Educationalists believe in the benefits of curriculum-based internet use. The purpose of the Internet Acceptable Usage Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school’s internet resources, and will be protected from harmful and illegal use of the Internet.

Redwood N.S. will employ a number of strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet.

**These strategies are as follows**:

1. Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP)
2. Education
3. Filtering/Monitoring

**Sanctions**

If a pupil deliberately misuses the internet or email, this will result in disciplinary action, including the withdrawal of access privileges. Parents/guardians will receive written notification of misuse by a pupil. In extreme cases, suspension or expulsion may be deemed necessary.

Redwood N.S. also reserves the right to report any illegal, nuisance or cyber bullying activities to the appropriate authorities. This may relate to incidents that occur both in and out of school hours, if the actions affect or make reference to pupils in the school.

**Internet**

* Internet will be used for educational purposes only.
* Internet sessions will be supervised by a teacher.
* Pupils will never disclose any personal information over the internet.
* Pupils will not intentionally visit any internet site that is deemed inappropriate.
* Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
* Filtering software is used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. (Level 3 NCTE)
* The school will regularly monitor pupils’ internet usage.
* Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety.
* Pupils will be taught to evaluate the content of internet sites.
* Parents will also receive training on internet safety.
* Uploading / downloading materials or images that are not relevant to the studies is in breach of the school’s Acceptable Usage Policy.
* Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues.
* Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
* The use of personal USB’s, external storage devices or CD-ROMS in school requires a teacher’s permission.
* Pupils will observe good “netiquette” (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring a school into disrepute.

**Email**

If pupils are allowed to use email, the following rules will apply:

* Email will be used for educational purposes only.
* Students will only use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher
* Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
* Pupils will not send text messages to or from school email.
* Pupils will not reveal their own or other people’s personal details e.g. addresses, telephone numbers, or pictures via school email.
* Pupils will never arrange to meet someone via school email.
* Sending or receiving email attachments is subject to teacher permission.

**Social Networking**

* Students will not have access to unsecured chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or any other type of unsecured electronic communication forum.
* Social networking sites including Facebook and Twitter are blocked by the School’s Broadband Programme filtration system – level 4.

**Internet Chat**

Students are not permitted to use internet chat rooms.

**School Website**

The ICT co-ordinator, Michelle Hogan (Principal) will manage the publication of material on the school website.

* Personal pupil information, home addresses and contact details will not be published on the school website.
* Class lists will not be published.
* Pupils’ names will not be published beside their photograph.
* Digital photographs, video clips and audio clips will focus on groups and group activities rather than on individual pupils where possible.
* Pupils will be given an opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website under the supervision of teachers to ensure that there is no content uploaded that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
* Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such.
* Permission to publish a student’s work will be sought from pupils/ parents/ guardians. This permission may be withdrawn at any time.
* Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

**Education**

Redwood N.S. will undertake an education programme as part of the SPHE curriculum to educate children on the safe, responsible use of the Internet.

21st century life presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation from which children and young people need to be protected. At the same time they need to learn to recognise and avoid these risks – to become internet wise.

**Resources that may be used to implement this programme include**

* [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) - This is the NCTE’s internet safety initiative.
* PDST – Professional Development Service for Teachers.
* Office of Internet Safety.
* Department of Education & Skills.
* External speakers on Internet Safety

# Filtering

‘Filtering’ is a term used to describe a way of limiting the content of web pages, emails, chat rooms and other electronic data to which users may be exposed. Many browsers have their own built in filtering tool e.g. Google. Google’s search engine has a built-in “Safe Search”. This filter eliminates sites that contain pornography and explicit sexual content from search results.

Redwood N.S. has filtering software. The access to websites from all school computers is monitored and regularly reviewed by the NCCA. Websites are only allowed through following a verification of their suitability.

We have a filter at level 4 – this level is currently used by the vast majority of schools. It gives access to millions of websites but blocks websites that are categorised as personal such as blogs. It also blocks social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

**Legislation**

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

* Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 (Revised 2014)
* Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
* Interception Act 1993
* Video Recordings Act 1989
* The Data Protection Act 1988

**Support Structures**

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

**Distance Learning**

**Guidelines for good online communication in Redwood NS:**

1. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Staff, families and students are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.
3. It is the duty of parents/guardians to supervise children while they are working online and to ensure any content which they are submitting to their teacher is appropriate.
4. Staff members can communicate with pupils and their families via email or through an established app (eg. Seesaw).
5. Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
6. Students and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified (Seesaw, Zoom)
7. For video/Zoom calls, parental permission is implied, as the link to a video call will be communicated via the parent/guardian’s email address. Essentially, by virtue of the pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed.
8. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
9. Redwood NS cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are hacked.

**Guidelines for staff members using online communication methods:**

1. Staff members will communicate with pupils and families during the hours of 8.50am – 2.30pm, where possible.
2. Staff members will have high expectations regarding pupil behaviour, with any communication which takes place online.
3. Staff members will seek to become familiar with apps before using them with pupils.
4. Staff members will report any concerns regarding online behaviour or interactions to school management.
5. Staff members will notify parents/guardians of the date, time and password for a video call via email/textaparent.
6. Staff members will only admit participants to video conferences, if they recognise the email address/username as being connected to a pupil.

**Rules for pupils using online communication methods:**  
For submitting learning:

1. Submit work and pictures that are appropriate - have an adult take a look at your work before you send it.
2. Use kind and friendly words.

For video calls/Zoom:

1. Pictures or recordings of the video call are not allowed.
2. Remember our school rules - they are still in place, even online.
3. Set up your device in a quiet space, with no distractions in the background.
4. Join the video call with your camera on.
5. Raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class.
6. If you have the chance to talk, speak in your normal voice, using kind and friendly words.
7. Show respect by listening to others while they are speaking.
8. Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the video call.
9. Be on time - set a reminder if it helps.
10. Enjoy! Don’t forget to wave hello to everyone when you join!

**Guidelines for parents and guardians:**  
For learning

1. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.
2. Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate.
3. Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils.

For video calls/Zoom

1. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Ensure that the school has the correct email address for inviting you to join apps and meetings.
3. The main purpose of a video call is to maintain a social connection between the school staff and pupils. Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience.
4. Be aware that when participating in group video calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
5. You will automatically enter a waiting room when the code for a Zoom call has been entered. Please note that school staff will only accept users into video call if you can be identified by the display name on your zoom account.
6. Please ensure that your child is on time for a scheduled video, or they may be locked out. Please request to join the Zoom call approximately five minutes before the scheduled start time. This will give school staff time to verify your email address.
7. Make sure to familiarise your child with the software in advance. For video in particular, show them how to mute/unmute and turn the camera on/off.
8. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
9. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call.
10. For detailed information on GDPR and Zoom, please visit <https://zoom.us/privacy>

It is important to note that any breach of the above guidelines will result in a discontinuation of this method of communication. A breach may also result in a person being immediately removed from a meeting or in a meeting being immediately terminated. In this case, the child’s parent will receive a report on the incident.  
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**Communication and Ratification**

This Internet Acceptable Usage Policy will be reviewed in June 2021 or sooner if deemed necessary.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Redwood National School.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Kathleen Gleeson Michelle Hogan Chairperson Principal Redwood NS Redwood NS

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Responsible Internet Use Pupil Undertaking**

**Permission Form**

**Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy. Please sign and return this permission form to the Principal. This policy is also available on the school website** [**www.redwoodns.ie**](http://www.redwoodns.ie)

**Name of Pupil:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Pupil:**

I agree to follow the school’s Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the ICT in Redwood NS. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school. An adult has explained all the details to me.

**Parent / Guardian**

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read and accept the terms of the Redwood NS Acceptable Usage Policy and grant permission for my son or daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet. I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but also that the school cannot be held responsible if pupils access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph

I do not accept the above paragraph

Please tick the appropriate box.

**School Website / Facebook /Twitter/ Social Media**

In relation to the School Website / Facebook / Twitter / Social media, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child’s schoolwork and or photographs may be chosen for inclusion on any of the above. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Usage Policy relating to publishing both the children photographs and their work on the school website.

I accept the above paragraph

I do not accept the above paragraph

Please tick the appropriate box.

**Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Contact Number:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Redwood NS 090 9747186 [www.redwoodns.ie](http://www.redwoodns.ie) [redwoodns@live.ie](mailto:redwoodns@live.ie)

Date:

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Internet Permission Form.

As part of the school’s education programme we offer pupils supervised access to the Internet. This allows student’s access to a large array of online educational resources that we believe can greatly enhance the learning experience.

However, access to and use of the Internet requires responsibility on the part of the user and the school. These responsibilities are outlined in the school’s Acceptable Use Policy (enclosed). It is important that this enclosed document is read carefully and that the permission form is then signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the school.

Although the school takes active steps to promote safe use of the Internet, it recognises the possibility that students may accidentally or deliberately access inappropriate or objectionable material. The school respects each family’s right to decide whether or not to allow their children access to the Internet as defined by the school’s Acceptable Use Policy.

The access to websites from all school laptops and ipads is monitored and regularly reviewed by the NCCA. Websites are only allowed through following a verification of their suitability. We have a filter at level 4 – this level is currently used by the vast majority of schools. It gives access to millions of websites but blocks websites that are categorised as personal such as blogs. It also blocks social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Having read the terms of our school’s Acceptable Use Policy, you may like to take a moment to consider how the Internet is used in your own home, and see if there is any way you could make it safer for your own family.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Hogan.