Introduction
St Patrick’s school supports access by students and staff to a variety of information sources available on a range of Electronic Communications Networks (ECN). These networks include
• Local Area Network (LAN), the network of computers within our school
• St Patrick’s School Intranet
• Internet
• E-mail
It is intended that students at St Patrick’s School will be able to participate safely in a global information environment and learn to use the technologies needed to gain access, responsibly.
St Patrick’s School has:
• a duty of care to protect its students from material on the Internet that is inappropriate for the students’ age group.
• a responsibility to skill students to deal with the wide-range and volume of material available through the Internet.

Background and Rationale
○ The Internet is radically and rapidly changing the way we access information and communicate with people from anywhere on the globe.
○ The Internet is an influential communications tool of the Information Age and it is important that our students learn to participate effectively in the electronic world.
○ The virtual world provided by the Internet presents many opportunities and benefits.

Benefits
○ Access to services provided through the Internet and Intranet will enable St Patrick’s School to provide teaching and learning opportunities otherwise inaccessible, to support staff in carrying out their duties and provide another medium for supplying information to the school community
○ The Internet provides both information sources and communication with peers or experts.
○ Teachers and students can also use the Internet environment to provide an audience for creative works and as a platform for learning information access skills.
○ Information accessed through the Internet is usually the most up to date and relevant available which is of particular benefit to school communities such as ours where geographical isolation can impact on learning opportunities. However global access to information and communication services also presents risks.

Risks
○ Unlike the information in a good encyclopaedia or computer program, the information on the Internet is not well selected or organised.
○ The information provided may sometimes be illegal, dangerous or offensive. Issues of sexual harassment and copyright violation can arise from the inappropriate use of materials on the Internet.
○ Time can easily be wasted by fruitless, wandering or distracting searches.
○ Privacy is not necessarily assured in the use of Internet services. Electronic mail can be intercepted and read by complete strangers, other users of the computer, local systems administrator and staff at the outside service provider. They can also find out what information has been accessed from the World Wide Web.
○ Programs and files arriving via the Internet can carry computer viruses.
○ Computer and network resources can be slowed or stopped by users receiving very large files or large number of files.

These risks can be minimised by appropriate supervision, the use of Internet filters, education and behaviour management. Therefore, access is conditional on users complying with rules outlined in this the St Patrick’s Acceptable Use policy.
Students

Student Internet Access

- All students will have access to Internet resources through the computer lab and classroom computers.
- Internet access for students in years Prep-Four will be under direct teacher supervision and monitored at all times. Students will not deviate from sites specifically chosen by the classroom teacher.
- Internet access for students in years Five–Seven will be closely monitored. Students will conduct internet research within specific teacher guidelines.
- Students will have e-mail access only under direct teacher supervision. All e-mail to and from students is to be screened.
- Children are to be supervised at all times when accessing the Internet.
- A censor management mechanism shall be in place for access to the Internet.

Unacceptable Uses

Use of the computer facilities and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use including not following St Patrick’s ICT policies and procedures, may result in the cancellation of access for an appropriate amount of time. The Principal’s decision will be final.

The following uses are considered unacceptable:

1. Personal Safety

- Students will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, etc.
- Since on a global network it is impossible to screen or filter the content of all data, students may encounter material, which is controversial, and which users, parents, teachers or administrators may consider inappropriate or offensive. Any encounter is to be immediately reported to the supervising teacher.

2. Privacy and safety of others

- Students will not attempt to gain unauthorised access to any other computer system through or go beyond the school authorised access account. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files.

3. System Security

- Students are not to download programs or files without seeking permission from the teacher in charge first. The teacher in charge when in doubt will consult the IT co-coordinator before downloading programs or files.

4. Inappropriate Language

Restrictions against Inappropriate Language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages.

- Students will not use inappropriate, threatening, or disrespectful language.
- Students will not post information that could cause damage, personal attacks, harassment or a danger of disruption.

5. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

Teachers need to be aware of copyright laws with regards to information on the World Wide Web. Teachers must enforce these laws with regard to student material taken from the web.

- Students will acknowledge all sources of information, using bibliographical conventions as set by the classroom teacher.
- All material on the Internet is copyright and subject to Copyright Laws, thus must not be used without express permission. Every attempt must be made to gain permission to utilise material.

Network Etiquette

All users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- be polite in your correspondence with others.
- use appropriate language.
- do not reveal your personal address or phone numbers or those of students or colleagues.
- do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users.