GEOFFREY FIELD INFANT SCHOOL

ELECTRONIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS – ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Introduction

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This policy is designed to enable acceptable use for staff, pupils, governors and visitors.

The school provides a range of ICT resources which are available to staff members, pupils and governors. To ensure the safety of staff, pupils, governors and visitors, it is important that all staff members, pupils, governors and visitors follow the guidelines detailed below.

This policy aims to:

- Promote the professional, ethical, lawful and productive use of the school's ICT systems and infrastructure.
- Define and identify unacceptable use of the school's ICT systems and external systems.
- Educate users about their data security responsibilities.
- Describe why monitoring of the ICT systems may take place.
- Define and identify unacceptable use of social networking sites and school devices.
- Specify the consequences of non-compliance.

This policy applies to staff members, pupils, governors and visitors, and all users of the school's ICT systems are expected to read and understand this policy. To confirm acceptance of the policy, users will sign an Acceptable Use Policy which is attached to this policy (Appendix A & B). Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

The use by staff and monitoring by the school of its electronic communications systems is likely to involve the processing of personal data and is therefore regulated by the Data Protection Act 2018, together with the Employment Practices Data Protection Code issued by the Information Commissioner. Staff are referred to the school's Data Protection Policy for further information.

If you are in doubt and require clarification on any part of this document, please speak to the Headteacher or School Business Manager.

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Provision of ICT Systems

All equipment that constitutes the school's ICT systems is the sole property of the school.

No personal equipment should be connected to or used with the school's ICT systems unless given permission from the Headteacher e.g. mobile phones on school Wi-Fi. Users must not try to install any software on the ICT systems without permission from the Headteacher. If software is installed without permission, it may cause extensive damage to the ICT systems and users could be held personally liable for any costs incurred in rectifying the damage.

The School Business Manager is responsible for purchasing and/or allocating ICT equipment to individuals. Individual laptop/desktop computers or ICT equipment may be removed at any time, without prior warning, for regular maintenance, reallocation or any other operational reason. Maintenance includes, but is not limited to, new software installations, software updates, reconfiguration of settings and computer re-imaging.

Network access and security

Users are not permitted to make any physical alteration, either internally or externally, to a school computer or the network hardware.

All regular users of the ICT systems at the school must first be registered. Following registration, a network user account will be created, consisting of a username, password and a school e-mail address. All passwords should be complex to ensure data and network security (at least 6 characters including numbers, letters and symbols). All user account details are for the exclusive use of the individual to whom they are allocated. Staff are responsible for ensuring their password remains confidential and their account is secure. Passwords must be changed each month and must not be shared with staff other than those required to carry out remedial actions on their account e.g. the SBM.

All users are personally responsible and accountable for all activities carried out under their user account(s). Users must take all reasonable precautions to protect their user account details and must not share them to any other person, except to designated members of staff or the Soft Egg team for the express purposes of system support.

Users must report any security breach or suspected breach of their network, email or application account credentials to the Headteacher or School Business Manager as soon as possible.

Users should only access areas of the school's computer systems to which they have authorised access.

When any computer is left unattended, it must be secured via a cable and padlock to an immovable object and either be logged off or screen locked. Activity that threatens the integrity of the school ICT systems, or activity which attacks or corrupts other systems, is forbidden. Users' internet activity must not compromise the security of the data on the school ICT systems or cause difficulties for any other users.

Under no circumstances should a pupil be allowed to use a staff computer account, unless being directly supervised by the account owner for curriculum purposes.

School Email

Where email is provided, it is for academic and professional use only. The school's email system can be accessed from both the school computers, and via the internet from any computer. Wherever possible, all school related communication must be via the school email address.

The sending of emails is subject to the following rules:

- Language must not include swear words, or be offensive or abusive.
- Emails or attachments of a pornographic, illegal, violent, sexist or racist nature are not permitted.
- The school has strong anti-virus software installed but users should be cautious when opening emails from unknown external sources or where for any reason an email appears suspicious e.g. invites the recipient to open a link to a suspect document or site. If a suspected virus is received it should be reported immediately to the Headteacher or School Business Manager.
- Sending of attachments which contain copyright material to which the school does not have distribution rights is not permitted.
- The use of personal email addresses by staff for any official school business is not permitted.
- The forwarding of any chain messages/emails etc. is not permitted. Spam or junk mail will be blocked and reported to the email provider.
- Any electronic communication which contains any content which could be subject to data protection legislation (e.g. sensitive or personal information) will only be sent using secure and encrypted email or password protection.
- Emails should never contain children's full names either in the subject line or preferably not in the main body of the text. Initials should be used wherever possible. No other personal data should be shared e.g. D.O.B., ethnicity, address, etc.
- Access to school email systems will always take place in accordance to data protection legislation and in line with other appropriate school policies e.g. confidentiality.
- Members of the community must immediately tell a designated member of staff if they receive offensive communication and this will be recorded in the relevant files/records (such as the CPOMS safeguarding system).

- Staff will be encouraged to develop an appropriate work life balance when responding to email.
- Emails sent to external organisations should be written carefully and checked before sending, in the same way as a letter written on school headed paper would be.
- Staff should take care with the content of email messages as incorrect or improper statements can give rise to personal liability of staff and to liability of the school in the same way as the contents of letter or faxes.
- School email addresses and other official contact details will not be used for setting up personal social media accounts.
- Where possible, emails must not contain personal opinions about other individuals e.g. other staff members, children or parents. Descriptions of individuals must be kept in a professional and factual manner

Internet Access

Internet access is provided for academic and professional use, with reasonable personal use being permitted but limited to short periods during recognised break times and must comply with the rules of this policy. Priority must always be given to academic and professional use.

The school's internet connection is filtered, meaning that a large amount of inappropriate material is not accessible. However, on occasions it may be possible to view a website which is inappropriate for use in a school. In this case the website must be reported immediately to the Headteacher or School Business Manager. Due to the international scale and linked nature of internet content it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a school computer or network. Neither the school, nor RBC, can accept liability for any material accessed or any consequences of internet access, if the school guidelines in this policy have been followed.

Staff must not therefore access from the school's system any web page or any files downloaded from the web which could be regarded as illegal, offensive, in bad taste or immoral.

Misuse of the internet may, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence. In particular, misuse of the school e-mail system or inappropriate use of the internet by viewing, accessing, transmitting or downloading any of the following material, or using any of the following facilities, will amount to gross misconduct (this list is not exhaustive):

- Accessing pornographic material (that is writings, pictures, films, video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature), racist or other inappropriate or unlawful materials;
- transmitting a false and/or defamatory statement about any person or organisation;

- sending, receiving, downloading displaying or disseminating material which is discriminatory, offensive, derogatory or may cause offence and embarrassment or harass others;
- transmitting confidential information about the school and any of its staff, students or associated third parties;
- transmitting any other statement which is likely to create any liability (whether criminal or civil, and whether for the employee or for the school);
- downloading or disseminating material in breach of copyright;
- engaging in online chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking sites and online gambling;
- forwarding electronic chain letters and other materials;
- accessing, downloading, storing, transmitting or running any material that presents or could present a risk of harm to a child.

Any such action will be treated very seriously and may result in disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.

Where evidence of misuse is found the school may undertake a more detailed investigation in accordance with our Disciplinary Policy, involving the examination and disclosure of monitoring records to those nominated to undertake the investigation and any witnesses or members of management involved in the disciplinary procedure.

If necessary such information may be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.

Digital cameras

The school encourages the use of digital cameras and video equipment; however, staff should be aware of the following guidelines:

- Photos should only be named with the pupil's name if they are to be accessible in school only. Photos for the website or press must only include the child's first name.
- The use of personal digital cameras in school is not permitted, including those which are integrated into mobile phones.
- All photos should be downloaded to the school network and then deleted from the camera/SD card immediately.
- The use of mobile phones for taking photos of pupils is not permitted.

File Storage

Staff members have their own personal area on the network, as well as access to shared network drives. Any school related work should be stored on one of these network drives,

preferably the shared network drive. Personal materials are not permitted on the network areas. Staff are responsible for ensuring they have rights for the storage of any file in their area, for example copyright music files. Any files stored on removable media must be stored in accordance with the information access and security policy, summarised as follows:

- If information/data has to be transferred it must be saved on an encrypted, password protected, storage device
- No school data is to be stored on a home computer, or un-encrypted storage device as secure remote access to the school system has been arranged.
- No confidential, or school data which is subject to the Data Protection Act, should be transferred off site unless it is sent by secure email.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are permitted in school, with the following restrictions:

- They are not to be used when members of staff are directly supervising or working with children. Whilst members of staff are working in the classroom or offices they should be securely stored in a bag/cupboard/locker.
- Personal mobile phone cameras are not to be used on school trips. The school provides digital cameras for this purpose.
- All phone contact with parents regarding school issues will be through the school's phones. Personal mobile phone numbers and other personal details should not be given to parents at the school.

Use of WhatsApp

WhatsApp is not permitted for use on School issued devices however it is allowed on personal devices for specific school business e.g., GFI Noticeboard & GFI Social Group which are secure groups for staff only and for the purpose of sharing information quickly and securely. School information should not be shared by staff through their own personal WhatsApp accounts.

Social networking

The key requirements are as follows:

- Staff members have a responsibility to protect the reputation of the school, staff and pupils at all times and that they treat colleagues, pupils and associates of the school with professionalism and respect whilst using social networking sites.
- Social networking sites should be used responsibly and users should ensure that neither their personal or professional reputation and/or the school's reputation, nor the reputation of individuals within the school are compromised by inappropriate postings.
- Use of social networking sites for school business is not permitted, unless via an officially recognised school site and with the permission of the Headteacher.

- Members of staff will notify the Headteacher if they consider that any content shared or posted via any information and communications technology, including emails or social networking sites conflicts with their role in the school.
- No school information, communication, documents, videos and/or images should be posted on any personal social networking sites.
- No details or opinions relating to any pupil are to be published on any website.
- Users must not knowingly cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to others (cyber bullying) via social networking sites. Any cyber bullying incidents must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.
- No opinions regarding another member of staff, which could cause offence, are to be posted.
- No photos or videos, which show pupils of the school who are not directly related to the person posting them, should be uploaded to any site other than the school's website.
- No comment, images or other material may be posted anywhere, by any method that may bring the school or, the profession into disrepute.
- Users must not give students/parents access to their area on a social networking site, (for example adding them as a friend on Facebook). If, in exceptional circumstances, users wish to do so, please seek advice from the Headteacher.

Video Conferencing

Staff may be required to use video conferencing to interact with staff, parents, pupils and governors remotely. Staff should ensure they follow good practice when using it including: -

- Only using video conferencing platforms recommended by the school.
- Using a school username.
- Ensuring the password to access the platform is complex.
- Not to share sensitive material over the platform.

Staff should familiarise themselves with the "Guidance Note for Staff on Using Video Conferencing Facilities" for acceptable practice when using video conferencing.

Home Working

Staff may be required to work remotely and should ensure they follow good practice when doing so, including: -

- Ensuring sensitive data is secured away and not shared with family or friends.
- Only using school approved devices and not personal devices.
- To avoid sharing personal data of third parties with others.
- To secure away any work devices safely.

Staff should familiarise themselves with the Guidance Note for Staff on Working From Home" for acceptable practice when working from home.

Monitoring of the ICT Systems

The school may exercise its right to monitor the use of its ICT systems. This includes websites accessed, the interception of school e-mails and the viewing of data stored, where it believes unauthorised use of the school's ICT system is, or may be taking place, or the system is, or may be being used for criminal purposes. Any inappropriate material found will be deleted. Monitoring software is installed to ensure that use of the network is regularly checked by the School Business Manager to ensure there are no pastoral or behaviour concerns or issues of a safeguarding or prevent nature.

Other reasons for monitoring the ICT systems include the need to:

- ensure operational effectiveness of the services provided;
- maintain the systems;
- prevent a breach of the law, this policy, or any other school policy;
- investigate a suspected breach of the law, this policy, or any other school policy.

Failure to Comply with the Policy

Any failure to comply with the policy may result in disciplinary action. Depending upon the severity of the offence, a breach of this policy may be considered gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.

Any unauthorised use of the school's ICT systems, Cloud-based ICT systems, the internet, e-mail and/or social networking site accounts, which the Headteacher considers may amount to a criminal offence or is unlawful shall, without notice to the user concerned, be reported to the police or other relevant authority.

The school reserves the right to audit and/or suspend a user's network, e-mail and/or application account(s) pending an enquiry, without notice to the user concerned or their consent.

Issue Date	Review Date	Issued by
Oct 2025	Oct 2026	N Sibley SBM

Appendix A Acceptable Use Policy for Staff, Governors & Visitors

As a school user of the network resources/equipment I hereby confirm that I have read and understood the Acceptable Use Policy and that I agree to follow the school rules (set out within this policy) on its use. I will use the network/equipment in a responsible way and observe all the restrictions explained in the school's Acceptable Use Policy. If I am in any doubt I will consult the Headteacher or School Business Manager.

I agree to report any misuse of the network to the Headteacher or School Business Manager. Moreover, I agree to report any websites that are available on the school internet that contain inappropriate material to the Headteacher or School Business Manager. I finally agree to ensure that portable equipment such as cameras, iPads or laptops will be kept secured when not in use and to report any lapses in physical security to the Headteacher or School Business Manager.

Specifically when using school devices: -

- I must not use these devices for inappropriate purposes
- I must only access those services I have been given permission to use
- I will not download, use or upload any material which is unsuitable within the school setting or that may cause disruption to the school network.

If I do not comply with the rules, I understand that this may result in loss of access to these resources as well as other disciplinary action. I realise that staff under reasonable suspicion of misuse in terms of time or content may be placed under retrospective investigation or have their usage monitored.

I understand that the school will monitor communications to uphold this policy and to maintain the school's network (as set out within this policy).

Signed ……. Date ……..

Print name ……

Appendix B Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils/Parents

At Geoffrey Field Infant School, we use computers to help us with our learning. The children learn how to send emails, find pictures and search the internet.

Please read the following rules and discuss them with your child. Following these rules will help your child stay safe on the internet both in and out of school.

Visit http://www.kidsmart.org.uk/ for more information about staying safe on the internet.

I will use the computers in school only for school work

I will only go to websites that I know my teacher has approved

I will only email people I know and that my teacher has approved

The messages I send will be polite and sensible

I will not give out my home address or phone number when using email or the internet

I will not look for, save or send anything that could offend others

I will tell a teacher if I see anything I am unhappy with or if I receive a message that I do not like

I will not bring a mobile phone into school

I will be responsible for my behaviour when using ICT in school or at home because I know that these rules are to keep me safe

During parent attended school events photos/videos are permitted but should be for personal use only and solely of my own child. Any images of other pupils will not be shared or posted on public online sites.

Signed Pupil:…….. Signed Parent/Carer:……

Date ……..