



## Internet Acceptable Use Policy

### **Students**

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that the community (staff and pupils) of Meánscoil Gharman will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school's AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school representatives and the Board of Management will revise the AUP annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

### **Strategy**

The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

### **General**

- Each pupil is provided with a user profile, storage space and all the required software for their use. This is similar to a corporate based computer user set-up.
- Internet sessions are always supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software is used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.

- The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal storage devices (memory keys, external hard drives or CD-ROMs) is permitted.
- Students will observe good "netiquette" (i.e., 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 materials.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source.
- Students will be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Students 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.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable usage policy.

### **Email**

- Students will use approved class email accounts under supervision by or with permission from a teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will not reveal 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 emails or the internet.

- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

### **Social Media**

Students will not have access to social media on the school network and they are forbidden to access all social networking sites on personal electronic devices on school campus.

Students are not permitted to refer to any member of the school community or the school on social networking sites and students' usage of social media, at all times, must protect the reputation of Meánscoil Gharman. Students are not permitted to follow or view any staff member of Meánscoil Gharman on either Twitter, Facebook or any other social media forum.

If students are found to be in breach of the above, the code of behaviour of Meánscoil Gharman will be strictly adhered to.

### **Internet Forums**

- Students will only have access to discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
- It is recommended that students use usernames to avoid disclosure of identity.
- Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat is forbidden.

### **School Website**

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
- Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website without parental permission. In general,

photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities. Video clips may be password protected, if requested.

- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.

### **Legislation**

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

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

### **Support Structures**

- The school will inform staff, students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.
- Information sessions will be organised for parents and guardians in relation to the Internet and technologies, such as 'Facebook' and 'youtube', and the possible risks such technologies pose to our pupils.

### **Sanctions**

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

- An Garda Síochána will be informed of breaches of Meánscoil Gharman's AUP if deemed necessary.



## **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

### **Staff Protocol**

As employees of Meánscoil Gharman, all staff at Meánscoil Gharman are expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to the ICT AUP, which is available on the website.

Email accounts @hotmail.com are provided to staff for use relating to school business. Staff email accounts should never be used to store or distribute unsavory materials or to send or forward games or jokes.

Occasional and reasonable personal use of email is permitted provided that this does not interfere with the performance, work duties and responsibilities of Meánscoil Gharman and An Foras Patrúnachta does not in any way embarrass Meánscoil Gharman and An Foras Patrúnachta and otherwise, complies with this policy.

References to any member of the school community or An Foras Patrúnachta made via electronic means, should be made in a strictly professional and business-like manner.

Meánscoil Gharman understands that staff may have private social media accounts. However, staff are expected to use these accounts in a responsible manner, including ensuring adequate privacy settings are employed. It is imperative that Staff members should never refer to any member of the school community or the school on social networking sites and staff usage of social media, at all times, must protect the reputation of Meánscoil Gharman and its community. Staff must ensure that any images posted on their social media sites should be of good repute and reflect the school and the school community in a positive light

only. If uploading photographs, it is imperative that staff seek the prior permission of those pictured before posting pictures.

**Staff must NEVER follow or befriend students on media forums such as Twitter or Facebook and must never view students' profiles or allow students to view theirs.**

### **World Wide Web**

- Staff should not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Staff should use the Internet for educational, professional purposes only.
- Staff should 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.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their work, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable usage policy.

### **Legislation**

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which all staff should familiarise themselves with:

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

### **Sanctions**

- Failure to comply with the policy and procedures outlined in this document may result in;
  - the withdrawal of computer, email and internet facilities,
  - initiation of disciplinary procedures and disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
  - serious breaches of the policy may result in initiation of criminal or civil proceedings.