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East Glendalough School

ICT and Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Policy

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Introduction

The use of Information and Communications Technology (hereafter "ICT"), social media, mobile phones and other devices [1] is now a feature of modern society and such technology is integral to the lives of most of our pupils. East Glendalough School uses instructional technology as one method of teaching and learning and, in order to support our students in becoming proficient in the competencies essential for success in a 21st Century learning environment, the School provides a variety of resources alongside the curriculum.

However, the School's classes and activities need to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. It is incumbent on all members of the East Glendalough School community to use technology responsibly, ethically and respectfully of others. Internet use and permission to use a mobile phone are considered a privilege rather than a right, and this policy has been drawn up to ensure that modern technologies are used appropriately.

Increasing sophistication of technology presents a number of issues for the School including:
- The high value of many phones and devices
- Integration of cameras into phones leading to child protection, data protection and teacher harassment issues
- Potential to use the phone at inappropriate time for phoning, texting, checking time using as a calculator or stop watch, surfing the net, taking photos or videos, playing games, listening to music
- Potential for text and cyber-bullying
- Potential for disruption of class. Even when silent, the use of mobile phones for texting purposes undermines classroom discipline.

It is not realistic to prohibit phones and devices being brought to school, nor is it logistically possible for schools to collect phones and devices each morning and return them in the afternoon.

The aims of this policy, therefore, are:
- To ensure that students benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the School's internet resources in a safe and effective manner
- To ensure that mobile phones are used appropriately and that their use doesn't disrupt teaching and learning or infringe the rights of others
- To accommodate future needs and changing circumstances
- To outline clearly for students and staff what is and isn't acceptable behaviour
- To allow staff of the School to carry out their duties unimpeded and free from harassment.

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[1] For the purpose of this policy, the word "device" shall be taken to mean any personal electronic item, such as (but not restricted to) laptops, netbooks, cameras, mobile phones, iPods, iPads, eReaders, gaming devices such as Nintendo DS, etc.

Mobile Phones

1) Students may carry their mobile phone on their person, but it must be turned off (not on "silent") except during break or lunchtime.
2) The one exception to this rule is during exams, when the Exam Rules will supersede this policy. Mobile phones should NEVER be brought into an exam, and exam papers will be cancelled if it emerges that a student has done so.
3) Phones and devices should not be used in any way between classes, before classes, etc. Phones may only be used before 8.55am, from 11.05-11.20am and from 1.15-1.55pm.
4) If a student needs to contact home urgently, they will be allowed to use the phone in the School Office. If parents need to contact children urgently, they should phone the School and the message will be relayed promptly.
5) If a student needs to check for an urgent text message outside of the permitted times they may do so by reporting to the School Office and asking permission. If, in the opinion of the Principal, a student is over-using this privilege it shall be withdrawn.
6) If a student breaches these rules the phone (and SIM card) will be confiscated immediately and given to the Deputy Principal.
7) In the event of a dispute about whether these rules have been breached, the phone shall be handed over immediately to the teacher who will give it to the Deputy Principal so the matter can be investigated. Failure to hand over the phone immediately shall constitute an admission of guilt.
8) At all times, the privacy of a student shall be respected. Where the data on a phone is accessed it shall only be to determine whether there has been misuse of the phone, not to monitor the private activities of the owner.

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If a device disturbs a class or if a student is seen using a phone outside the permitted time:
- The device will be confiscated for two school days. Devices will be returned to a parent/guardian for weekends or holiday periods if requested (and subsequently returned to the Deputy Principal by the student upon their return).
- The device will be returned by the Deputy Principal at 4.00pm on the appropriate day.
- A second offence will lead to the device being confiscated for seven days, and a third offence will necessitate a parent/guardian coming in to collect it after seven days.
- If a student refuses to hand over the device or behaves unhelpfully to the teacher, the phone will be confiscated for seven days and a parent/guardian will be required to collect it.

If a device is deliberately used in a class <u>for any purpose</u> unless a teacher gives direct permission:
- The device will be confiscated for seven days. Phones will be returned to a parent/guardian for weekends or holiday periods if requested (and subsequently returned to the Deputy Principal by the student upon their return).
- The device will be returned by the Deputy Principal at 4.00pm on the appropriate day.
- A condition of the device's return will be that the Deputy Principal is entitled to view all the photos saved on the device. (As mentioned above, this shall be done with respect for the student's privacy and normally in the presence of the student.)
- A second offence will lead to the device being confiscated for fourteen days, and a third offence will necessitate a parent/guardian coming in to collect it after fourteen days.
- If a student refuses to hand over the device or behaves unhelpfully to the teacher, the device will be confiscated for fourteen days and a parent/guardian will be required to collect it.

If a device has been used to take photographs/audio or video footage other than with the express permission of a teacher:

- The device will be confiscated until the matter can be resolved.
- If the material has been captured without teacher permission during classtime, the student responsible shall be sanctioned, up to a suspension of three school days.
- If the material (photographs/audio/video footage) has been taken outside class with the consent of the subject(s) therein there shall be no further sanction.
- If the material has been taken without the consent of the subject(s) therein, the student responsible shall be suspended for three school days.[2]
- If the material has been taken without the consent of the subject(s) therein and subsequently posted on the internet, shown to others or distributed in any manner, the student responsible shall be suspended for a minimum of five school days. This applies regardless of how the School management learns of the matter
- Depending on the nature of the content viewed, the School reserves the right to contact relevant outside bodies (Gardai, legal advice, HSE, etc) to determine the appropriate course of action

<u>**Exempt occasions**</u>

There are certain events in the life of the School where it is normal and reasonable for photographs/recordings to be captured and where the explicit consent of the subject therein would usually not be required. These include concerts, sports events, TY activities, trips, etc. Students should use discretion as to what is appropriate and must continue to be extremely cautious about posting anything to the internet or showing it to others without achieving the direct consent of those involved. If they are in any doubt at all about what is appropriate, the guidance of a member of staff should be sought because if, in the opinion of the Principal or Deputy Principal, their actions are deemed to have been inappropriate the sanctions as outlined above shall apply.

<u>Internet Usage</u>

To ensure that ICT resources are used appropriately, East Glendalough School has established an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) which defines the procedures and parameters under which these resources may be used by staff and students.

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions, as outlined below, will be imposed. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

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

- Communications via ICT resources are sometimes public in nature. School rules for behaviour apply. It is expected that users will at all times comply with these rules and will act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner at all times. Particular care must be taken when using email and other forms of direct electronic communications. Hacking and other unlawful activities, including any form of cyber-bullying, is strictly prohibited. Users are

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[2] This policy will apply in conjunction with the *East Glendalough School Anti-Bullying Policy* which may be used to determine whether further intervention or sanction is required.

prohibited from installing personal software to any ICT resource without prior permission from school management.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school may monitor students' Internet usage.
- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software is strictly forbidden.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- In order to provide an Internet environment that is safe and age-appropriate to students, school management reserves the right to monitor and review the use of ICT resources and will do so as needed to ensure that the systems are being used for educational proposes. It is important that the school community understands this and recognises that monitoring access, among other things:
    - increases the safety and security of people and resources by supporting a positive learning and work environment, safe from harassment, intimidation or threats,
    - discourages breaches of confidentiality, copyright infringements and inappropriate file downloads and print requests,
    - promotes appropriate internet access, electronic communications messages (e.g. blogs and appropriate discussion forums).

Therefore, users must be aware that they should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of these ICT resources. Personal information, however, is not publicly accessible outside of the school network.

World Wide Web
- Students will not at any time intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will use the Internet for appropriate purposes only.
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information of their own or any other person.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to students' studies is in direct breach of this Acceptable Use Policy and is strictly forbidden.
- 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.
- Teachers will not share their personal details with students, including personal mobile numbers, personal email addresses, Facebook or other Social Networking personal details. Exchange of assignments, notes, resources etc. may be done through Edmodo or similar applications and/or the teachers' school email addresses. This is to ensure transparency and protect both students and teachers from any potential harassment, embarrassment, inappropriate allegation or Child Protection issue that could arise in the absence of a monitored communication system.
- Unless explicitly instructed by a teacher to do so, students will not access any social networking websites while in school or during school opening hours. Student access to social networking sites such as Facebook, Ask.FM and Twitter (this is not an exhaustive list) is strictly forbidden while in school or during school opening hours, unless under a

teacher's direct supervision and instruction. This access restriction also applies to all other social networking sites in existence at the time of approving this policy, or any new social networking sites that arise before the date of the next review of this policy.

Email
- Students will use approved class email accounts under supervision by, or with permission from, a teacher.
- Students should not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students should not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses, telephone/mobile numbers, email addresses or pictures.
- Students should never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Students should note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Students may only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication that have been approved by the school.
- Internet Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and may only be accessed when supervised by a teacher.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.

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. Violations of this policy are deemed as violations of school behavioural expectations and codes.

Anyone who is aware of problems with, or misuse of these ICT resources, or has a question regarding the proper use of same, should discuss this with a member of staff or management. The East Glendalough School Board of Management urges any person who receives a harassing, threatening, intimidating or other improper message to report it immediately to a member of staff.

General

1) East Glendalough School accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones or other devices. The safety and security of mobile phones and other devices is wholly a matter for students, parents and guardians.
2) East Glendalough School is not responsible for any possible charges that might be incurred during approved school-related use.
3) While virus protection software is used and updated on a regular basis, the School accepts no responsibility for any corruption of personal devices.
4) It is strictly forbidden for students to share login names or passwords or to use another person's account.
5) The School reserves the right to investigate suspected incidents of misbehaviour by accessing the personal devices or social media pages of students. Where there is a

suspicion of inappropriate content being stored on a device the presumption of privacy does not apply.

6) The School can offer advice and counselling to students on dealing with upsetting material. Any member of staff should be contacted to arrange this support. There is also excellent advice on the website www.webwise.ie.

Reviewed and approved by the	Parents' Association Committee:	March 2015
	Student Council:	March 2015
	Teaching Staff:	March 2015
	Board of Management:	March 2015