

ACCEPTABLE USAGE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Schools are constantly being challenged with regards to how computers and personal devices such as cell phones/smart phones/tablets can be used in constructive and educative ways, especially in classrooms and as part of the learning experience at school. At the same time, schools have to manage the use of these devices to avoid the possible risks that can be incurred from careless or malicious use.

Internet on the IPad, laptop, and cellular phone is accessible to all members of the class community. Because the administrative staff, teaching staff and pupils are dependent on technology to do their work, it is imperative that there is consensus on how the equipment is to be used and what it is used for. Clear guidelines need to be given and a code of conduct established.

The policies and guidelines given in this document serve both to encourage and extend the use of electronic devices in constructive and educative ways as well as to limit and contain the possibilities of destructive or counter-productive instances.

Agreement to the conditions specified is a requirement for all who wish to make use of the technology available at the school.

This policy deals with:

SECTION 1: LAPTOP ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

SECTION 2: OTHER MOBILE DEVICES (phones, smartphones, iPads etc.)

SECTION 3: NORMS OF BEHAVIOUR for ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION and INTERNET USE

SECTION 4: MONITORING

SECTION 5: CONSEQUENCES OF BREACH OF THIS POLICY

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the policies and principles and code of conduct of the school and are governed by the school's rules and regulations.

Applicable legislation includes but is not limited to:

1. The Constitution of South Africa
2. The Films and Publication Act 65 of 1996
3. The Children's Act 38 of 2005
4. Criminal Law (Sexual offences and related matters). Amendment Act 32 of 2007
5. Protection from Harassment Act 17 of 2011
6. The Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013
7. The Electronic Communication and Transactions Act 25 of 2002

SECTION 1: LAPTOP ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

GENERAL

The laptops have been introduced into the classrooms as a learning instrument, and their basic purpose is educational. Anything that enhances their educational potential is to be encouraged; anything that hinders them achieving their purpose is to be prevented. As they are educational school tools, the notion of privacy will be treated as secondary to the achievement of school's educational purposes. Accordingly, if a teacher suspects that a child is using his machine for purposes other than educational during school time, that teacher will be entitled, and indeed expected, to intervene and inspect the contents of the machine to determine whether the facility has been or is being used for a purpose which is contrary to school policy. This would relate specifically, but not only, to the storage of illegal music files, pornography, antisocial material, hacking material or material that infringes copyright legislation.

IN CLASSROOMS

- Pupils should not listen to music files while working without permission from the teacher.
- Pupils may not use E-mail facilities during class time unless instructed to by their teachers.
- Pupils should not display screen savers/backgrounds which are inappropriate or noisy.
- Pupils may not play games on their computers during class time unless the games are part of the teaching programme and have been required by the teacher as a class activity.
- Pupils should respect that the Internet is a shared resource and should therefore be circumspect and reasonable about how much they download.

PRINTING ON SCHOOL PRINTERS

The School provides printing facilities. The machines are able to print, photocopy and scan.

Photocopiers should only be used in accordance with the following school policy.

Pupils should only print, scan or photocopy during class time if instructed to do so by their teachers.

SECTION 2: OTHER MOBILE DEVICES (phones, smartphones, iPads etc.)

The Privacy to Personal Information law applies. Any personal information that can identify a person cannot be shared on any public forum without the permission of the person.

GENERAL

Pupils are not permitted to have mobile devices (MDs) at school.

If a pupil has an MD with him at times when it may not be used, it must be on silent or turned off. If an MD rings during these times, the MD may be confiscated for a period to be determined by the person in charge.

The school accepts no responsibility for any loss of or damage to MDs, whether at school or elsewhere.

CLASSES

During classes, it is the prerogative of the teacher of the specific class to decide if, when and how MDs will be used during that class.

SECTION 3: NORMS OF BEHAVIOUR for ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION and INTERNET USE

ETHICAL PRACTICE

All members of the classroom community are expected to honour the school's values and practices. In doing so, they will not:

- bring the school into disrepute
- post any material on a website without the permission of the person or entity involved
- create a persona or digital ID on any social media site (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) which represents or pretends to represent the school without the approval of the Principal.

THE CLASSROOM

When teachers use or allow the use of the internet and/or social media for schoolwork, either in the classroom or as required work outside the classroom, participation in such online media is an extension of their classrooms in terms of what is permitted/acceptable online.

Photographs may not be taken or videos or recordings made in a class without the permission of the teacher concerned.

LANGUAGE USE

Messages posted publicly must not include any personal attacks (colloquially known as 'flaming')

Messages should follow the rules of appropriate public language.

Any text transmitted to a public environment may not contain any language or content that the author would not be willing to share from the podium at a school meeting.

PORNOGRAPHY

Both the Film and Publications Act and the Sexual Offences Act make it an offence for a person under the age of 18 to:

- View pornography
- Be in possession of pornography
- Download pornography from the internet
- Trade in pornography
- Enter a licensed premise where pornography is legally sold
- Expose another person under the age of 18 to pornography

Child pornography

According to the South African law, child pornography is deemed to be any naked image showing genitalia of a person under the age of 18.

Pornography at school

Possession or distribution of pornography at school is considered to be serious misconduct. Viewing and/or circulating any material deemed by those in authority to be pornographic is a serious offence. As well as the above, activities that would be considered to be pornography include, but are not limited to: sexting, distributing naked 'selfies', distributing photographs/videos of a naked friend, distributing photos/videos of anyone involved in sexual activities.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

The following behaviour is unacceptable at all times:

- Attacking Pinelands Montessori, the staff, the pupils or other people on any digital communication forum
- Cyber-bullying. According to the school's bullying policy, bullying includes but is not limited to:
 - behaviour that can be construed to be the systematic, uninvited, repeated and intentional abuse of another person over a period of time
 - harming another person (hurting or embarrassing another person)
 - repeated threatening behaviour which is intended to frighten another person
 - using electronic technology; for example, text messages or emails, rumours sent by email or posted on social networking sites, embarrassing pictures, videos, websites or fake profiles.
 - Insulting others
 - Using racist or sexist language
 - Passing derogatory or offensive comments

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work – words, images and ideas - without proper acknowledgement, and passing it off as one's own. This is fraudulent and is tantamount to stealing. Types of plagiarism include:

- Verbatim (word-for-word) copying, often achieved by using the 'copy-paste' function.
- Paraphrasing without acknowledgment: merely changing a few words in the chosen text.
- Using ideas generated by another person and presenting them as one's own.
- Submitting someone else's work or assignment as one's own.
- Giving one's work to another scholar to use as his own is also fraudulent, as one is complicit in the act of plagiarizing.

All information obtained during research from the internet must be referenced with the name of the site, the title and author of the article (if given) and the date accessed

THE INTERNET

We are pleased to be able to offer access, via our computer network, to the Internet (which includes E• Mail, World-Wide-Web and other facilities).

Internet access enables pupils to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums and other repositories of information and to exchange personal communication with other Internet users around the world.

Families should, however, be aware that some material accessible via the Internet contains items that are illegal, defamatory or potentially offensive. The Internet is a large and unregulated global network and increasingly it is possible to find controversial material or behaviour on the Internet that some may see as offensive or inappropriate. This includes pornographic material or material with explicit sexual content, and unacceptable behaviour in private E• mail or social networking websites.

While the intentions of the school are to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, pupils may find ways to access other materials. We believe that the benefits to pupils in using the Internet in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages.

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. However, at school we are also involved in setting standards and in monitoring adherence to our rules and to the school's standards of behaviour, and this involves teachers and staff.

As part of our curriculum we do teach and guide our pupils in the appropriate use of the Internet and social media.

As Internet facilities are a limited resource and one which we pay for, users are expected to use them primarily for:

- direct educational purposes;
- constructive communication with other Internet users, provided it is not anti-social in nature.

They are also encouraged to be considerate and limit the size of any downloads they make from the internet.

Users may not:

- Access material that is labelled as 'not intended for minors', even if they have turned 18.
- Download and make public or intentionally view any material that is pornographic, abusive or age restricted.
- Disseminate the addresses of any material that falls into one of the above categories.

SECTION 4: MONITORING

Pupils who break any of the above rules are subject to the normal disciplinary structures of the school. In addition, pupils must understand the following:

1. All users are entitled to reasonable privacy of their work under normal circumstances and therefore it is an offence to use or attempt to use another user's account/password no matter what the circumstances maybe.
2. Pupils are to conserve space by deleting unnecessary E-Mail or other material which takes up excessive storage space.
3. Pupils should never download or install any commercial software onto network drives. All copyright laws must be obeyed.
4. Pupils may not use any account other than their own. They have full responsibility for their accounts and must not share their passwords with anyone, and therefore, any violations of any part of this policy that can be traced to an individual account name will be treated as the sole responsibility of the owner of that account.

SECTION 5: CONSEQUENCES OF BREACH OF THIS POLICY

The violation of school rules concerning the use of the network, electronic media and communication will result in the same disciplinary actions as would result from similar violations in other areas.

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with according to the Discipline policy of the school.
