



## **Acceptable Use Policy**

### **Devised by :**

Louise Caraher (School Principal) and Wendi O'Donoghue (Behaviour Analyst)

### **Rationale**

Saplings Special School for Children with Autism and Complex Needs, Kill, has a duty of care and responsibility when working with children. It is our duty to safeguard and protect our students when it comes to technology and internet usage. It is also our duty to ensure that the property of the school, the property of students and the property of staff remains intact in as far as possible.

### **Staff Phone Usage (See also Staff Mobile Phone Policy)**

Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff in working with children, it is vital that staff be engaged with children at all working times. In this context, access to phones should be limited to urgency only.

#### **Work Calls**

- Calls to parents/guardians should be kept as short as possible. Where a lengthy conversation with parents/guardians is required, appointments should be made to schedule such a class
- Calls to other professionals and organisations should be made in consultation with the Principal and classroom supervision will be arranged where appropriate

#### **Personal Calls**

- In general, personal calls should be carried out during break and lunch times only.
- In cases of urgency, a staff member should use discretion in making calls.
- Incoming personal calls should be reserved for urgent matters, and the Principal should be informed in the morning if a staff member needs to keep their phone on them all day

#### **Mobile Phones**

- Mobile phones are not permitted in the classroom
- In case of urgency, staff should use discretion in making calls or texts
- Texting should follow the rules in relation to calls
- If staff take photos/videos with consent they should delete them immediately once they have printed or uploaded the photos onto school computers.

### **Children's Phones**

- Generally, students are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school, unless it is to be used as a reinforcer. Phone calls and texting are not permitted in school, unless in a teaching task as agreed in a student's IEP.
- A student can work for their mobile phone (for games or apps) as a reinforcer. When the phone is not in use, it will be kept in a safe place e.g. a locker or the student's school bag.
- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
- Pupils should mark their phones clearly with their name and be aware of their own passcode.
- Students should not take unauthorised photos or recordings of other students or staff members on their mobile phone.

### **iPad/ Tablets**

- Students are permitted iPads/ tablets for educational/ communication/ reinforcer use
- In the case of student owned iPads or tablets are only to be used by the student who owns it only.
- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged iPads/tablets.
- The iPad/tablet must have a protective cover if being sent into school.
- The iPad/tablet will travel into school with the student every day and be kept in their school bag when not in use.
- The school may lock an app so that the student cannot click out of it to access games or the internet.

### **Computers and Internet**

The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

- Internet sessions will only be permitted with prior permission from a staff member
- Access will be allowed only to a listed range of approved sites
- Filtering software and or integrated management systems will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material

- The school will regularly monitor and archive pupils Internet usage by checking user files, temporary Internet files and history files.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis
- The use of personal usb keys or CD-ROMs in school requires permission.
- Students will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials
- Students will not upload, download or otherwise transmit material that is copyrighted.
- Students will also use computers for educational tasks and improving typing skills.
- If a student is experiencing challenging behaviour around a computer breaking down or the internet going offline, then an intervention will be put in place for this.
- If a student is choosing computer as their reinforcer continuously it may be necessary to place a limit on the amount of times they can access it each day.
- Students are not permitted to carry laptops from one area to another.

### **Email**

- Students will use approved email accounts under supervision or permission of a teacher, as appropriate.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory, or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will not arrange to meet someone outside school via school email.
- All staff will place a privacy setting on when emailing information regarding a student in line with our Data Protection Policy.

### **Whiteboard**

- Students are only allow access to whiteboard with permission from class teacher or SNA.
- Whiteboard is not for reinforcement

### **DS/Gameboy/Wii (handheld games)**

- Students can work for hand held games as a reinforcer

- Students must keep their hand held games in a safe place such as a locker or their school bag at all other times.
- Students may from time to time share their hand held games or play Wii together.
- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged hand held games.

**Relates to:**

Child Protection  
Health and  
Safety

**Ratification:**

This revised policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management in October 2019. It is envisaged that this policy will be reviewed in October 2022, or should a new circular arise which requires this policy to be updated.

Ratified by Board of Management on: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (chairperson): \_\_\_\_\_