



INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY



Internet Acceptable Use Policy Jonah Special School

Purpose

The Jonah Special School owns and operates a small number of computers, I Pods and I Pads which are provided for the use of students and staff in support of the programs of the school. All users of this system are responsible for ensuring that this computing facility is used in an effective, efficient, ethical, and lawful manner.

This document establishes rules and prohibitions that define acceptable use of this system. Unacceptable use is prohibited, and is grounds for loss of computing privileges, as well as discipline or legal sanctions. The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that staff and students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's ICT resources in a safe and effective manner.

Audience and Agreement

By using the computer system, I Pods and I Pads, users agree that they will comply with this policy.

Privileges

Access and privileges on Jonah Special School's computing system are assigned and managed by the School Principal. Users may not, under any circumstances, transfer or confer these privileges to other individuals. The authorized user is responsible for the proper use of the system, including any password protection.

Responsibilities

Users are responsible for maintaining the following –

- a) An environment in which access to all school computing resources are shared equitably between users.
- b) An environment conducive to learning –
 - A user who harasses, or makes defamatory remarks, shall bear full responsibility for his or her actions. Further, by using these systems, users agree that individuals who transmit such remarks, to or from the school, shall bear sole responsibility for their actions. Users agree that Jonah Special School's role in managing these systems is only as an information carrier, and that they will never consider transmission through these systems as an endorsement of said transmission by Jonah Special School.
 - Users are advised that they may encounter material that may be considered offensive or objectionable in nature or content. Users are further advised that Jonah Special School does not assume responsibility for the contents of any of these outside networks.
 - The user agrees to comply with the acceptable use guidelines for whichever outside networks or services they may access through the Jonah Special School system.
 - Further, the user agrees to follow proper etiquette on outside networks.
 - The user agrees never to attempt to transmit, or cause to be transmitted, any message in which the origination is deliberately misleading (except for those outside services which may conceal identities as part of the service).
 - The user agrees that, in the unlikely event that someone does transmit, or cause to be



transmitted, a message that is inconsistent with an environment conducive to learning or with a misleading origination, the person who performed the transmission will be solely accountable for the message, not Jonah Special School, which is acting solely as the information carrier.

- c) An environment free of illegal or malicious acts –
- The user agrees never to use a system to perform an illegal or malicious act.
 - The user agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions laid down in the **Data Protection Act of 1988 and 2003** and the **Freedom of Information Act of 1997** and to inform themselves of their rights as citizens and their responsibilities under said acts.

Confidentiality

The School Principal reserves the right to access all information stored on computers in the school.

Virus Protection

Computer viruses are items of software that attach themselves to other legitimate items of software or data, without the consent of the computer user, and are programmed to proliferate themselves onto other computers, often to cause disruption or damage. It is essential that all users play a part in protecting the network from the presence of viruses.

It is the policy of the school to run up to date virus protection software on all computers that are attached to the network. This software will automatically report the presence of most known viruses. Any user who receives an on-screen warning from this software (these are very clear and explicit) should stop all use of the computer immediately and report the occurrence to the School Principal.

Viruses can attach themselves easily to removable storage media and this is one of the main ways in which they proliferate. The software used to prevent students from tampering with various computer settings will also, to some extent, prevent them from accessing these removable media. However this is not totally secure. Furthermore there are instances in which students and staff will want to transfer data to and from the network on removable media, e.g. as a means of submitting homework. To allow for this and still ensure system security it is the school's policy that all removable media must be virus scanned before being accessed through any computer on the network. These must be re-scanned again each time they are used in computer outside the network.

Violations

An individual's computer use privileges may be suspended immediately upon the discovery of a possible violation of these policies. Such suspected violations will be confidentially reported to the School Principal.

The Principal may nominate another person to conduct an examination of computing systems at any time and without prior notice to assure compliance with internal policies, assist with internal investigations, and assist with the management and protection of the school's information resource systems.

Violations of these policies will be dealt with in the same manner as violations of other school policies and may result in disciplinary action. In such a review, the full range of disciplinary sanctions is available including the loss of computer use privileges, dismissal from the school, Garda involvement and legal action. Violations of some of the above policies may constitute a criminal offence.



The Jonah Special School 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 –

- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be fully explained to all users.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Users 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.
- Users will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Users will never disclose or publicise personal or school information especially on sites requiring e-commerce transactions.
- Users 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.

➤ School Website/Facebook Page –

- We are privileged to have a Facebook Page and portal on the World Wide Web that gives interested parties an insight into the life of Jonah Special School. The publication of any student work on the site will be co-ordinated by a class teacher.
- Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website without parental permission.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.

➤ 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:
 - Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998.
 - Interception Act 1993.
 - Video Recordings Act 1989.
 - The Data Protection Act 1988 and 2003.
 - Freedom of Information Act 1997

➤ 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, to involve the Gardai and other legal bodies should the need arise in the case of a serious breach of this AUP.



Jonah Special School

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Jonah Special School at its meeting held on:

Ratified by the Jonah Board of Management on: _____

Date

Signed: _____

Principal

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Next Review Period: *September 2026*