

POLICY ON THE ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET BY PUPILS

1. Use of the Internet

- 1.1. When using the Internet, all pupils must comply with all copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws, and are expected to communicate in a manner consistent with the aims and the ethos of Dominican College.
- 1.2. The Code of Conduct of Dominican College also pertains to the use of the school network. While the use of information and communication technologies is a required aspect of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, access to the Internet and the Learning NI service remains a privilege not a right. It is given to pupils who act in a considerate and responsible manner, and will be withdrawn if they fail to maintain acceptable standards of use.
- 1.3. No Internet user is permitted to:
 - (a) Retrieve, send, copy or display offensive messages or pictures;
 - (b) Use obscene or racist language;
 - (c) Harass, insult or attack others;
 - (d) Damage computers, computer systems or computer networks;
 - (e) Violate copyright laws;
 - (f) Use another user's password;
 - (g) Trespass in another user's folder, work or files;
 - (h) Intentionally waste resources (such as on-line time and consumables);
 - (i) Use the school network for unapproved commercial purposes.
 - (j) Use the school network for private or personal purposes.
- 1.4. Use of Learning NI by pupils of Dominican College must be in support of the aims and objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.
- 1.5. Electronic information handling skills are now fundamental to the preparation of citizens and future employees in the information age. Staff are encouraged to investigate the possibilities provided by access to this electronic information and communication resources, and blend its use, as appropriate, within the curriculum. They will, wherever possible, model appropriate and effective use, and provide guidance and instruction to pupils in the acceptable use of the Internet.

2. Access to the Internet

- 2.1. Pupils will only be given access to the Internet on receipt of a signed pro-forma acknowledging that they have read and understand the school's Policy on the Acceptable Use of the Internet.
- 2.2. Pupils will only be given access to the Internet with the express permission of a parent or guardian.
- 2.3. Pupils in year 8 – 12 will only be given access to the Internet at the request of a teacher, for a specified purpose and for a specified period of time.
- 2.4. Access to the Internet may be withdrawn if a pupil is found to be in breach of the school's Internet Policy. A serious breach of the policy will result in further disciplinary action being taken, including suspension or expulsion. If it is suspected that a criminal offence has been committed the appropriate authorities will be informed.

3. Use of E-Mail by Pupils

- 3.1. Pupils are only permitted to use the e-mail service provided by C2K on the school network.
- 3.2. Use, by pupils, of other web based e-mail providers such as Hotmail is **strictly prohibited**.

4. Filtering for Internet and E-Mail

- 4.1. C2K provide a filtering service for all Internet and e-mail. However, any filtering service, no matter how thorough, can never be comprehensive, and it is essential that all pupils clearly understand the school's Policy on the Acceptable Use of the Internet.
- 4.2. All pupils should be aware that their use of the Internet and e-mail is monitored by C2K, and that any use deemed to be inappropriate will be reported to the Principal.
- 4.3. Auditing of use is based on the unique C2K usernames and passwords. It is essential that pupils do not share these with others under any circumstances.
- 4.4. Pupils will be held accountable for any inappropriate use of the Internet or the e-mail provision made through their username and password.
- 4.5. In the event that an inappropriate website is inadvertently accessed by a pupil, that pupil must: exit the website immediately; note the web address of the offending site; and inform the network manager.

5. Location and Supervision

- 5.1. The school will ensure that access to the Internet provided to pupils is a filtered service. All pupils will be made aware that the school can and does track and record sites visited, the searches made on the Internet and e-mail sent and received by individual pupils.
- 5.2. Internet access for all pupils will only be available on computers that are in highly-used areas of the school such as classrooms, libraries, study rooms, computer suites and media centres. Computers which are connected to the Internet will be in full view of people circulating in the area.
- 5.3. While using the Internet, pupils will, where possible, be supervised. However, when appropriate, A-level pupils may pursue electronic research independent of staff supervision if they have been granted permission. In all cases, pupils will be reminded of their responsibility to use these resources in line with the school's Policy on the Acceptable Use of the Internet.
- 5.4. The school will ensure that all pupils understand how they are to use the Internet appropriately and why the rules exist.
- 5.5. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that pupils are using the system responsibly. While normal privacy is respected and protected by password controls, as with the Internet itself, pupils must not expect files stored on Learning NI or the school network to be absolutely private.

6. Examples of Acceptable and Unacceptable Use of the Internet

6.1. On-line activities which are encouraged include, for example;

- (a) The use of e-mail and computer conferencing for communication between colleagues, between pupil(s) and teacher(s), between pupil(s) and pupil(s), between schools and industry;
- (b) Use of the internet to investigate and research school subjects, cross-curricular themes and topics related to social and personal development;
- (c) Use of the internet to investigate careers and further and higher education;
- (d) The development of pupil's competence in ICT skills and their general research skills.

6.2. On line activities which are not permitted include, for example:

- (a) Searching, viewing and/or retrieving materials that are not related to the aims of the curriculum or future careers;
- (b) Copying, saving and/or redistributing copyright protected material, without approval;
- (c) Subscribe to any service or ordering any goods or services, unless specifically approved by the school;
- (d) Playing on-line computer games or using interactive 'chat' sites.
- (e) Using the network in such a way that it's use by other users is disrupted (for example: down loading large files during peak usage times; sending mass e-mail messages);
- (f) Publishing, sharing or distributing any personal information about other users (such as photographs; home address; e-mail address; phone number, etc.)
- (g) Any use of social networking sites.

7. Internet use at Home

7.1. While in school, teachers will guide pupils toward appropriate materials on the Internet. Outside school, parents or guardians should bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they would normally exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio and other media.

7.2. Appropriate home use of the Internet by children can be educationally beneficial, and can make a useful contribution to home and school work. It should, however, be supervised, and parents should be aware that they are responsible for their children's use of the Internet resources at home. The school will provide parents with advice on the use of the Internet at home on request.