Rockbrook School - ICT Acceptable Use Policy

1. Rockbrook is committed to the ethical and moral use of all Information & Communications Technology (ICT)

2. Rockbrook is continually developing and managing the information security environment to comply with the highest standards.

3. Rockbrook is supportive of, and committed to maintaining high standards of information security and views information security as essential to the long-term goals and strategic objectives within the school.

4. Rockbrook wishes to ensure and demonstrate compliance with all relevant legislative, regulatory and contractual requirements.

Purpose & Application

5. The purpose of this ICT Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to define the way in which electronic communications are managed in the school and to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's ICT resources in a safe and effective manner.

6. To promote good practice, and responsible and safe use of the Internet. At all times, the wellbeing and dignity of all students and staff in our school are at the heart of this policy.

7. This ICT Usage Policy applies to the students, employees and staff at Rockbrook Park School and all other persons offered access to school ICT systems (The term 'User ' refers to all) both on and off site, within and outside of normal working hours.

Scope

8. The policy covers the appropriate use of such technology and the school's right to log and monitor any such activity including details such as the content of emails, which sites are visited and what is downloaded. Each user is responsible for being fully aware of the ICT Usage Policy and its implications for personal conduct.

9. As in all their work activities, users are required to use ICT resources in a reasonable, professional, ethical and lawful way.

General Principles

10. Rockbrook Park School's ICT systems, resources and associated applications are intended for activities that support the mission, goals and objectives of the school. This usage is encouraged and supported.

11. The ICT systems, resources and associated applications are to be used in a manner consistent with the school's mission and values and as part of the normal duties of all persons offered access to the school's (ICT) systems.

12. The school's email accounts, Internet identifications and web pages should only be used for appropriate and sanctioned communications.

13. The use of the school's resources and associated applications may be subject to monitoring for security and/or network management reasons and as a result users may also have their access and use restricted.

14. The distribution of any information through the Internet, email and any messaging systems through the school's network are subject to scrutiny by appropriate personnel.

15. It is the responsibility of each member of staff and user to protect the information or information assets under their direct control and to adhere to the established information security policies and procedures when conducting their duties. Breach of information security policy and procedures may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal/expulsion.

16. Users have a personal responsibility to report any information security incidents or suspected weaknesses to their Year Head.

17. Users are asked to report and look for assistance if they access material or receive a message that is inappropriate. They should contact their Year Head.

18. Users must not access, download or send any material through ICT technology which:

    - Is offensive or could give rise to offence being taken by a 'reasonable person'
    - Is illegal
    - Could bring the school into disrepute

19. The use of all ICT systems, resources and associated applications are subject to Irish and European law and any illegal use will be dealt with appropriately through the school's disciplinary process.

20. Rockbrook Park School is committed to ensuring that it operates in compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003. Rockbrook Park School makes every effort to ensure that personnel information is maintained in a manner which is accurate, relevant and is held securely at all times. All those maintaining records on behalf of

the school are asked to ensure that they adhere to the provisions of the Data Protection Acts.

21. The school retains the right to report any actual or potential illegal violations to the relevant State and other Authorities.

Individual Practice

22. **Users will not use the ICT systems to access, download or circulate material** that contains illegal or inappropriate material such as obscene, profane, objectionable or pornographic material or that advocates illegal acts or that advocates violence. This rule will be strictly enforced and is viewed as very serious with potential criminal liabilities arising there from. The Gardaí or other appropriate authority will be informed, where appropriate.

23. **Software and Hardware**: Users should not attempt to disrupt the IT system by interfering with software or hardware. No deliberate attempt must be made to introduce software of any kind on to the system without the expressed permission of a teacher.

24. **Data Storage:** Where available, staff should save their work files on their Google Drive to ensure that it is backed up.

25. **Moving Data Off-site:** Users must show due diligence when transferring, carrying and using any electronic data off the school systems e.g. working on home devices.

26. Rockbrook Park School has a legal obligation to protect its data content and has no ability to control data on personal PCs. Therefore, it cannot be emphasised strongly enough, that the use of USB / Memory sticks to transfer confidential information must be treated with great caution. The use of encrypted USB keys is highly recommended.

27. **Personal gain or profit:** Users may not use the ICT system for unauthorised and unapproved commercial purposes or personal gain or profit.

28. **Users should not subscribe** to electronic services or other contracts on behalf of the school unless with the express authority to do so.

29. **Users will respect the rights of copyright owners.** Copyright infringements occur when one inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright.

30. **The use of photographic images** or film on behalf of the school should respect copyright obligations and be appropriate for use, consistent with the ethos of the school.

31. **Risk of Harassment:** Users will not use the ICT systems to access, download or send any material that could be found to be inappropriate or offensive by others, i.e., material that is obscene, defamatory or which is intended to annoy, harass or intimidate another person or advocates discrimination towards other people. This could be regarded as harassment or bullying.

32. **ICT facilities should not be used** to make or post indecent remarks, proposals or any material which may bring the school into disrepute.

33. **It is not permissible to advertise** or to otherwise support unauthorised or illegal activities.

34. **Inappropriate Language:** Users will not type, record or reproduce obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, racist, threatening or disrespectful language or images on the IT system. Information which could cause damage, danger or disruption will not be posted. Users will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person, group or organisation. Users will not engage in defamatory or personal attack, prejudicial or discriminatory, that distress or annoy another person.

35. Should students cause damage to the ICT system, they are required to bear the cost of repairs/replacement.

The use of Email and other IT based Communications:

There are risks attached to the sending of emails such as:

36. A message may go to persons other than the intended recipient and if confidential or sensitive this could be damaging to the school.

37. Email messages can carry viruses dangerous to a digital devices operations generally.

38. Letters, files and other documents attached to emails may belong to others and there may be copyright implications in sending or receiving them without permission.

39. Email messages written in haste or written carelessly are sent simultaneously and without the opportunity to check or rephrase. This could give rise to legal liability on the school's part such as claims for defamation, etc.

40. An email message may legally bind the school in certain instances without the proper authority being obtained internally.

41. It should be remembered that all personal data contained in emails may be accessible under Data Protection legislation and, furthermore, a substantial portion of emails to Government and other public bodies may be accessible under Freedom of Information legislation.

42. Emails should be regarded as potentially public information which carry a heightened risk of legal liability for the sender, the recipient and the organisations for which they work.

To reduce the risks inherent in the use of email the following guidelines are necessary:

43. Users should only use approved email accounts (i.e. @rockbroo.ie) on the school system for purposes related to their work at Rockbrook Park School.

44. An email should be regarded as a written formal letter, the recipients of which may be much wider than the sender intended. Hence, any defamatory or careless remarks can have very serious consequences as can any indirect innuendo. Inappropriate remarks whether in written form, in cartoon form or otherwise must be avoided, as should any remarks that could be deemed indecent, obscene, sexist, racist or otherwise offensive or in any way in breach of current legislation.

45. Should you receive any offensive, unpleasant, harassing or intimidating messages via the email you are requested to inform the Principal/Deputy Principal.

46. Any important or potentially contentious communication which you have received through email should be printed and a hard copy kept. Where important to do so you should obtain confirmation that the recipient has received your email.

47. Documents prepared for your service users may be attached via the email. However, excerpts from reports other than our own, if substantial, may be in breach of copyright and the author's consent ought to be obtained particularly where taken out of its original context. Information received from one service user / client should not be released to another service user / client without prior consent of the original sender - if in doubt consult your manager.

The Use of Other Technologies

56. Emerging technologies will be examined for educational benefit and a risk assessment will be carried out before use in the school is allowed.

57. Staff should not give out their personal email addresses or any such personal point of contact to students.

58. Please note that any external communication tools such as Twitter/Facebook page whereby you promote your role as a teacher in the school are a special case and must be presented to the Principal.

In general when using ICT systems, users must not

59. Represent personal opinions as those of the school. All staff and other users are instructed to use a disclaimer such as:

"The information in this e-mail is confidential and may be legally privileged. It is intended solely for the addressee. Access to this e-mail by anyone else is unauthorised. If you are not the intended recipient, you are notified that any disclosing, copying, distributing or taking any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. Any views, opinions or advice contained in this e-mail are those of the sending individual and not necessarily those of the school. It is possible for data transmitted by e-mail to be deliberately or accidentally corrupted or intercepted. For this reason where the communication is by e-mail, Rockbrook Park School does not accept any responsibility for any breach of confidence which may arise from the use of this medium."

60. Represent yourself as someone else.

61. Forward chain emails.

62. Waste time by using the Internet and email systems for non-school related activities.

63. The school reserves the right to review, audit, intercept, access and disclose all messages created, received or sent over the electronic mail system for any purpose.

64. Perform any other inappropriate uses identified by the school.

Confidentiality

65. Notwithstanding the school's right to retrieve and read any electronic mail messages, such messages should be treated as confidential by other employees and accessed only by the intended recipient. Employees are not authorised to retrieve or read any email messages that are not sent to them. Any exception to this policy must receive prior approval from the Principal. However, the confidentiality of any message should not be assumed. Even when a message is erased it is still possible to retrieve and read that message. If any breach of our email policy is observed then disciplinary action up to and including dismissal/expulsion may be taken.

66. Users must not upload, download or otherwise transmit commercial, unlicensed software or any other copyrighted materials that belongs to the school or external parties.

67. Users must not reveal, publicise or disclose any information that might be in breach of the Data Protection legislation

68. Users must not reveal or publicise confidential or proprietary information that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, all types of educational or financial information, strategies and plans, databases and the information contained therein or any other information which is deemed the property of the school.

69. Send confidential emails without applying appropriate security protocols.

Security

70. All laptops must have virus detection software installed; users must not attempt to investigate virus programmes themselves.

71. To prevent viruses from being transmitted care must be exercised by users in the downloading of material. It should be from a reliable source and the user must not seek to avoid the standard virus protection measures implemented by the school. Staff must ensure that virus protection on personal devices is up-to-date to avoid brining viruses into the school.

72. It is essential that only software that is authorised, licensed and approved is installed on Rockbrook equipment, and that licence agreements are complied with.

73. Users must not intentionally interfere with the normal operation of the school's ICT systems, resources and associated applications. This includes the distribution of

viruses and sustained high-volume network traffic that substantially hinders other users of the network.

74. It is not permitted to examine, change or use another person's username, password, files or outputs for which no explicit authorisation has been given.

75. Care must be taken that personal digital devices are secure at all times and that no confidential data is stored on them. They should be locked away when not in use and user –IDs or passwords should not be stored with the device.

76. Care must be taken that all documents and IT media are disposed of securely at the end of their life, shredded or sent to secure disposal as appropriate.

77. All laptops in the offices of the school should be monitored regularly to ensure that they are being used in accordance with the stated policy. Where there is any suspicion or doubt a person with specialist knowledge of IT hardware and software should be asked to assess the purposes for which the laptop has been used.

Safeguarding Children

77. Students will be educated in the effective use of the Internet in research, including the skills of knowledge location, retrieval and evaluation. Ensuring students are aware of the SMART rules and are aware of how to use the Internet effectively is the responsibility of all teachers.

78. Teachers must be aware of the regulations regarding the use of internet applications and email and seek to protect students and themselves in this regard.

- Where a device is used by more than one person, each person should be obliged to have a unique username and password, or where this is not possible, to maintain a signed record of the date, time and duration of their use of the device.

- Where a laptop can be accessed by children or young people, it should be accessible only through the use of a username and password unique to each child. Where this is not possible, the children or young people should be obliged to provide a signed record of the date, time and duration of their use of the laptop and their access should be supervised at all times.

- Laptops which can be accessed by children or young people should always employ appropriate filtering software.

- All the laptops in the school are monitored regularly to ensure that they are being used in accordance with the stated policy. Where there is any suspicion or doubt, a person with specialist knowledge of IT hardware and software should be asked to assess the purposes for which the laptop has been used.

- Rockbrook Park School will continuously evaluate the possible ways that students communicate with staff, volunteers and each other, such as via the internet, mobile phones, email using digital and other electronic or information technology.

- It is important to develop guidance to reduce the risks to children that may arise in the course of their use of technology. Such risks include:

    - being groomed online by paedophiles
    - experiencing or perpetrating bullying
    - accessing or being exposed to inappropriate or harmful material
    - having their personal contact details accessed and circulated
    - having personal images uploaded and used without consent.
    - the school needs to consider how its personnel use images (such as photographs and film) of children in publications or on websites.

Protect Your Reputation and your Career

79. It is essential that all personnel and other users adhere to this ICT Usage Policy or risk disciplinary action in line with the school's codes of conduct.

80. Please see form of Acceptance below which should be signed by each user.

81. This policy will be reviewed and updated as required

FORM OF ACCEPTANCE

I have read ICT Usage Policy of Rockbrook Park School and confirm my acceptance and adherence to this document.

Signed: _____

Date: _____