Acceptable Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Policy

1. **Policy Statement**

Noble Park English Language School recognises that the Internet offers huge potential benefits to equip our students with the confidence and skills to access information technology in mainstream schools. It offers wonderful opportunities for students and teachers to contribute to the world community on the web. Social networking spaces such as Facebook and instant messaging tools such as SnapChat are now part of a student’s ‘life on the web’. At Noble Park English Language School students can:

* Explore the world online
* Access rich information resources to support research and investigations
* Communicate and collaborate with people all over the world
* Publish to the web.

Before using the school’s internet, it’s crucial to make sure all users, staff, students and visitors understand what they should and shouldn’t be doing online.

Behaving safely online means that all users should be aware of:

* Protecting privacy and personal information
* Selecting appropriate spaces to work and contribute
* Protecting the privacy of others (this can be sharing personal information or images)
* Being proactive in letting someone know if something is ‘not quite right’. At home this would be a parent or carer, at school a teacher.

These principles of safety and responsibility are not specific for the web but certainly apply to the use of internet at school. Just as in the real world, the virtual world of the internet involves some risks. Noble Park English Language School has developed proactive strategies, including the development of a *Child Safe Policy* for all staff, that help minimise these risks to our students.

1. **Guidelines**

For students the use of the school’s network to access the Internet and Internet services, including electronic mail and the World Wide Web, will be governed by an Acceptable Use Procedures for the Internet.

The Acceptable Use Procedures is intended to encourage responsible action and to reflect a respect for the ability of its adherents to exercise good judgement.

Independent student use of the internet will only be permitted where students and their parents/carers provide written acknowledgement that students agree to act in accordance with the standards of conduct established in the Acceptable Use Agreement. The Acceptable Use Agreement will be signed on enrolment by both students and parents/carers.

Students can expect sanctions if they act irresponsibly and disregard their obligations to other users and the school as the provider of their Internet access. Students must not use the school internet, computers and digital learning devices or the ICT network in breach of a law or to commit an offence. This includes cyber-bullying and sexting, and breaches of copyright.

Staff are required to adhere to the Department’s ICT Acceptable Use Policy, <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/infrastructure/ictacceptableusepolicy.pdfb>, the ***School’s Child Safe Policy*** and the ***Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct***.

1. **Procedures**

***The following procedures must be followed:***

1. The use of the school's network is subject to the Acceptable Use Agreement.  This means that the school’s network can be used only by staff, students and associated individuals (e.g. visiting teachers) and only for or in connection with the educational or administrative functions of the school.
2. The Acceptable Use Agreement is intended to operate within and be consistent with existing school policies and procedures in the Student Engagement Policy and Child Safe Policy.
3. Online safety and security is the shared responsibility of all network users. It is the responsibility of the student to protect his/her password and not divulge it to another person. If a student knows or suspects his/her account has been used by another person, the account holder must notify a teacher immediately. It too is also the responsibility of staff members to report any suspected breaches in security immediately to either the School Principal or the Learning Technology Coordinator.
4. All messages created, sent or retrieved on the school’s network are the property of the school, and should be considered public information. The school reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system as deemed necessary and appropriate. Internet messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images can be disclosed to law enforcement and other third parties without prior consent from the sender.
5. For breeches of the Acceptable Use Agreement students can face a number of consequences depending on the severity of the breech and the context of the situation. More than one consequence may apply for a given offence. Serious or repeated offences will result in stronger penalties.
   * + Removal of network access privileges
     + Removal of email privileges
     + Removal of internet access privileges
     + Removal of printing privileges
     + Paying to replace damaged equipment
     + Other consequences as outlined in the school’s Student Engagement Policy.
6. Bullying and harassment of any kind is prohibited. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual or group’s race’ religion, national origin, physical attributes, or sexual preference will be transmitted. Violations of any guidelines listed above may result in disciplinary action.
7. While the Internet may be largely a self-regulated environment, the general principles of law and community standards still apply to communication and publishing via the Internet. In addition to school penalties, there may be legal or Departmental sanctions for improper use of the Internet.
8. **LINKS AND APPENDICES (including processes related to this policy).**

***Links which are connected with this policy are:***

* NPELS Student Engagement Policy
* NPELS Child Safe Policy
* NPELS Student ICT Acceptable Use Agreement
* <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/infrastructure/ictacceptableusepolicy.pdfb>

1. **EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.