



European School LLC

შპს ევროპული სკოლა

Digital Citizenship Policy



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Digital Citizenship Policy

Table of Contents

Digital Citizenship Policy	2
Rationale	3
Digital Citizenship definition.....	3
Beliefs	3
ES Responsibilities	3
Digital Responsibility	4
User Responsibilities	4
Email	4
Security	5
Downloads	5
Plagiarism	5
Cite your sources.....	5
Be respectful	5
Position on Cyber Bullying and Digital Citizenship.....	6
Digital Wellbeing.....	6
Managing cyberbullying and Education	6
Parental/Guardian Involvement	7
Ongoing Support and Resources.....	7
Periodic Review	7
Standards.....	7
Procedures.....	8
Additional information and resources for teaching digital citizenship	9
Digital Citizenship Curriculum [6]	9
Policies and additional resources	9
Bibliography	10

Rationale

The European School aims to introduce a digital learning culture with clear policies and guidelines, in line with our Mission, Vision and Values, which provides guidance to staff, students, parents and community about what creates a safe, respectful, and caring environment where technologies are used reasonably, safely and wisely for teaching and learning.

This is in line with the mission and vision of the ES, our legal and professional obligations and community expectations. In this context, the aim of this policy is to ensure the wise, safe, responsible and ethical use of technology in the school community [1].

Digital Citizenship definition

As defined by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE, 2018), “Digital citizenship is the ability for students to recognize the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of living, learning and working in an interconnected digital world, and they act and model in ways that are safe, legal and ethical.”

Students who demonstrate digital citizenship [2]:

- develop and manage their digital identity and reputation and are aware of the permanence of their actions in the digital world.
- engage in positive, safe, legal, and ethical behavior when using technology, including social interactions online or when using networked devices.
- demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the rights and obligations of using and sharing intellectual property.
- manage their personal data to maintain digital privacy and security.

Beliefs

- The internet and educational technologies are valuable and very important tools in teaching and learning process.
- The use of the Internet and digital technologies is also important for the informational and administrative activities of the school management and for the professional work of the staff.
- A safe, caring and respectful learning environment involves the appropriate and responsible use of the Internet and digital technologies for learning and communication.
- A responsible digital citizen can think critically and make ethical choices when using the Internet and digital devices, and take care of himself/herself, others, and society when he/she researches, writes, stores, sends data or information, or simply communicates online.
- Digital citizenship is taught in European school, but it also needs to be strengthened within the curriculum of all academic disciplines.

ES Responsibilities

The ES ensures that school owned all computer systems are protected and secure. Email accounts and Microsoft accounts are provided to all students (grades 1-12), staff,

administrators, and faculty and are supported by the IT Department. In order to use the WiFi network, any student is given a voucher that can be used inside the school. In this way, their security and privacy are protected. Teachers and administration can use WiFi internet connection with their own devices as well.

Digital Responsibility

Online/Network users are expected to learn and to accept rules of online network etiquette, as well as rules of schools' policies. These include respect and responsibility as well as avoidance of vulgar language. Try to avoid sarcasm and humor; Harassing, bullying, swearing, vulgarities, threatening or abusive language of any kind is not acceptable.

Websites, Social Networking, blogging, wikis, podcasting, video or other Web 2.0 tools are considered an extension of classroom collaboration and communication. Whether at school or home, any speech that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is also inappropriate in all use of emails, blogs, wikis, podcasts and other Web 2.0 tools. Students using these communication tools are expected to act safely by keeping all personal information out of their posts.

Use of the network for any illegal activities is prohibited. Illegal activities include, but are not limited to: (a) tampering with computer hardware or software, (b) unauthorized entry into computers and files (hacking), (d) knowledgeable vandalism or destruction of equipment, (e) deletion of computer files belonging to someone other than oneself, (f) gambling, (g) posting inappropriate content (including but not limited to images, video, audio and comments) can result in disciplinary consequences as well as potential legal charges [3].

Users should always use the internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner. Users should recognize that among the valuable content online there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should only use trusted sources when conducting research via the internet. Users should always remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want students, parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it cannot be completely retracted and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways the user never intended.

Don't post or share (even privately) inappropriate material. Nothing is truly private online.

User Responsibilities

All network resources require a Username and network password to access. It is the only responsibility of the user to keep his/her password secure and to change the password often. If you feel that your password has been compromised, it is your responsibility to notify the IT Department and request a password change. It is a violation of this agreement for any user to share his/her password or use/share someone else's password.

Email

ES provides users with the privilege of email accounts and MS accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Email accounts are based on Gmail servers and availability and use is restricted based on school policies. If users are provided with email and/or MS accounts,

the account should be used with care. Users should not send personal information or attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origins. Users should use appropriate language and only communicate with other people as allowed by the district policy or the teacher. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage is monitored and archived.

Security

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin. Users should never share personal information. If users believe a computer or mobile device they are using might be infected with a virus, they should alert building IT Department. Users should not attempt to remove the virus themselves or download any programs to help remove the virus.

Downloads

Users should not attempt to download or install programs via the school network or onto school resources unless approved by the IT Department. Users may be able to download other file types, such as images, videos, and files. For the security of the network users should download such files from reliable sites, and only for educational purposes. It is important, however, to remember that devices have limited storage capacity. It will be important for users to manage storage with the understanding that all school-related apps and files take precedent over others.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas as your own. Students are required to give proper credit to all Internet sources used in academic assignments, whether quoted or summarized. This includes all types of media on the Internet, such as, but not limited to, graphics, movies, music, and text. Plagiarism of Internet resources will be dealt with in accordance with existing disciplinary guidelines for plagiarism.

Cite your sources

Cite your sources whenever you are sharing an idea that originated from someone else (even if it is not word for word), it is good practice to cite that source. This applies to discussion forums too. If you read a great thought in your text, share it, but be sure you let your audience know where you saw it first [4].

Be respectful

While it is easier to say hurtful or disrespectful things without standing face-to-face with someone, it is important to remember that your classmates and teachers are real people who are affected by the words you say and write. It is essential to keep in mind the feelings and opinions of others, even if they differ from your own. *If you wouldn't say it to someone's face, don't say it online either.*

Position on Cyber Bullying and Digital Citizenship

- Cyberbullying will not be tolerated and is strictly forbidden.
- Engaging in cyberbullying to harm (physically or emotionally) another person will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges.
- In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime.
- Users should remember that digital activities are monitored and retained.
- Students shall receive age-appropriate education including, but not limited to appropriate online behaviors in social networking sites, chat rooms, electronic communications etc.; the dangers inherent with the online disclosure of personally identifiable information; and, consequences of unlawful activities, including cyberbullying awareness and response, and other unlawful or inappropriate online activities by students

Digital Wellbeing

The European School is committed to fostering digital wellbeing among students, staff, and the school community. Digital wellbeing encompasses a balanced approach to technology use, ensuring that individuals understand and manage the psychological, physical, and social effects of digital interactions. The following guidelines support a healthy digital lifestyle:

- **Screen Time Management:** Students and staff are encouraged to be mindful of their screen time and adopt healthy usage patterns. This includes taking regular breaks, setting time limits on non-academic digital activities, and engaging in offline interactions to maintain balance.
- **Psychological Impact Awareness:** As digital interactions can impact mental health, the school will provide resources to help students recognize the effects of social media, online communication, and prolonged digital use. Workshops and discussions will be held to address the importance of self-care, resilience, and understanding the positive and negative effects of digital connectivity.
- **Balanced Technology Use:** We encourage students and staff to use technology in a way that enriches learning and personal growth, without over-reliance on digital devices. By integrating these practices, we aim to create a school environment that values balanced technology use and promotes overall wellbeing.

Managing cyberbullying and Education

The European School takes a strong stance against cyberbullying and is dedicated to providing support for students who may be affected. Cyberbullying includes using digital communication to harm or intimidate others, which is strictly prohibited and can lead to disciplinary action. To support our students:

- **Support Resources:** Students affected by cyberbullying have access to counseling services and support from the school's pastoral care team. Affected students, parents, or staff members are encouraged to report any incidents to a trusted adult or the school administration.
- **Educational Initiatives:** The school will conduct regular workshops and classroom discussions to raise awareness about the effects of cyberbullying and empower students to stand against it. Topics covered will include identifying cyberbullying behaviors, strategies to handle and report incidents, and promoting respectful online interactions.
- **Community Engagement:** In partnership with parents and guardians, the school aims to build a supportive environment where open discussions about online behavior and mutual respect are prioritized. Educational resources and informational sessions will be available to families to strengthen the community's understanding of cyberbullying prevention.

By addressing digital wellbeing and cyberbullying support, we seek to cultivate a safe, respectful, and healthy digital environment for all members of the school community.

Parental/Guardian Involvement

To foster responsible digital citizenship both in and outside of school, we encourage parental and guardian involvement. Parents can support their children's understanding of digital citizenship by reinforcing key principles at home, such as respecting privacy, identifying reliable sources, and communicating responsibly online. The school will provide guidance to parents on safe internet practices, supporting open discussions about digital behaviors, and modeling respectful online interactions. Through collaborative efforts, we aim to create a consistent message on the importance of responsible technology use across home and school environments.

Ongoing Support and Resources

The European School is committed to supporting the development of digital citizenship skills within our community. To ensure that students, staff, and parents stay informed about best practices, we will provide ongoing resources, including access to relevant workshops, online modules, and informational sessions. These resources aim to deepen understanding, equip individuals with practical skills, and support the shared commitment to a safe, respectful, and ethical digital environment.

Periodic Review

This Digital Citizenship Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure alignment with new technological advancements, legal requirements, and community expectations. Feedback from students, staff, parents, and other stakeholders will be considered in each review to ensure that the policy remains relevant and effective in promoting a safe digital learning environment.

Standards

All members of the school community (e.g. staff, parents, students):

- will use school ICT equipment, such as laptops, mobile phones, tablets, cameras or other mobile devices in the school for educational purposes only;
- will sign a Responsible Use Policy;
- will be trained or briefed on digital citizenship, which reinforces the whole-community approach.
- will use technology responsibly and ethically and not use any device in a manner which may be deemed harmful, objectionable, inappropriate or illegal;
- will comply with laws of copyright, licensing agreements, moral rights or intellectual property, including copying of software, music, videos and images;
- will not interfere with network security, the data of another user or attempt to log into the network with a user name or password of another user;
- will keep usernames and passwords confidential and not share them with anyone else;
- will deny another person access to any device logged in under their own user account;
- will avoid using an ICT device to gain advantage in any form of academic assessment unless so authorised;

- will not identify, discuss, photograph or otherwise publish personal information or personal opinions about school employees, students or the school;
- will seek permission from affected individuals before taking photos, recording sound or videoing for educational purposes;
- will gain written permission from affected individuals before publishing or transmitting photos, recorded sound or video for educational purposes;
- will not encourage, participate or otherwise knowingly support others or share in a prohibited use of school or privately-owned communication technologies on the school site or at any school related activity.
- Where BYOD is in place, students will use their own device and at no point use another student's device [5].



Procedures

- This policy will be communicated to all school community members, including parents.
- This policy applies to students during all school-related activities, including off campus studies, school excursions, field trips, camps and extra-curricular activities.
- Any student in contravention of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary procedures, including being denied access to the ICT system.
- Mobile phones or devices being used by students in contravention of school policy may be confiscated and returned to a parent or guardian at a mutually agreed appointment time.
- The school has the right to check work or data on the school's computer network, email, internet, computers and other school ICT equipment or devices, without obtaining prior consent from a user.
- The school monitors traffic and content sent and received using the school's ICT infrastructures and, from time to time, this will be analysed and monitored to help maintain an optimal learning environment.

Additional information and resources for teaching digital citizenship

Digital Citizenship Curriculum [6]

Topic Key:

					
Media Balance & Well-Being	Privacy & Security	Digital Footprint & Identity	Relationships & Communication	Cyberbullying, Digital Drama, & Hate Speech	News & Media Literacy

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION [7]

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION HANDBOOK [8]

Policies and additional resources

- European School Anti-Bullying Policy
- Procedure for Personal Data Protection
- European School Acceptable Use of ICT Policy
- European School e-Safety Policy
- ES lab guides and regulations
- Technology Handbook for Parents and Students

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