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable or offensive materials.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- No user of the school's Internet may enter into an legal / contractual obligation, involving the school, without the prior written consent of the Principal.
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information on the Internet.

- Users will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, any be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

### **E-Mail**

- Students will use approved class e-mail accounts under supervision by/or permission of their teacher.
- The school authorities may inspect your use of the Internet at any time without notice. It is worth reflecting before you use the Internet by asking yourself :'How would you feel if your message were read out in court ' ?  
E-mail messages may have to be read out in litigation. An e-mail should be regarded as a written formal letter, the recipients of which may be much wider than the sender intends – one should ensure that no matter which might be regarded as illegal, obscene, harassment or defamatory should be sent on the Internet. Even when a message is erased it is still possible to retrieve and read.
- If you receive any offensive, unpleasant or intimidating message or material via e-mail at school, print the message, keep a copy and inform the teacher in charge and the Principal **without delay**
- Students will not reveal / send 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 e-mails or internet.
- Students will note that sending and receiving attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

### **Internet Chat**

- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communications forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
- User names will be used to avoid disclosure of identity
- Face-to-face meeting with someone organized via Internet chat will be forbidden.

### **School Website**

- Pupils may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the WWW. This will be co-ordinated by their teacher. Where appropriate copyright notice will be published and pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact detail will be omitted from the school web pages.

### **Legislation**

Teachers, students and parents should familiarize themselves with the information available on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet :

- Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003
- Child Trafficking & Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recording Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

### **Sanctions**

Failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against any user up to and including suspension or expulsion.

### **Ammendments**

The Board of Management of Ardscoil Ris may amend this Policy at any time.

**Signed on behalf of the BOM :** *Br. K. L Walsh* (Chair)

**Date :** *05/10/2004*

Dear Parent/Guardian,

**Re. Internet Permission Form**

As part of the school's education programme we offer pupils supervised access to the Internet from time to time. This allows students to access a large array of online educational resources that we believe can greatly enhance students' learning experience.

However, access to and use of the Internet requires responsibility on the part of the user and the school. These responsibilities are outlined in the school's Acceptable Use Policy (enclosed). It is important that this enclosed document is read carefully, signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the school.

Although the school takes steps to promote safe use of the Internet, it recognizes the possibility that students may accidentally or deliberately access or promote inappropriate or objectionably material.

The school respects each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their children access to the Internet as defined by the school's Acceptable use Policy.

Having read the terms of our school's Acceptable Use Policy, you may like to take a moment to consider how the Internet is used in your own home, and see if there is any way you could make it safer for you own family.

Yours sincerely,

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Principal / Sec. to the Board of Management

**Please read the attached Ardscoil Ris Internet Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this permission form to the Principal.**

School Name : .....

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 the rules explained to me by the school.

Pupil's Signature ..... Date .....

**Parent / Guardian**

As the parent / legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Acceptable use Policy and grant permission for my son / 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 / do not accept the above paragraph **yes / no** (circle as appropriate)

Signature : ..... Date .....

Address ..... Telephone .....

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BOM 10/04