



**St. Mary's Grammar School, Belfast**

**INTERNET ACCESS**  
**POLICY**

**June 2017**



# St. Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School

## Introduction

The Internet is a worldwide network of computers that contains millions of pages of information. Users are cautioned that many of these pages include offensive, sexually explicit, and inappropriate material. In general, it is difficult to avoid at least some contact with this material while using the Internet. Even innocuous search requests may lead to sites with highly offensive content. Additionally, having an e-mail address on the Internet may lead to receipt of unsolicited e-mail containing offensive content. Users accessing the Internet do so at their own risk and the school is not responsible for material viewed or downloaded by users from the Internet. To minimize these risks, your use of the Internet at St. Mary's is governed by this Policy.

The computer network is the property of St. Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School ("the School") and is to be used for legitimate business purposes. Employees ("users") are provided access to the computer network to assist them in the performance of their jobs. (For the purposes of this Policy the computer network includes the School's internal network and the CLASS system.) All users have a responsibility to use the School's computer resources and the Internet in a professional, lawful and ethical manner.

This Policy has been designed to protect the staff and the School. The Board of Governors has a responsibility to support and educate the staff in the use of the Internet to ensure that staff do not unwittingly get themselves and the School into an activity that may result in either a criminal action or a legal claim being taken.

The Policy explains what the School expects in terms of e-mail and Internet usage.

The Policy states some general rules, do's and don'ts and then identifies 6 areas (pornography, harassment, copyright, contracts, defamation and confidentiality) where legal or criminal problems may arise. Under each section there is an explanation of the potential problems and some rules to help avoid these problems.

## Good Practice

1. Remember the Schools e-mail system is primarily for business use.
2. Note that all e-mail is stored and e-mail (including personal e-mail) may be inspected by the School at any time without notice.
3. Ask yourself before sending an e-mail how you would feel if your message was read out in court. E-mail messages may have to be disclosed in litigation.
4. Make and keep hard copies or disc copies of all important e-mails sent.
5. Keep all passwords secure.
6. Do not impersonate any other person when using e-mail or amend messages received.
7. Do not import any non-text file including files received as e-mail attachments onto your system without first checking them for viruses using the approved software. If you send an e-mail with an attachment you must include the following statement in your message.  
  
“We cannot accept any liability for any loss or damage sustained as a result of software viruses. It is your responsibility to carry out such virus checking as it is necessary before opening any attachment”.
8. Do not deliberately visit, view or download any material from any web site containing sexual or illegal material or material which is offensive in any way whatsoever.
9. Do not download software onto the School’s system without prior permission from the Head of ICT. This includes software and shareware available free on the Internet.

## **Pornography**

### *What is Pornography?*

As there can be no legitimate business use for accessing or transmitting sexually explicit materials at work, the question of whether or not sexual material constitutes pornography is not relevant to the use of the School's e-mail and Internet access.

### *What you must not do*

Do not access or transmit any material with a sexual content.

### *What you must do*

If you accidentally open a questionable web site you should close it immediately and report the time and the web site to the Head of ICT. The system records all activity and, as this activity will be monitored, it is necessary to report in advance in order to eliminate further enquiries.

### *What the school will be doing*

The school currently monitors and examines web sites accessed by the pupils on a daily basis. **From the date of implementation of this policy the web sites accessed by staff will be monitored.**

### *What are the consequences of not following this Policy?*

Accessing and transmitting sexual material may be a criminal offence for which both you and the School could be liable.

The display on screen of sexual material or the transmitting of such material to other people may constitute sexual harassment. See the harassment section of this Policy.

Failure to comply with this Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you, including possible dismissal.

**NB. To download or send pornography or to deliberately view pornography which involves an image of a child or what appears to be an image of a child may be a criminal offence.**

## **Harassment**

### *What is harassment?*

It is the School's Policy that all employees must be allowed to work in an environment free from harassment of any kind. This includes (but is not limited to) sexual harassment, or harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion, politics, disability or race.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of women and men at work. In the context of this Policy this includes sending messages with sexually suggestive material, repeated offensive sexual propositions or abuse of a sexual nature.

*What you must not do*

Do not send abusive messages or messages which contain offensive material.

*What are the consequences of not following this Policy?*

Failure to comply with this Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you. In addition, harassment is a criminal offence for which the harasser may be imprisoned. Victims of harassment may be able to claim damages from the harasser and from the School.

## **Copyright**

*What is Copyright?*

The owner of the copyright has the exclusive right in certain works, such as documents, articles, books, plays and musical compositions, so that they cannot be copied or used in certain other ways without the consent of the copyright owner.

*What you must not do*

Do not download, copy or transmit to third parties the works of others without their permission as this may infringe copyright. Copyright is most likely to be breached when you download material from the Internet or when you copy text or attach it to an e-mail message.

*What are the consequences of not following this Policy?*

Failure to comply with this Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you. In addition, you and the school can be sued by the owner of the copyright for damages for unauthorised use of the copyrighted material.

## **Entering Contracts**

*What is a contract?*

A contract is an agreement between two or more parties to create legal obligations between them. Contracts can be made orally or in writing. Binding contracts can be formed by e-mail.

E-mail may appear informal but you must take care not to enter contractual obligations without the usual care and attention to detail which is necessary to protect both your interests and the interests of the School.

## **Defamation**

*What is defamation?*

Defamation is the publication of a statement which adversely affects a person's or the School's reputation. Publication may be by way of Internet or e-mail.

*What you must not do*

Do not send or circulate, internally or externally, any information which is defamatory. In particular, you must not send or circulate, internally or externally, any information which contains negative comments about an individual, organisation or business without first checking that the contents of the information are accurate.

*What are the consequences of not following this Policy?*

A person, organisation or business defamed may sue you and the School for damages. There is a defence if the information is "true" but the onus is on you or the School to prove the same.

Failure to comply with this Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you, including your dismissal.

## **Confidential information**

*What is confidential information?*

In general terms, confidential information includes any information which is not available to the public.

#### *What you must not do*

Do not send any documents of a highly confidential nature by e-mail, except where they are encrypted and you are authorised to do so. All such messages should have the following statement included in non-encrypted text:

“ This message is confidential and intended only for the addressee. No other person is authorised to decrypt this message and authorised decryption is prohibited and may be unlawful. Unauthorised decryption will not waive privilege or confidentiality.”

E-mails containing information that is in any way sensitive or confidential must include the following statement:

“ The information included in this e-mail is of a confidential nature and is intended only for the addressee. If you are not the intended addressee, any disclosure, copying or distribution by you is prohibited and may be unlawful. Disclosure to any party other than the addressee, whether inadvertent or otherwise, is not intended to waive privilege or confidentiality.”

#### *What are the consequences of not following this Policy?*

Failure to comply with this Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you, including your dismissal.

## **The use of internet video**

#### *What is internet video?*

Internet video is any video clip that is streamed or has been downloaded from an internet site, for example YouTube. Internet video may be used by staff within lessons to enhance teaching and learning.

#### *What you must not do*

You must not use internet video within a lesson without first ensuring that all the guidelines below are strictly adhered to. In particular, you must never permit pupils to view a video if you have not fully reviewed it in advance of the lesson. You must never search for a video in the presence of pupils.

#### *What you must do*

You must review the entire video and the page it is published on in full before it is viewed by the pupils. You are responsible for ensuring that the content of any video you use is fully appropriate for pupils and complies with all aspects of the School Internet Policy and Child Protection Policy. Should you have any doubts whatsoever about the appropriateness of the content of a video, you must not permit pupils to view the video and should discuss your concerns with your Head of Department or your Senior Leadership Team link.

Once you have reviewed the video in full and are satisfied that the content is appropriate, the URL for that video should be copied and pasted into the presentation for the lesson and the link checked before use.

Videos must always have a direct connection to course content and the Scheme of Work. They will only be used to complement and not substitute teaching, typically taking up no more than five minutes within a lesson.

*What are the consequences of not following this Policy?*

Failure to comply with this Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

**NB The use of internet video by staff will be closely monitored on an ongoing basis.**

## **AMENDMENTS**

The school may amend this Policy at any time. Staff will be informed of any amendments.

## **No Expectation of Privacy**

Staff are given computers and Internet access to assist them in the performance of their jobs. Staff should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the School's computer equipment. The computer network is the property of the School and the School is, therefore, obliged to monitor its use.

**Waiver of Privacy rights.** Users expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the School's computer equipment or Internet access. Users must consent to allow school personnel to access and review all materials created, stored, sent or received through any School network or Internet connection.

**Monitoring of computer and Internet usage.** The School has the right to monitor and log any and all aspects of its computer system including, but not limited to, monitoring Internet sites visited by users, monitoring chat and newsgroups, monitoring file downloads, **monitoring internet video usage** and all communications sent and received.

## **Acknowledgment of Understanding of the School's Internet Policy**

I have read and agree to comply with the terms of this Policy governing the use of the School's computer network. I understand that violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including possible dismissal and civil and criminal penalties.

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Signature

Date

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Printed name

<b>Approvals</b>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="113 190 630 324">▪ Signatures: <div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 20px;">Principal _____</div><div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 20px;">Chair of Governors _____</div></li><li data-bbox="113 347 630 392">▪ Date of approval by Governors: _____ / _____ / _____</li><li data-bbox="113 414 630 459">▪ Date of next annual review: _____ / _____ / _____</li></ul>	
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