

**Acceptable Internet Use Policy at St  
John's College**

## **Contents:**

1. Introduction
2. Parent Permission Letter
3. School Policy
4. School Procedures

## 1. **Introduction**

Use of the Internet is growing rapidly in schools. The problems and issues that have been highlighted by the media concern most schools. Whilst some of the media interest is hype, there is real cause for concern and it is imperative that schools consider issues carefully before allowing pupil access to the Internet.

It is our belief that there is no present or future technical solution that can completely guarantee the restriction of pupils to unwanted Internet material. Most development work is concentrating on removing access to pornography and even here success is unlikely to be complete. Other areas of unacceptable materials, such as racist, extremist, political or violent material is beyond the scope of most safeguarding programs. In these circumstances the initial reaction of teachers to treat this as an issue for education and parental involvement soon becomes the most sensible course. The development of detailed school policy and practice, together with parent / school contracts in an “Acceptable Internet Use Policy” is our advised action.

We include draft letters for parents, school policies and procedure documents.

## 2. Parents' Permission Letter

10th February 2006

Dear Parents,

### The Internet Partnership - Home and School

The school is very pleased to announce that its Information Technology Programme will shortly offer children supervised and filtered access to the Internet.

The school encourages pupils to use the rich information resources available on the Internet, together with the development of appropriate skills to analyse and evaluate such resources. In order to protect pupils while on-line, the sites available to them will be selected carefully by members of staff. Pupils will only be able to search the sites that have been evaluated and set up on the computers.

In due course, pupils will also be taught to use e-mail. To do this, pupils will be given a temporary, filtered e-mail address. However, the name of your child **will not** form any part of the e-mail address. This will help our children to achieve further educational goals and objectives and develop important I.T. skills for the future.

Before being allowed access to the Internet, children must obtain their parents' permission and agree to follow the pupil guidelines enclosed for Internet use. The school supports and respects the right of parents to decide whether or not to allow their children access to the Internet. It is therefore important that you read the enclosed guidelines then complete the form attached, which should be signed and returned to school as soon as possible. Children are also required to sign the agreement.

If you have any further questions regarding Internet use within school, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Kloosterman  
KS2 IT Co-ordinator

### **3. School Policy**

#### **Pupil access to the Internet**

The school encourages use by pupils of the rich information resources available on the Internet, together with the development of appropriate skills to analyse and evaluate such resources. These skills will be fundamental in the society our pupils will be entering.

On-line services significantly alter the information landscape for schools by opening classrooms to a broader array of resources. In the past, teaching and library materials could usually be carefully chosen. All such materials would be chosen to be consistent with national policies, supporting and enriching the curriculum while taking into account the varied teaching needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of the pupils. Internet access, because it may lead to any publicly available site in the world, will open classrooms to electronic information resources which have not been selected by teachers as appropriate for use by pupils.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees during the coming information age. The school expects that staff will begin to investigate possibilities and blend use of such information as appropriate within the curriculum and that staff will provide guidance and instruction to pupils in the appropriate use of such resources. Staff will consult the IT Co-ordinator for advice on content, training and appropriate teaching levels consistent with the school's IT programme of study.

Independent pupil use of telecommunications and electronic information resources should be supervised and only permitted upon submission of permission and agreement forms by parents of pupils and by pupils themselves.

Access to on-line resources will enable pupils to explore thousands of libraries, databases while exchanging messages with people throughout the world. The school believes that the benefits to pupils from access to information resources and increased opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. But ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the school supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for independent access.

The school's KS2 IT co-ordinator will prepare appropriate procedures for implementing this policy and for reviewing and evaluating its effect on teaching and learning.

## 4. **School Procedures**

### **Resource Development**

In order to match electronic resources as closely as possible to the national and school curriculum, teachers need to review and evaluate resources in order to offer materials that are appropriate to the age range and ability of the group being taught. The IT coordinator will provide appropriate guidance to pupils as they make use of telecommunications and electronic information resources to conduct research and other studies. All pupils will be informed by staff of their rights and responsibilities as users either as an individual user or as a member of a class or group.

As much as possible, the school's chosen information provider has organised information resources in ways that point pupils to those that have been reviewed and evaluated prior to use. The children will always start from the internal network and use the safe search engines listed there as a gateway to the Internet.

### **School Rules**

The school has developed a set of guidelines for Internet use by pupils. These rules will be made available to all pupils, and kept under constant review.

All members of staff are responsible for explaining the rules and their implications. All members of staff need to be aware of possible misuses of on-line access and their responsibilities towards pupils.

## 5. Pupil Guidelines for Internet Use

### General

Pupils are responsible for good behaviour on the Internet just as they are in a classroom or a school corridor. General school rules apply.

The Internet is provided for pupils to conduct research and communicate with others. Parents' permission is required. Remember that access is a privilege, not a right and that access requires responsibility.

Individual users of the Internet are responsible for their behaviour and communications over the network. It is presumed that users will comply with school standards and will honour the agreements they have signed.

Computer storage areas will be treated like school desks and lockers. Staff may review files and communications to ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on servers or disks would always be private.

During school, teachers will guide pupils toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear responsibility for such guidance as they must also exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio and other potentially offensive media.

The following are not permitted:

1. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
2. Using obscene language
3. Harassing, insulting or attacking others
4. Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
5. Violating copyright laws
6. Using others' passwords
7. Trespassing in others' folders, work or files
8. Intentionally wasting limited resources

### Sanctions

1. Violation of the above rules will result in a temporary or permanent ban on Internet use.
2. Additional disciplinary action may be added in line with existing practice on inappropriate language or behaviour.
3. When applicable, other authorities may be involved.
4. **Pupils deliberately breaking the guidelines will be severely dealt with.**

