



**St Monica's Catholic Primary School**  
...a small school where big things happen...



## **Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils**

Policy Reviewed:	November 2025
Review Cycle:	2 years
Date of Next Review:	September 2027

**Our computers have internet access to help our learning.  
These rules will help keep us and our computer equipment safe.**

**Pupils:**

- I will use the computers safely at all times.
- I understand that I am responsible for my own actions. I am aware that there is E-Safety software in school which constantly checks computer files and monitors the internet sites I visit.
- Every time I use the computer, I will log on using the username and password that my teacher has told me to use (class account or individual account). I will keep the password a secret.
- I will make sure that I log off the computer when I am finished using it. If I have to leave the computer, I will lock the computer to prevent others from using my account by pressing 'Ctrl, Alt & Delete'.
- I will not use other children's/teacher's accounts or files. I will respect copyright and not copy anyone's work and call it my own.
- If I find an unattended machine logged on under another username I will not continue using the machine – I will log it off immediately.
- I will only use programs that are already on the school computer/notebook/iPad. If I need a new program, I will ask my teacher – I won't try to install it myself!
- I will not bring in software from home and try to use it on the school computers, tablets, laptops, Notebooks, Wii or Nintendo DS etc.
- If I have a problem with the computer, Notebook or I-Pad, I will tell a teacher immediately so that the problem can be fixed – I won't leave it broken for the next person.
- To help protect other pupils and myself, I will immediately tell a teacher about any unpleasant or inappropriate material or messages on the computer/laptop/iPad or anything that makes me feel uncomfortable when I see it.
- I understand that the computers/laptops/iPads are here for school work, and I will only play appropriate games on them if I have permission from my teacher or an adult.
- I will only take appropriate photographs or videos using school equipment (e.g. cameras/I-Pads/videos etc.) when my teacher gives me permission.
- I will not take photographs or videos without the teacher's permission. Photographs or videos taken on personal equipment (e.g. mobile phones etc.) brought in from home is forbidden.
- I will only upload school photographs or videos onto our class computer if my teacher gives me permission.
- I will not copy or attempt to copy school photographs or videos onto a USB stick/Blank CD and use them outside of school.
- I will not upload or attempt to upload photographs or videos of pupils or teachers within school onto the Internet unless given permission by my teacher when part of an educational lesson.
- I will not download or attempt to download software, music or videos from the internet (e.g. I-Tunes) onto our school computers.
- I will not send personal emails while in school. Sending emails and texts on personal equipment (e.g. mobile phones) is forbidden!

- I will only send e-mails to familiar people or schools with permission from my teacher when part of an educational lesson. All e-mails will be checked by a teacher before it is sent. I will be polite and responsible when sending e-mail and I will not forward any chain letters.
- I will be aware of my personal safety when I am communicating online, and I will not share personal information about myself or others.
- I am not allowed to access social networks or chat rooms.
- I will not give my full name, my home address or telephone number to anyone on the Internet or in any e-mail or arrange to meet anyone out of school.
- I will always treat others the same way I would want them to treat me – just as I would when not using the computers. I will not use the computers to harass or bully anyone.
- I can bring mobile phones into school. When bringing mobile phones into school, I must hand it into the office in the morning when entering school and I can collect it from the office at home time. I may use my mobile phone when my teacher gives me permission.

#### **Parent/s and/or Carers:**

- I undertake to read and accept all of the above in support of and on behalf of my child's agreement to it.
- I will discuss internet safety issues with my child and try to ensure that they are fully aware of the risks of internet use and of school policy with regard to the same.
- I accept that in accordance to 'The Education Act 2012' school has the right to search and or delete anything from personal devices if they believe illegal or suspicious activity has taken place.
- I will ensure that I NEVER UPLOAD photographs and/or videos of children of St Monica's Catholic Primary School (other than my own) on to any website including any social media site such as Facebook, Twitter etc.

#### **Communications:**

The following outlines the school policy with regard to email and other online communication between home and school.

All communication must respect the dignity of the recipient

1. Within 5 working days- receipt of an email will be acknowledged (during term time but not over a weekend).
2. Within 5 working days - provide a response to the email by telephone or in writing (including an email). This may include informing the sender that more time is required to provide a full response. If this is the case staff should indicate a timeframe in which a response should be expected.
3. If a member of staff is not able to deal with the email directly then they will pass it on to the most appropriate person and inform the sender that they have done so.
4. Staff will not be expected to monitor or respond to emails out of their normal working hours (including weekends and published school holidays). Whilst parents may compose

emails at all sorts of hours to suit their own needs I would ask that emails are not normally sent outside of a member of staff's normal working hours. Mobile phones and other electronic devices that enable staff to access their school emails when away from school can make it difficult to 'ignore' a message from a parent, leading to unnecessary worry and anxiety on the part of the staff.

5. Whilst this is rare, if a member of staff receives an email which is of an aggressive tone, sets unreasonable demands or could otherwise be interpreted as harassing, they will refer this to a senior line manager in the school, who will decide if consideration needs to be given to dealing with further communication under the schools 'Persistent Complaints and Harassment Policy'.

In recent years, communications between home and school have shifted quite dramatically from pen and paper to email; with email becoming the preferred and predominant mode of communication.

Email provides us with a quick, cheap and easy means of communication. As a result, it is used for such a wide range of communications, it has also become increasingly difficult to distinguish between formal and informal communications.

The ease of communication via email has many advantages but these are proving to have ever diminishing returns, as the expectation for almost instantaneous reply, in a well-informed, considered and timely manner appears to be on the increase, with complaints following when this has not been the case.

As a school our first priority is to deliver high quality teaching and learning. The ability and ease of email communication directly with your child's teacher is a privilege. Many schools would not make this facility available to parents, as frequent requests for updates and information can distract teachers from their primary focus, teaching.

On any one day a teacher will have a plethora of demands on their time including up to five lessons teaching (and tutor time, lunch duties and activities, and after school practices and clubs). Teachers cannot and are not expected to monitor and manage their inbox during lessons or at other times in the day, when they should be planning and preparing for lessons, assessing student work or carrying out school duties.

The school (and you) expect teachers to be fully prepared, focused and engaged with students and supporting their learning. Whilst administration staff, support staff and senior leaders may be able to access emails more routinely, their primary function is to support teachers and students. Constantly monitoring and responding to email leads to what is commonly referred to in the aviation industry as 'task fixation'. In aircraft terms this leads pilots to be so fixated on the task in the flight deck that they forget to look out of the window. Whilst less dramatic, in a school it leads to staff focusing on the immediate task of responding to an email instead of concentrating on the delivering and supporting teaching and learning.

As parents we may feel that it is perfectly reasonable to ask for updates about our child's progress or behaviour. The occasional request might be manageable but if the parent of every child a teacher teaches asks for bespoke feedback just once in a year that would, on

average, generate 190 required responses. In a similar vein parents cannot micro manage their child's education via email.

The school works hard to provide parents with timely and informative information concerning their child's progress throughout the year. Currently these are: four progress and effort reports, one full report and one parent teacher meeting each year. In addition to this staff may also telephone, write or email a parent to inform them of a serious incident or serious ongoing concerns about a child's behaviour or attitude to learning. They would not be expected to maintain a running dialogue about such matters, unless it has been agreed as part of a Pupil Support Plan.

We provide parents with an online system that enables them to view their child's attendance at lessons, behaviour and achievements by simply logging in. Parents are encouraged to use this facility.

### **Other things to consider**

When communicating with the school, please bear in mind that a great many staff are putting their heart and soul, and many, many hours into trying to help our students achieve well. We would never wish to discourage parents from communicating with staff, establishing a relationship and working together. Parental communication is essential, we do not always get it right and we need your feedback to help us to continue to improve.

On occasions staff face criticism over an activity which they may be doing entirely out of goodwill, (be it running a trip, or a team, or a play) and an ill-crafted email from an upset parent, even when the point is justified, can result in hurt being caused and a reluctance from staff to continue to go the extra mile, that we so much appreciate of them.

Likewise, even when a communication is about a core school responsibility, our communications need to be respectful. Couching a point as being 'direct', 'blunt' or 'honest' does not make it any less destructive to a relationship that should be based on trust and mutual respect. This applies to all communication and as staff we need to be just as careful in how we show we value our students and parents. We do not always get it right but we constantly aim to do so and to improve when this is not the case.

Many of you will be facing the same challenges in your own workplace from an increasing expectation of anytime, anywhere communications. Some readers may be of the view that this is simply the way the world works now. However, the school has a duty of care to staff, as it does to students. This includes a responsibility to ensure that the staffs' workload is manageable and does not unreasonably intrude in to their private life.

### **Finally**

There are enough good teachers leaving the profession as a result of not feeling very valued, and there is no need for us to add to this. Indeed the letters and emails of thanks and appreciation that we do receive are very much appreciated. We have an incredibly dedicated team of staff at St Monica's and we want to retain them and make them feel valued. It is therefore essential that we respect them and help them to maintain a sustainable workload. In return, as members of staff of St Monica's, we promise to do our utmost to create a mutually respectful and effective relationship, for the ultimate benefit of our pupils.

Name of Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_