



omega
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Student Acceptable Usage Policy

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Review Date and Summary of Changes

Date of review	Summary of changes

Signed By:

Chief Executive Officer

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Chair of the Finance Audit and Risk Committee

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1.Scope

Omega Multi-Academy Trust promotes the use of technology within our schools. The skills this develops will be invaluable in whatever field of work they enter later in life. As a trust we ensure our networks are robust and resilient including DFE approved web filtering to support the safeguarding of students. The acceptable user policy for students supports these values.

A Student Acceptable Usage Policy in schools is important for several reasons: -

- **Promotes Safe and Responsible Technology Use**

The rise of digital tools in the classroom—such as laptops, tablets, and online learning platforms—has made technology integral to modern education. The Acceptable Usage Policy provides clear guidelines about what constitutes acceptable online behaviour, ensuring students use these resources in a way that prioritises safety and responsibility. This includes avoiding risky activities like sharing personal information, downloading unapproved software, or engaging in inappropriate online discussions. By fostering responsible digital behaviour, students are better prepared to navigate the complexities of the internet safely, on and off site.

- **Protects Students**

The internet, while a valuable educational tool, is also full of risks, such as exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying, or inappropriate communications. Our Acceptable Usage Policy acts as a shield, helping to protect students from accessing websites or platforms that could be harmful. It may include provisions around using social media, communicating with peers or teachers online, or accessing content related to violence, hate speech, or explicit material. For staff, the policy ensures that they can enforce safe online practices while maintaining a professional environment. This protection is essential for maintaining a healthy educational atmosphere, both for students and teachers.

- **Encourages Digital Citizenship**

Digital citizenship refers to the responsible use of technology in ways that promote respect, ethical behaviour, and critical thinking online. The Acceptable Usage Policy helps teach students the concept of digital citizenship by emphasizing values such as respecting others' privacy, avoiding plagiarism, understanding the consequences of sharing misinformation, and fostering kindness and civility in online interactions. It also educates students about the long-term impact of their online actions, such as the potential permanence of digital footprints and the importance of maintaining a positive online reputation.

By teaching these values, schools not only help students become responsible users of technology but also prepare them for the digital workforce and society, where these skills are increasingly critical.

Prevents Misuse of Resources

As a trust we invest in expensive technology and infrastructure to support teaching and learning, and an Acceptable Usage Policy helps protect these resources. Without clear guidelines, students may misuse school computers, devices, or networks for non-educational purposes like playing games, streaming media, or accessing inappropriate websites. This can drain bandwidth, distract students from learning, and potentially damage equipment. The Acceptable Usage Policy ensures that technology is used effectively for its intended educational purposes, maximizing the investment and minimizing waste or damage.

- **Establishes Accountability**

One of the most important roles of an Acceptable Usage Policy is to set clear expectations for students. By establishing what is acceptable and what isn't, students have a better understanding of the behaviour that is expected of them when using school resources. This includes the consequences they may face if they breach the policy. Whether it's a warning, loss of internet access, or more serious disciplinary measures, the policy ensures students understand that their actions online have real-world consequences.

The accountability built into the Acceptable Usage Policy encourages students to think critically before engaging in potentially harmful online behaviours. They are more likely to respect the rules when they understand that there are repercussions for violating them. In turn, this helps maintain a positive and respectful digital environment.

- **Supports Effective Learning**

The primary goal of technology use in schools is to support and enhance the learning experience. Without a clear Acceptable Usage Policy in place, distractions can quickly undermine the effectiveness of classroom technology. Students might be tempted to use devices for personal entertainment, causing a loss of focus on educational tasks.

A clear policy ensures that students remain on task, keeping their focus on learning activities that contribute to their academic growth. Whether it's accessing educational videos, collaborating on assignments, or researching information for projects, the Acceptable Usage Policy guides students toward using technology for its intended educational purpose.

Additionally, the policy can also help create an environment where students feel more comfortable using technology, knowing that their behaviour is being monitored and supported by the school. This creates a secure space where students can learn to use technology confidently, preparing them for future digital experiences outside the school environment.

- **Encourages Ethical Use of Online Information**

In an age where information is abundant, it's critical for students to learn how to evaluate and use online resources ethically. The Acceptable Usage Policy often includes guidelines on plagiarism, citation, and respecting intellectual property, teaching students

the importance of giving credit where it's due. This fosters academic integrity and helps students avoid the temptation to copy-paste from sources without proper attribution.

Beyond academic work, this ethical framework encourages students to respect the rights of others online, such as not sharing others' personal data without consent or engaging in digital theft. These ethical standards are crucial as students grow up and participate in an increasingly interconnected, information-driven world.

- **Builds Trust Between Parents, Teachers, and Students**

When parents are aware of a clear Acceptable Usage Policy, it can help them trust that the school is taking steps to protect their children online. It shows that the institution is proactively working to create a safe digital environment for students. Parents can feel more secure in the knowledge that their child is being taught proper online behaviour and that there are mechanisms in place to address any issues that arise.

Additionally, teachers can use the policy to explain to students the importance of behaving responsibly while online. If students understand the rules, they are more likely to feel accountable for their actions, which creates a more cooperative and respectful school community.

2. Definitions

This agreement will set out the rules around using technology and devices, such as laptops and phones, when you are at school.

- **Technology** – this includes any ICT systems at the school, including the internet.
- **School-owned devices** – any devices that are owned by the school that have been given to you to help with your school work, including laptops and tablets.
- **Personal devices** – any device that belongs to you that you bring into school, including mobile phones.

3. Monitoring

The acceptable use policy for pupils outlines the responsibilities and expectations for using ICT facilities and electronic devices within the school. The policy applies to any computer or device connected to the school's network or accessing school resources. The key points include:

- **Adherence to Policy:** Pupils are expected to adhere to the principles outlined in the policy and the Pupil Code of Conduct. They must understand how to use ICT facilities and electronic devices appropriately and stay safe online
- **Monitoring and Compliance:** The school reserves the right to monitor the use of all ICT facilities and electronic devices. Inappropriate use could result in a breach of the school's Data Protection Policy
- **Reporting Concerns:** Pupils are encouraged to report any concerns about social media misuse or other online safety issues to school staff immediately

- **Training and Awareness:** Pupils should seek help from school staff if they are concerned about something they or a peer have experienced online. They are also expected to attend any training on social media use offered by the school

Within the ICT Trust function, ongoing reports will be shared with key stake holders.

Appendix

1.Primary Acceptable Usage Policy

At each primary school within the Omega Multi Academy Trust we know that using technology is an important part of your learning experience. We want everyone to be able to use technology, like the internet and laptops, but it is important that you are safe when you are using technology.

This agreement will set out the rules around using technology and devices, such as laptops and phones, when you are at school. Please read this document carefully and go through it with your parent. Once you are sure that you understand the rules set out in the agreement, please sign your name, or get your parent to sign their name, at the bottom.

If you have any questions about anything in this agreement, ask your teacher.

This is how we stay safe when we use computers or any other IT equipment:

- I will not use the internet without being told to by a member of staff.
- I will keep my passwords secure and will not use other people's passwords.
- I will be cautious of strangers when working online.
- I will not share personal information about myself or others online.
- I will not upload images of myself or others without permission.
- I will not arrange to meet people I have communicated with online.
- I will immediately report any inappropriate material, messages, or anything that makes me uncomfortable online.
- I will report any bad behaviour to a member of staff.
- I understand that the school can monitor my use of ICT and online activities.
- I will respect all computer and IT equipment and report any damage or faults.
- I will respect others' work and not access, copy, move, or remove files.
- I will not use any programs or software without permission.
- I will not open or use email unless a member of staff asks me to.

Online

- I understand that I need permission to be online.
- I will be polite when communicating with others.
- I will not do online what I wouldn't do offline, as in the playground.
- I will not use inappropriate language or make unkind comments.
- I appreciate that others may have different opinions.

- I will not fill in any online forms without staff permission.
- I will not use any web sites I haven't had permission to use.
- I will not upload or download images, music, or videos without permission.
- If I feel uncomfortable at any point I will stop, and report it to a member of staff.

I understand that if I break the rules, I might not be allowed to use the computers or other IT equipment.

2.Secondary Acceptable Usage Policy

At each secondary school within the Omega Multi Academy Trust we know that using technology is an important part of your learning experience. We want everyone to be able to use technology, like the internet and laptops, but it is important that you are safe when you are using technology.

This agreement will set out the rules around using technology and devices, such as laptops, when you are at school. Please read this document carefully and go through it with your parent. Once you are sure that you understand the rules set out in the agreement, please sign your name, or get your parent to sign their name, at the bottom.

If you have any questions about anything in this agreement, speak to your teacher.

Using Technology in School

- I will only use/access IT resources once instructed to do so by a member of staff
- I will only use the school Internet and network for my school work or when a teacher has given permission.
- I will not try to bypass the school's security settings.
- I will always log off my computer when finished.
- I will not look at, change, or delete other people's work or files.
- I will respect all IT equipment, including peripherals and immediately report any issues including broken equipment to a member of staff.

Security, Passwords & Copyright

- I will not share my Internet or network passwords. I will also create a password that uses capital and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols (where appropriate).
- I will not upload or download any pictures, writing, or movies that may cause upset.
- I will not use any copied or copyrighted material in my documents without directly referencing the source.
- I will use non-copyrighted images and music from the Internet when creating documents, presentations, or other media.
- I will not try to alter IT equipment in any way.

Online Behaviour & Safety

- I will not give out my personal details, such as my name, address, school, or phone number on the Internet.
- I will report anything suspicious or anything that upsets me to my teacher.

- I will make sure all my contact with other people at school is responsible.
- I will not cyberbully pupils, teachers, or other members of staff.
- I will not look for or look at unpleasant or inappropriate websites or software apps. I will check with a teacher if I think it might be unsuitable.
- I know that everything I do on the computers at school is recorded and that the school can talk to my parent/guardian if a teacher is worried about my online safety.
- I will follow these rules all the time because I know they are designed to keep me safe.
- I understand that these rules apply when I am externally accessing web-based resources provided by the school.

Agreement

I agree that I have read and understood this agreement and ensure that I will abide by each principle.

Name	
Signature	
Date	