

St Michael's Primary School Background Information for Parents of Primary/Intermediate Students

Dear parent(s)* ,

This background information may be helpful as you read through and discuss the cybersafety use agreement with your child.

There are the sixteen rules to help keep students cybersafe as outlined in the cybersafety use agreement that you have been asked to sign.

- 1. I know I cannot use the school ICT equipment until my parent(s) have signed the use agreement and it has been returned to school.**

All students must have a use agreement signed by their parent. Year 3-6 students sign their use agreements along with their parents. Use agreements are an essential part of cybersafety policy and programmes for schools and other organisations.

- 2. I can only use the computers and other school ICT equipment for my school work.**

This helps to ensure the equipment is available when students need to use it for their learning. It will also help to reduce the likelihood of any inappropriate activities taking place which put the safety of the learning environment at risk.

- 3. If I am unsure whether I am allowed to do something involving ICT, I will ask the teacher first.**

This helps children to take responsibility for their own actions, and seek advice when they are unsure of what to do. It provides an opportunity for the teacher and child to work through an issue, and so avoid the child making an unwise decision which could possibly lead to serious consequences.

- 4. If I have my own user name, I will log on only with that user name. I will not allow anyone else to use my user name.**

The user name is the unique identity by which the network recognises an individual. There are never two users with the same user name and this allows the school to track the activity of any student. A user name could be misused if a student's password was known and then used by others.

- 5. I will not tell anyone else my password.**

Passwords perform two main functions. Firstly, they help to ensure only approved persons can access the school ICT facilities. Secondly, they are used to track how those facilities are used. Knowing how the equipment is being used and by whom, helps the school to maintain a cybersafe environment for all users, and teaches the child the importance of personal security.

- 6. I can only go online or access the Internet at school when a teacher gives permission and an adult is present.**

There must be an educational purpose for children being online or accessing the Internet at school. Having an adult present (teacher or teacher's aide) will help to ensure children's safety.

- 7. I understand that I must not, at any time use the Internet, email, mobile phones or any ICT equipment to be mean, rude, offensive or to bully, harass, or in any way harm anyone else connected to our school, or the school itself, even if it is meant as a 'joke'.**

Unfortunately, along with many benefits, technology has also provided new ways to carry out anti-social activities. Bullying and harassment by text message, for example, is

becoming a major problem in in many countries. Often children become involved in these acts through peer pressure, without thinking of the consequences.

8. While at school, I will not:

- a. Attempt to search for things online I know are not acceptable at our school. This could include anything that is rude or violent or uses unacceptable language such as swearing**
- b. Make any attempt to get around, or bypass, security, monitoring and filtering that is in place at our school.**

The school has a number of steps in place to prevent students accessing inappropriate or illegal material. The students also have an individual role to play in this process by not attempting to access information they know will not be acceptable at school. Disciplinary procedures will result if a student is attempting to bypass school Internet filtering or security systems.

9. If I find anything that upsets me, is mean or rude, or things I know are unacceptable at our school, I will not show others, I will click on the 'minimize tab' or turn off the screen and get a teacher straight away.

Because anyone at all can publish material on the Internet, it does contain material which is inappropriate, and in some cases illegal. The school has taken a number of steps to prevent this material from being accessed. However, there always remains the possibility that a student may inadvertently stumble across something inappropriate. Encouraging the student to tell a teacher immediately if they find something which they suspect may be inappropriate, encourages critical thinking and helps children to take responsibility for their actions and keep themselves and others safe. This way, they contribute to the cybersafety of the school community.

10. I understand that I must not download or copy any files such as music, videos, games or programmes without the permission of a teacher. This is to ensure we are following copyright laws.

Many files available on the Internet are covered by copyright and although they can be easily downloaded, it may be illegal to do so. Sometimes these files can contain malicious content such as viruses, spyware programs or even inappropriate, age-restricted or illegal material.

11. I must have a letter from home and permission from the school before I bring any ICT equipment/device from home. This includes things like mobile phones, mp3 players, games, cameras, and USB drives.

There will probably be little need for students to bring privately owned ICT equipment to school. If there is a need for privately owned ICT to be brought to school permission from the school should be sought beforehand. Parents are also reminded of the school's specific policy on the use of mobile phones at school.

12. I will not connect any device (such as a USB drive, camera or phone) to school ICT or run any software without a teacher's permission. This includes wireless technologies.

Connecting devices and installing software bought from home may cause conflicts with the school ICT systems. The school must also abide by software licensing requirements included with software. This means that if the school has not purchased the software, the school may not be legally entitled to install it.

13. The school cybersafety rules apply to any ICT brought to school, like a mobile phone.

The school will also have additional rules regarding when a mobile phone may be used at school. The rules outlined in this document govern the safe and responsible use of all ICT (refer to rule 7 above).

- 14. I will ask my teacher's permission before I put any personal information online. I will also get permission from any other person involved. Personal information includes: name, address, email address, phone numbers, and photos.**

This reduces the risk of children being contacted by someone who wishes to upset or harm them, or use their identity for purposes which might compromise children's privacy or security online.

- 15. I will respect all school ICT and treat ICT equipment/devices with care. This includes not intentionally disrupting the smooth running of any school ICT systems, not attempting to hack or gain unauthorised access to any system, following all school cybersafety rules, not joining in if other students choose to be irresponsible with ICT, and reporting any breakages/damage to a staff member.**

In addition to promoting student safety, the rules help the school to protect the considerable investments made in expensive ICT equipment. Intentionally disrupting ICT systems will be seen by the school as intentionally setting out to disrupt the learning of others.

- 16. I understand that if I break these rules, the school may need to inform my parent(s). In serious cases the school may take disciplinary action against me. I also understand that my family may be charged for repair costs.**

Depending on the seriousness of the breach, possible school responses could include one or more of the following: a discussion with the student, informing parent(s), loss of ICT privileges, the family possibly having responsibility for repair/replacement costs, the school taking disciplinary action.

*** The term 'parent' used throughout this document also refers to caregivers and legal guardians.**