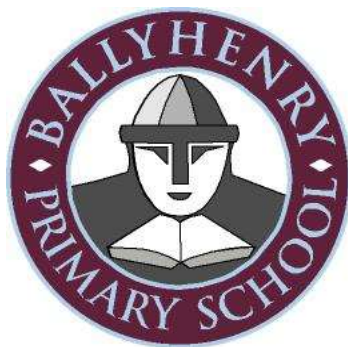# Acceptable Use Policy for the Internet and Digital Technologies.

Ballyhenry Primary School
"Achieving Success in a Caring Environment"

Agree Date	Review Date	Person Responsible
2021	2023	Mr A. Robinson

Date ratified by Board of Governors: 24-04-21

Acceptable Use Policy for the Internet and Digital Technologies.

In Ballyhenry Primary School we believe that the Internet and other digital technologies are very powerful resources which can enhance and potentially transform teaching and learning when used effectively and appropriately. As a Rights Respecting School we acknowledge the importance of safe and responsible use of ICT as a tool for learning.

UNCRC Article 17
You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.

Amongst other things, we believe that ICT can:
- Enhance teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Facilitate a differentiated pace and level of learning that takes account of individual pupil abilities, including those who are more able.
- Help provide appropriate support and scope for greater independence for those children with special educational needs.
- Facilitate immediate access to richer sources of information.
- Foster the development of information skills that teach pupils to be discriminating in their use of information and to enable them to shape and present it in appropriate ways.
- Increase motivation to learn.
- Provide a safe and non-threatening environment for learning.
- Promote group work and collaborative learning.
- Promote skills in decision making.
- Improve children's thinking skills, providing them with opportunities to become independent, self-motivated and flexible learners.
- Present information in new ways that help pupils to understand and use it more readily.
- Develop self esteem.

Our school provides pupils with opportunities to use the excellent resources on the Internet, along with developing the skills necessary to access, analyse and evaluate them.

This document sets out the policy and practices for the safe and effective use of the Internet in Ballyhenry Primary school. The policy has been drawn up by the ICT Co-ordinator and agreed by the principal and governors.

Code of Safe Practice

When using the Internet, email and digital technologies, all users must comply with all relevant legislation on copyright, property theft, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity. This Code of Safe Practice for Ballyhenry Primary School makes explicit to all users (staff and pupils) what is safe and acceptable and what is not.

The code covers fixed and mobile Internet; school PCs, laptops, and digital video equipment. It should also be noted that the use of devices owned personally by staff and pupils but brought onto school premises (such as mobile phones, camera phones, PDAs) are subject to the same requirements as technology provided by the school.

The ICT Co-ordinator will monitor the effectiveness of the Code of Practice, particularly in the light of new developments in technology.

Code of Practice for Pupils

Pupil access to the Internet is through a filtered service provided by C2K, which should ensure educational use made of resources is safe and secure, while protecting users and systems from abuse. Parents/carers are informed that pupils will make use of the internet for educational purposes while in school.

In addition, the following key measures have been adopted by Ballyhenry Primary School to ensure our pupils do not access any inappropriate material:

- The school's Code of Practice for use of the Internet and other digital technologies is made explicit to all pupils and is displayed prominently;
- Our Code of Practice is reviewed each school year and signed by pupils/parents;
- Pupils using the Internet will normally be working in highly-visible areas of the school;
- All online activity is for appropriate educational purposes and is supervised, where possible;
- Pupils will, where possible, use sites pre-selected by the teacher and appropriate to their age group, or use suitable keywords to narrow search items;
- Pupils are educated in the safe and effective use of the Internet, through a number of selected programmes and online resources.

It should be accepted, that however rigorous these measures may be, they can never be 100% effective. Neither the school nor C2K can accept liability under such circumstances.

The use of mobile phones by pupils is not normally permitted on the school premises during school hours, unless in exceptional circumstances, where permission may be granted by a member of staff.

During school hours pupils are forbidden to play computer games unless specifically assigned by the teacher.

Sanctions

Incidents of technology misuse which arise will be dealt with in accordance with the school's positive behaviour policy. Minor incidents will be dealt with by the Principal/ICT Co-ordinator and may result in a temporary or permanent ban on Internet use.
Incidents involving child protection issues will be dealt with in accordance with school child protection procedures.

Code of practice for staff

Staff have agreed to the following Code of Safe Practice:

- Pupils accessing the Internet should supervised by an adult at all times.
- All pupils are aware of the rules for the safe and effective use of the Internet. These are displayed and discussed with pupils.
- Recommended websites for each year group have been checked beforehand by staff to ensure there is no unsuitable content and that material is age-appropriate.
- Deliberate/accidental access to inappropriate materials or any other breaches of the school code of practice should be reported immediately to the Principal/ICT Co-coordinator.
- In the interests of system security staff passwords should only be shared with the Network manager/ICT Co-ordinator.
- Staff are aware that the C2K system tracks all Internet use and records the sites visited. The system also logs emails and messages sent and received by individual users.
- Staff should be aware of copyright and intellectual property rights and should be careful not to download or use any materials which are in breach of these.
- Photographs of pupils should, where possible, be taken with a school camera/ipads and images should be stored on a centralised area on the school network, accessible only to teaching staff.
- School systems may not be used for unauthorised commercial transactions.

Internet Safety Awareness

In Ballyhenry Primary School we believe that, alongside having a written safety policy and code of practice, it is essential to educate all users in the safe and effective use of the Internet and other forms of digital communication. We see education in appropriate, effective and safe use as an essential element of the school curriculum. This education is as important for staff and parents as it is for pupils.

Internet Safety Awareness for pupils

Rules for the Acceptable use of the Internet are discussed with all pupils and are prominently displayed. In addition, Key Stage 2 pupils follow a structured programme of Internet Safety Awareness using a range of online resources.

Internet Safety Awareness for staff

The ICT Co-ordinator keeps informed and updated on issues relating to Internet Safety and attends regular courses. This training is then disseminated to all teaching staff, classroom assistants and supervisory assistants on a regular basis or as appropriate.

Internet Safety Awareness for parents

The Internet Safety Policy is on the website and the Code of Practice for pupils is sent home at the start of each school year for parental signature. Internet safety leaflets for parents and carers also are sent home when available.   We organise/facilitate ICT evenings for parents and staff to educate them on issues surrounding the Internet, Safe and Effective use of the Internet and how best they can support and protect their child.

Health and Safety

Ballyhenry Primary School has attempted, as far as possible, to ensure a safe working environment for pupils and teachers using ICT resources which has been designed in accordance with health and safety guidelines. Pupils are supervised at all times when Interactive Whiteboards and Digital Projectors are being used. Pupils are aware of when and how to report an issue of Health and Safety to the classroom teacher.

Digital and Video Images of Pupils

Parental permission is sought on entry to school to cover the use of photographs of pupils on the school website, in the local press and for displays within school or on the welcome screen in the foyer. Any transfer of images between school and home by staff must be done using an encrypted pen drive. Photographs of pupils are archived when they leave the school.

School Website

Our school website promotes and provides up to date information about the school, as well as giving pupils an opportunity to showcase their work and other aspects of school life. In order to minimise risks of any images of pupils on the school website being used inappropriately the following steps are taken:

- Group photos are used where possible, with general labels/captions;
- The website does not include home addresses, telephone numbers, personal e-mails or any other personal information about pupils or staff.

School Facebook

The school's Facebook Page has been designed to let parents know about upcoming events. It is a closed group only parents/carers of pupils of the school are permitted to join. There is a separate acceptable use policy for this group. Specific permission is sought regarding the sharing of photographs. This group is monitored by the Principal/Senior Teacher.

Social Software

Chatrooms, blogs and other social networking sites are blocked by the C2K filters so pupils do not have access to them in the school environment. However, we regard the education of pupils on the safe and responsible use of social software as vitally important and this is addressed through our Internet Safety Education for pupils.

Instances of cyber bullying of pupils or staff will be regarded as very serious offences and dealt with according to the school's discipline policy and child protection procedures.

Pupils are aware that any misuse of mobile phones/websites/email should be reported to a member of staff immediately.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually.