

Internet / Intranet – Acceptable Use Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 The Internet is a worldwide communication network linking together thousands of computer networks and many millions of users through public and private telecommunication lines.

1.2 The facilities to provide access represent a considerable commitment of Medina House resources in respect of telecommunications, networking, security, software and support as well as significant costs. They also represent a significant risk if they are not used correctly.

1.3 This document is intended to define in a clear and straightforward manner what those risks are and the conditions under which the School's Internet might be used.

2 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all employees and pupils of Medina House School.

2.2 The policy applies equally to the Isle of Wight Council's internal version of the Internet, the Intranet which uses similar technologies and poses similar risks. For ease of reading, the term Internet is used to refer to both services throughout the remainder of this document.

2.3 Medina House School has a separate 'Electronic Mail – Acceptable Use Policy' which covers the use of internal and Internet based e-mail.

3 Policy Updates

3.1 This policy will be amended from time to time in response to changing circumstances as Internet facilities develop and in response to operational and legislative requirements.

3.2 As a condition of use, it is the responsibility of users to ensure that they keep up-to-date with the latest requirements of the policy.

4 User Awareness

4.1 All Internet users will be required to sign the following statement before being allowed access to the Internet:

I have read the School's Internet/Intranet Acceptable Use Policy and fully understand the terms and conditions and agree to abide by them.

I understand that the School's security systems will record for management use all Internet activity undertaken by me, including the addresses of websites visited or attempted to be visited and any material transmitted or received.

I understand that violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, including termination of employment, and could also lead to personal criminal prosecution.

5 Provision of Service

5.1 The School will provide Internet access to all staff who have signed the User Awareness statement.

5.2 The School does however reserve the right to withdraw this facility at the request of the ICT Manager and in the event that the facility becomes uneconomic or is being abused.

5.3 Users must ensure that they use the facility lawfully at all times.

5.4 The Internet access will only be made available through the RM data network because the school can route all traffic through its firewalls and other security systems to protect users and the School from inappropriate material.

5.5 Internet connections from standalone PC's via modems will only be permitted under very special circumstances and must be approved in writing by the Headteacher.

6 Personal Use of Internet

6.1 The School's Internet facility is intended to support the school's legitimate educational and training requirements only.

6.2 The School's Internet facility is not for personal use unless specific agreement has been given in writing by the Head Teacher.

7 Prohibited Uses

7.1 The School's Internet service may not be used for the transmitting, retrieving or storing of any communications or images which are:

7.1.1 Harassing – harassment is unwanted conduct (including insults and 'jokes') which relates to gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, disability or other similar issues.

7.1.2 Defamatory – defamation is the publication of material which adversely affects the reputation of a person or school.

7.1.3 Copyright – copyright means that the owner of such material has the exclusive right to determine how that material might be copied and used. Copyright material may not be transmitted if the owner's permission has not been obtained.

7.1.4 Pornographic – pornographic means any material of a sexual nature. As there can be no possible legitimate business use for accessing or transmitting sexually explicit materials at work, the question of whether or not such material constitutes pornography is not relevant to the use of the School’s Internet services and all such material is prohibited.

7.2 Use of the School’s Internet facilities to deliberately propagate computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses or trap door programmes is prohibited.

7.3 Use of the School’s Internet facilities to disable or overload any computer system or network, or to attempt to disable, defeat or circumvent any system intended to protect the privacy or security of another user is prohibited.

7.4 Users must not install additional Internet or e-mail related software, or change the configuration of existing software without the written authorisation of the School’s ICT Manager.

7.5 Use of the School’s Internet facilities to download or distribute pirated software or data is prohibited.

8 Monitoring

8.1 The School uses special hardware and software to monitor and control the use of the Internet which enables it to record (and if necessary view) all usage of the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, user details, pages attempted, pages accessed, files downloaded, graphic images viewed and all e-mail correspondence.

8.2 Users should not expect the use of the Internet or the contents of files to be private. All usage will be monitored, logged and retained as required to ensure that users are complying with the requirements of this policy and that no misuse is taking place.

9 Untoward Incidents

9.1 The nature of the Internet is such that it may not always be possible to avoid accessing material which is prohibited by the terms of this Acceptable Use Policy.

9.2 Users who are placed in this position should report to the Headteacher immediately so that their systems can be cleaned. Accidental access will not result in disciplinary action but failure to report it may do so.

9.3 Users who believe that the Internet systems are being used in a way which they regard as being offensive, potentially illegal or which otherwise appears to contravene acceptable School policy or statutory requirement should report to the Headteacher.

10 Newsgroups

10.1 Newsgroups offer a wealth of potentially valuable information and advice but can also consume inappropriately large amounts of time and energy. In addition, newsgroup messages often provide links to inappropriate web pages and users should be aware of the risk of inadvertently accessing unacceptable sites by this means.

10.2 Users must not access newsgroups which are not work related.

10.3 Users must not participate in discussions which are politically sensitive or controversial, whether nationally or locally, and users must not give advice or information which they know to be contrary to the School's policies or interests.

10.4 Newsgroups are by definition public forums. Users must therefore not reveal any information which might reasonably be deemed to be sensitive or confidential.

11 Breach of Policy

11.1 This Acceptable Use Policy has been drafted in such a way as to protect both the School and users and any breach of policy will be dealt with in accordance with the School's general disciplinary procedures.

11.2 Failure to adhere to this policy will be considered to be a potentially serious disciplinary offence which could lead to dismissal.

11.3 In addition, users are advised that the following action may also be taken by third parties:

11.3.1 Harassment is a criminal offence for which the harasser can be imprisoned. Victims of harassment may also be able to claim damages from the harasser as well as the County Council.

11.3.2 A person or company may sue individuals as well as the Council for damages if defamation of reputation can be demonstrated.

11.3.3 A copyright owner may sue individuals for damages as well as the Council in the event of breach of copyright.

11.3.4 Accessing and transmitting sexual material may be a criminal offence. The courts may take action against individuals where appropriate.

11.3.5 The School will not hesitate to bring to the attention of the appropriate authorities any use of its systems by users which it believes might be illegal.



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Signed

Date

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