



## Oathall Community College ICT and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy 2012-2013

### Introduction

Oathall Community College recognises that access to technology in school gives students and teachers greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21st-century technology and communication skills. To that end, we provide access to technologies for **student, staff and visitors** use. This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviours that **all users (students, staff and visitors)** are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices at Oathall.

- The college network is intended for educational purposes.
- All activity over the network may be monitored and retained.
- Access to online content via the network will be restricted in accordance with our filtering policies.
- Users are expected to follow the same rules for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of school resources can result in disciplinary sanctions.
- We make a reasonable effort to ensure all users safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of school technologies.
- Users of the network or other technologies are expected to alert a teacher or IT staff immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

### Technologies Covered

Oathall Community College may provide Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more. As new technologies emerge that can enhance learning, Oathall will attempt to provide access to them. The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all available technologies, not just those specifically listed.

### Usage Policies

All technologies provided by Oathall are intended for educational purposes. All users are expected to use good judgment and to follow the specifics of this document as well as the spirit of it: be safe, appropriate, careful and kind; don't try to get around technological protection measures; use good common sense; and ask if you don't know.

### Websites

Oathall provides its users with access to the internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. That access will be restricted in compliance with school filtering policies. Users will be required to use internet search and websites responsibly. Web browsing may be monitored and web activity records may be retained indefinitely.



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Users are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution, and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web. If a site is blocked and a user believes it shouldn't be, the user should follow protocol to alert an IT staff member or submit the site for review.

### **Email**

Oathall will usually provide users with email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Email accounts, should be used with care. Users should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origin; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the college policy or the teacher. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage may be monitored and archived.

### **Learning platforms/Social / Web 2.0 / Collaborative Content**

Recognising that collaboration is essential to education, Oathall provides users with access to web sites or tools that allow communication, collaboration, sharing, and messaging among users. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing, and messaging may be monitored. Users should be careful not to share personally-identifying information online.

### **Mobile devices**

Oathall may provide users with mobile computers or other devices to promote learning both inside and outside of the classroom. Users should abide by the same acceptable use policies when using school devices off the school network as on the school network.

Users are expected to treat these devices with extreme care and caution; these are expensive devices that the school is entrusting to the users care. Users should report any loss, damage, or malfunction to IT staff immediately. Users may be financially accountable for any damage resulting from negligence or misuse.

Use of school-issued mobile devices, including use of the school network, may be monitored.

### **Personally owned mobile devices**

Occasionally, users may be given permission to use their own devices within the classroom and college environment. Users may only use mobile phones or other devices when asked to do so by a teacher or other member of staff. In these circumstances, behaviour rules remain the same. The purchase of a mobile device is not compulsory and there is no expectation that users need to buy a mobile device in order to take part in any activity.

### **Security**

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the 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. If you believe a computer or mobile device you are



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using might be infected with a virus, please alert IT staff. Do not attempt to remove the virus yourself or download any programs to help remove the virus.

### **Downloads**

Users should not download or attempt to download or run .exe programs over the school network or onto school resources. You may be able to download other file types, such as images or videos. For the security of our network, download such files only from reputable sites, and only for educational purposes.

### **Netiquette**

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

### **Plagiarism**

Users should not plagiarise (or use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet. Any copyright restrictions must be followed. Users should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online. Research conducted via the Internet should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.

### **Personal Safety**

If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) immediately. Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognise that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life without parental permission.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying.

Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in these behaviours, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some



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cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained. Any such incidents will be dealt with in line with the college's bullying policy.

### **Limitation of Liability**

Oathall Community College will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware. While Oathall employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness. Oathall will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorised transactions conducted over the school network.

### **Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy**

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions. Behaviour that is not acceptable when spoken or written is equally unacceptable when any form of new technology is used. Violations may result in:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges in extreme cases
- Notification to parents in most cases
- Detention or exclusion from school and school-related activities
- Legal action and/or prosecution

This policy is not exclusive of other school or employment policies and violations may overlap with other policies governing conduct and behaviour in the school and workplace.

### **Examples of Acceptable Use**

I will:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities and research.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behaviour online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits only.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research; ensure there is no copyright infringement.
- Recognise that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.



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### Examples of Unacceptable Use

I will not:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful to myself or others.
- Search inappropriate images or content.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others—staff or students.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Plagiarise content I find online.
- Post personally-identifying information, about myself or others.
- Agree to meet someone I meet online in real life.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, accounts, or content that isn't intended for my use.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.