

Awatapu College

Background Information for Parents



Dear parent(s),

[Note: The term 'parent' used throughout this document also refers to caregivers and legal guardians.]

This background information may be helpful as you read through and discuss the cybersafety use agreement with your son/daughter.

These are the seventeen rules to help keep students cybersafe as outlined in the cybersafety use agreement that you and your son/daughter have been asked to sign.

- 1. I cannot use the school ICT equipment until my parent and I have signed the use agreement and it has been returned to school.**

All students must have a use agreement signed by themselves and their parent. Use agreements are an essential part of cybersafety policy and programmes for schools and other organisations.

- 2. If I have my own user name, I will log on only with that user name. I will not allow anyone else to use my user name.**

The user name is the unique identity by which the network recognises an individual. There are never two users with the same user name and this allows the school to track the activity of any student. A user name could be misused if a student's password was known and then used by others.

- 3. I will not tell anyone else my password.**

Passwords perform two main functions. Firstly, they help to ensure only approved persons can access the school ICT facilities. Secondly, they are used to track how those facilities are used. Knowing how the equipment is being used and by whom, helps the school to maintain a cybersafe environment for all users, and teaches the student the importance of personal security.

- 4. While at school or at a school related activity, I will not have any involvement with any ICT material or activity which might put myself or anyone else at risk (e.g. bullying or harassing).**

Unfortunately, along with many benefits, technology has also provided new ways to carry out anti-social activities. Bullying and harassment by text message, for example, is becoming a major problem in New Zealand and in many other countries. Often students become involved in these acts through peer pressure, without thinking of the consequences.

- 5. I understand that I must not at any time use ICT to upset, offend, harass, threaten or in any way harm anyone connected to the school or the school itself, even if it is meant as a joke.**

Harassing or bullying others will not be regarded as a joke by the school.

- 6. I understand that the rules in this agreement also apply to mobile phones. I will only use my mobile phone(s) at the times that I am permitted to during the school day.**

Students and parents are also reminded of the school's specific policy on the use of mobile phones at school.

- 7. I understand that I can only use the Internet at school when a teacher gives permission and there is staff supervision.**

There must be an educational purpose for students to be online or accessing the Internet at school. Having a staff member present will help to ensure student safety.

- 8. While at school, I will not:**

- a. Initiate access, or attempt to access age restricted, or objectionable material**
- b. Download, save or distribute such material by copying, storing, printing or showing to other people**
- c. Make any attempt to get around, or bypass security, monitoring and filtering that is in place at our school.**

The school has a number of steps in place to prevent students accessing inappropriate, age-restricted or illegal material. The students also have an individual role to play in this process by not attempting to access

information they know will not be acceptable at school. Disciplinary procedures will result if a student is attempting to bypass school Internet filtering or security systems.

9. **If I accidentally access inappropriate material, I will not show others. I will close or minimise the window and report the incident to a teacher immediately.**

Because anyone at all can publish material on the Internet, it does contain material which is inappropriate, and in some cases illegal. The school has taken a number of steps to prevent this material from being accessed. However, there always remains the possibility that a student may inadvertently stumble across something inappropriate. Encouraging the student to tell a teacher immediately if they find something which they suspect may be inappropriate, encourages critical thinking and helps students to take responsibility for their actions and keep themselves and others safe. This way, they contribute to the cybersafety of the school community.

10. **I understand that I must not download any files such as music, videos, games or programmes without the permission of a teacher. This makes sure the school complies with the Copyright Act 1994. I also understand that anyone who infringes copyright may be personally liable under this law.**

Many files available on the Internet are covered by copyright and although they can be easily downloaded, it may be illegal to do so. Sometimes these files can contain malicious content such as viruses, spyware programs or even inappropriate, age restricted or illegal material.

11. **I understand that these rules apply to any privately owned ICT equipment/device (such as a laptop, mobile phone, USB drive) I bring to school or a school related activity. Any images or material on such equipment/devices must be appropriate to the school environment.**

Students need to be aware that if they bring any ICT device to school or to a school related event, then all stored content on it must be acceptable and appropriate for the school environment.

12. **I will not connect any device (such as a USB drive, camera or phone) to school ICT or run any software without a teacher's permission. This includes wireless technologies.**

Connecting devices and installing software bought from home may cause conflicts with the school ICT systems. The school must also abide by software licensing requirements included with software. This means that if the school has not purchased the software, the school may not be legally entitled to install that software.

13. **I will ask my teacher's permission before I put any personal information online. I will also get permission from the other person involved.**

This reduces the risk of students being contacted by someone who wishes to upset or harm them, or use their identity for purposes which might compromise student's privacy or security online

14. **I will respect all school ICT and treat ICT equipment/devices with care. This includes not intentionally disrupting the smooth running of any school ICT system, not attempting to hack or gain unauthorised access to any system, following all school cybersafety rules, not joining in if other students choose to be irresponsible with ICT, and reporting any breakages/damage to a staff member.**

In addition to promoting student safety, the rules help the school to protect the considerable investments made in expensive ICT equipment. Intentionally disrupting ICT systems will be seen by the school as intentionally setting out to disrupt the learning of others.

15. **I understand that the school may monitor traffic and material sent and received using the school's ICT network. The school may use filtering and/or monitoring software to restrict access to certain sites and data including email.**

The school has an electronic monitoring system that has the capacity to record Internet use, including user details, time, date, sites visited, length of time viewed and from which computer/ device. The school may also use filtering to restrict access to certain sites.

16. **I understand that the school may audit its computer network, Internet access facilities, computers and other school ICT equipment/devices or commission an independent forensic audit. Auditing of the above items may include any stored content, and all aspects of their use, including email.**

In an audit, all material, files and emails could be checked by the school.

17. **I understand that if I break these rules, the school may need to inform my parent(s). In serious cases the school may take disciplinary action against me. I also understand that my family may be charged for repair costs. If illegal material or activities are involved, it may be necessary for the school to inform the police.**

Depending on the seriousness of the breach, possible school responses could include one or more of the following: a discussion with the student, informing parent(s), loss of ICT privileges, the family possibly having responsibility for repair/replacement costs, the school taking disciplinary action.