The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school's AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

The Board of Management will review the AUP regularly. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

School's Strategy

The Internet and digital media can help our pupils learn, create and communicate in ways that we would never have imagined in our youth. The online world is very much part of their lives, they are "growing up digitally" with technology embedded in every aspect of their lives. Digital literacy skills are key life skills for children and young people today. They need to be media aware and know how to effectively search for and evaluate online content; know how to protect personal information and reputation; know to respect copyright and intellectual property and know where to get help if problems arise. The Internet is a valuable teaching and learning tool. It can develop children's independent research skills and promote lifelong learning. The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. The school's policy is to look for opportunities across the curriculum to reinforce online safety messages.

Security Measures

- The Irish Schools Broadband Programme provides an integrated set of services to schools which includes broadband connectivity and services including content filtering (see below), webhosting, and security services. These services are managed by the PDST Technology in Education, working closely with the Department of Education and Science and are coordinated and supported by the PDST Service Desk which is the single point of contact for schools for all broadband related issues, providing information, advice and support to schools.

- Content filtering is an essential and integrated element of the broadband service that is provided to schools by the Schools Broadband Programme. The purpose of Content filtering is to ensure (in so far as possible) that inappropriate websites and content are not accessible from within schools. Within the content filtering service provided,

schools are given a choice of six different levels of content filtering so that they can choose a level that best meets their particular situation, age group of students etc. Schools can choose from these six levels, and the chosen level of content filtering is implemented by the Schools Broadband team for the school. Content filtering systems classify websites into different 'categories', and these categories are used to control which category of website is allowed for schools on the different filtering levels. Level one is the most restrictive while level six is the 'widest' level available as it allows access to websites such as Youtube, personal blogging and social networking. (Level 1 is used by a very small number of schools, as it is generally perceived as being a little too restrictive by most schools.) All six levels block access to inappropriate material in categories such as pornography, violence etc. A school may elect to have a different filtering level applied to a limited number of devices within the school. This is known as split level filtering.

- St. Joseph's NS Rathdonnell uses split level filtering. The laptops used by the children in class are set at Level 2. Level 2 allows access to a wide range of educational and other websites but it blocks websites belonging to the 'games' or 'social networking' category.

- Teachers' laptops (which are connected to the Smart Boards) are set at Level 4. Level 4 allows access to the same websites as Level 3, but allows access to 'YouTube', which has become widely used in schools for teaching and learning in the last few years. The Discover Primary Science lessons for example use Youtube as do the Bible Stories videos which the children enjoy. Level 4 also blocks access to websites belonging to the 'personal websites' category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the 'Social Networking' category.

- Internet use by children in school will always be supervised by a teacher and will be part of classwork.

- Filtering software such as the Schools Broadband Programme will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.

- The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage by checking the history for example.

- Students and teachers will be provided with training and information in the area of Internet safety. (e.g. www.webwise.ie)

- 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 memory sticks or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Children are expected to respect computers, hardware, and software and not to intentionally waste limited resources in school such as paper or ink.
- Students will observe good internet practice at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

Use of the Internet

- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will use the Internet for educational purposes only and during class time.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate material or images in accordance with school policy ie the student will immediately minimize the page and report the incident to the class teacher without attracting the attention of other students. The teacher should note the incident.
- A list of appropriate websites will be made available to every teacher. Also a list of educational websites will be saved in the favourites folder on the school computers.
- Pupils will be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- Students will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

School Website / PR

- The school has developed a website reflecting the activities which take place within the school community. Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or class work on the World Wide Web once the content reflects and adheres to the guidelines of our Acceptable Use of Internet Policy. All content, photographs and video clips will be vetted by the Principal and teachers for approval prior to being loaded onto www.rathdonnellns.weebly.com
- The content of the website will be regularly checked to ensure it does not compromise the safety of pupils and staff. The publication of pupils' work will be coordinated by a teacher.

- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
- Photographs, audio and video clips will focus upon group activities. Should any individual photos be included during school activities e.g. in Science Log, pupils will not be identified by name.
- Personal pupil information including surname, home address and contact details will not be included on the website. Photographs will not bear the pupils' surname. Pupils continue to own the copyright on any published work. St. Joseph's NS will ensure that image files are appropriately named when published on the web.

Email

- Students may use approved email accounts under supervision by or with permission from the class teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Children are not allowed to access their own email accounts in school.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the Internet.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school eg use of Skype for geography projects.

Legislation

Information is available on the Internet on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

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

Personal Devices

- Pupils using their own technology in school, such as bringing a mobile phone into class, sending nuisance text messages or the unauthorized taking of images with a mobile phone camera, still or moving is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

Staff

- The Internet is available for Staff personal and professional use. Personal use of the Internet should not occur during class time.

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.
- From time to time parents will receive information and advice regarding Internet safety in the home. Webwise.ie has an excellent section for parents, with advice and a lot of up to the minute information.

Sanctions

- Some material available on the Internet is unsuitable for children and therefore the guidelines in this policy must be adhered to at all times. Access to the Internet will be withdrawn from pupils who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use. Internet access in school includes a strict filtering service yet no filtering service is completely foolproof.
- Procedures are in place should a child accidentally access inappropriate material and also should a child deliberately abuse the use of the Internet in school.
- Intentional misuse of the Internet will result in disciplinary action including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.
- All of these sanctions are in line with our school's discipline policy.

The AUP Policy for St. Joseph's NS was reviewed by the Board of Management in …………………

Chairperson: *Ciarán Brogan*   Date: **29ᵗʰ September 2016**

St. Joseph's N.S. Rathdonnell,
Trentagh, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
074 91 37315

12th October 2016

Dear Parents,

Re: Internet Permission Form

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

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. Webwise.ie may be a useful site to visit.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Grainne Duggan _____

Mrs. Cathy Russell _____

St. Joseph's N.S. Rathdonnell, Trentagh, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
074 91 37315

Permission Form

Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this permission form to the school. If families have more than one child attending, all names and signatures can be included on this one form.

School Name

Name of Pupil(s): _____

Class(es): _____

Student

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school.

Student's Signature: _____ Date:

Student's Signature: _____ Date:

Student's Signature: _____ Date:

Parent/Guardian

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use 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 the school cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph □ I do not accept the above paragraph □

(Please tick as appropriate)

Signature: _____

Date: _____