

St Mary's C.B.S. Enniscorthy

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USER POLICY

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. In general, it is difficult to avoid at least some contact with this material while using the Internet. Even innocuous search requests may lead to sites with highly offensive content. 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. To minimise these risks, your use of the Internet at St. Mary's C.B.S. is governed by this Policy.

The computer network and all individual computers are the property of St. Mary's C.B.S. ("the school") and are to be used for legitimate school business purposes. Employees ("users") are provided with access to the computers to assist them in the performance of their jobs. All users have a responsibility to use the school's computer resources and the Internet in a professional, lawful and ethical manner. Use of the Internet and e-mail facilities for private and personal purposes is not permitted, except when explicitly authorised by school management.

This Policy has been designed to protect the staff and the school. The board of management of St. Mary's C.B.S. has a responsibility to support and educate its' staff in the use of the Internet to ensure that staff do not unwittingly get themselves and the school into an activity that may result in either a criminal action or a legal claim being taken.

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'ts, 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 Do's and Don'ts

1. Keep all your passwords secure. You are responsible for all uses, including illicit use, of e-mail and Internet under your password. You should therefore not divulge your username or password to anyone.
2. The school's e-mail system is primarily for educational use.
3. All e-mail is stored and the school may inspect e-mail, including personal e-mail, at any time without notice.
4. Ask yourself before sending an e-mail, 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. Even when a message is erased it is still possible to retrieve and read that message.
5. All e-mails must be sent under school headings.
 6. Make and keep hard copies and/or disk copies of all e-mails sent.
 7. Do not impersonate any other person when using e-mail or amend messages received.
 8. Do not import any non-text file, including files received as e-mail attachments, onto your system without first checking them for viruses using the approved software. If you send an e-mail with attachment you must include the following statement in your message:
“we cannot accept any liability for any loss or damage sustained as a result of software viruses. It is your responsibility to carry out such virus checking as is necessary before opening any attachment”.
 9. Notwithstanding the school’s right to retrieve and read any electronic mail messages, such messages should be treated as confidential by other employees and accessed only by the intended recipient. Employees are not authorized to retrieve or read any e-mail messages that are not addressed to them.
 10. Do not deliberately visit, view or download any material from any Web site containing sexual or illegal material which is offensive in any way whatsoever
 11. If you receive any offensive, unpleasant, harassing or intimidating messages or material via the e-mail at school, print the message and keep a hard copy and inform the IT department and the Principal without delay.
 12. To prevent computer viruses from infecting the school system do not download any software onto the school’s system. This includes software and shareware available free on the Internet. Such material may be downloaded only through the IT department.
 13. Use of public messaging systems on the Internet should be made only with the written permission of the Principal. Public messaging systems include user groups, special interest forums and bulletin boards.
 14. St. Mary’s C.B.S. School’s web page should not be interfered with or changed in any way without prior authorization from the Principal.
 15. Do not allow Internet or e-mail use to interfere with work responsibilities. This includes interfering with the classroom time of other staff members or pupils and spending unreasonable and unwarranted time on the Internet or e-mail activities. If in doubt consult the Principal

PORNOGRAPHY

What is pornography?

As there can be no legitimate business use for accessing or transmitting sexually explicit materials at work, the question of whether or not sexual material constitutes pornography is not relevant to use of the school’s e-mail and Internet access.

What you must not do:

Do not access or transmit any material with a sexual content.

What you must do:

If you accidentally open an undesirable/offensive web site then you should close it immediately and report the time and the web site to the IT co-ordinator. The system records all activity and as it will be monitored it is necessary to report in advance to eliminate further inquiries.

What the school will be doing:

All network internet usage is recorded. The school currently monitors and examines web sites accessed by the pupils on a regular basis. From the date of implementation of this Policy the web sites accessed by staff will be monitored to the same degree.

What are the consequences of not following this Policy?

The display on screen of sexual matter or the transmitting of such material to other people may constitute sexual harassment (see the harassment section of this Policy). Accessing and transmitting sexual material may be a criminal offense for which both you and the school may be liable

The Garda or other appropriate authority will be informed where appropriate.

Failure to comply with this aspect of the Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you, including possible dismissal.

N.B. To download or send pornography or to deliberately view pornography which involves an image of a child or what appears to be an image of a child may be a criminal offence.

HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the school that all employees must be allowed to work in an environment free from harassment of any kind. This includes (but is not limited to) sexual harassment, or harassment on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, politics, disability race, or victimisation.

What is harassment?

“Sexual Harassment” takes place where a person

- a) subjects another person (“the victim”) to an act of physical intimacy, or
- b) requests sexual favours from the victim, or
- c) subjects the victim to any act or conduct with sexual connotations, including spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material where
 - (i) the act, request or conduct is unwelcome to the victim, and
 - (ii) could reasonably be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating to him or her,or

(iii) the victim is treated differently by reason of his or her rejection of or submission to the act, request or conduct, or it could reasonably be anticipated that the victim would be so treated.

In the context of this Policy this includes sending messages with sexually suggestive material, repeated sexual propositions or abuse of a sexual nature.

“Harassment” occurs where a person subjects another person (“the victim”) to any unwelcome act, request or conduct, including spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material, which in respect of the victim is based on any discriminatory ground and which could reasonably be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating to him or her.

What you must not do:

Do not send abusive messages or messages which contain offensive material.

What are the consequences of not following this Policy?

Failure to comply with this aspect of the Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you, including possible dismissal. In addition, harassment is a criminal offence for which the harasser can be imprisoned. Victims of harassment may be able to claim damages from the harasser and from the school.

COPYRIGHT

What is copyright?

The owner of the copyright has the exclusive right in certain works such as documents, articles, books, plays, films, recordings and musical compositions, so that they cannot be copied or used in certain other ways without the consent of the copyright owner.

What you must not do:

Do not download, copy or transmit to third parties the works of others without their permission as this may infringe copyright. Copyright is most likely to be breached when you download material from the Internet or when you copy text or attach it to an e-mail message.

What are the consequences of not following this Policy?

Failure to comply with this aspect of the Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you, including possible dismissal. In addition, you and the school can be sued by the owner of the copyright for damages for unauthorised use of the copyright material.

ENTERING CONTRACTS

What is a contract?

A contract is an agreement between two or more parties to create legal obligations between them. Contracts can be made orally or in writing. Binding contracts can be formed by e-mail. E-mail may appear informal but you must take care not to enter contractual obligations without the usual care and attention to detail to protect the school's interests.

What you must not do:

You must not enter into any contract that incurs costs outside budgets duly approved for you or your department. You may not download any software except through the IT department. You may not enter into any contract involving the school without the express authority of the Principal to do so.

What are the consequences of not following this Policy?

Failure to comply with this aspect of the policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you including possible dismissal.

DEFAMATION

What is defamation?

Defamation is the publication of a statement which adversely affects a person's or the school's reputation. Publication may be by way of Internet or e-mail.

What you must not do:

Do not send or circulate, internally or externally, any information which is defamatory. In particular, you must not send or circulate, internally or externally, any information which contains negative comments about an individual, organisation or business without first checking that the contents of the information are accurate.

What are the consequences of not following this Policy?

A person, organisation or business defamed may sue you and the school for damages. There is a defense that the information was 'true', but the onus would be on you or the school to show that. Failure to comply with this aspect of the policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you including possible dismissal.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

What is confidential information?

In general terms, confidential information includes any information which is not available to the general public.

What you must not do:

Do not send any documents of a confidential nature by e-mail except where they are encrypted and you are authorised to do so by the IT co-ordinator. All such messages should have the following statement included in non-encrypted text:

“ this message is confidential and intended only for the addressee. No other person is authorised to decrypt this message and unauthorised decryption is prohibited and may be unlawful. Unauthorised decryption will not waive privilege or confidentiality.”

e-mails containing information that is in any way sensitive or confidential must include the following statement:

“the information included in this e-mail is of a confidential nature and is intended only for the addressee. If you are not the intended addressee, any disclosure, copying or distribution by you is prohibited and may be unlawful. Disclosure to any party other than the addressee, whether inadvertent or otherwise is not intended to waive privilege or confidentiality.”

What are the consequences of not following this Policy?

Failure to comply with this aspect of the policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you including possible dismissal.

AMENDMENTS

The Board of Management of St. Mary’s C.B.S. may amend this Policy at any time