

Internet Safety Policy for Verbum Dei High School 2011-2012

Introduction

It is the policy of Verbum Dei High School to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Definitions

TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE. The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. OBSCENE, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or
3. Harmful to minors.

HARMFUL TO MINORS. The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

SEXUAL ACT; SEXUAL CONTACT. The terms "sexual act" and "sexual contact" have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

Other Definitions:

SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITE. The term “social networking website” refers to a website which functions as an online community of people who share common interests and activities, and wish to interact with others. Social networking websites generally provide multiple ways for users to interact with each other including blogging, sending messages to other users (both publicly viewable and private), gaming, and chatting.

CHAT ROOM: The term ‘chat room’ refers to a form of communication in which users communicate in real-time. This can include private and publicly viewable messages sent to other users of the chat room. A chat room can also encompass ‘instant messaging’ which is generally a one-on-one, real-time conversation between two individuals.

CYBERBULLYING: The term ‘Cyberbullying’ is simply traditional bullying using electronic media (online, telephone, text messaging, etc.).

Statement of Objective

Verbum Dei is committed to providing its students with technological resources and equipment that a contemporary college preparatory education requires to assist in their education. The school spends considerable funds to enhance the computing systems, and to provide an up-to-date network for students, faculty and staff use. Since access to these resources, to the Internet, and to the local area network is a privilege, and not a right, inappropriate use may result in the revocation of the user privilege and also may result in further disciplinary action.

All of the policies, rules and guidelines in the Student and School Families Handbook apply to computing activities on campus and at student work sites.

Access to Inappropriate Material

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or “Internet filters”) shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information.

Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Verbum Dei High School online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms,

instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications such as a social networking website.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and (c) cyberbullying.

Penalties for Improper Use

Failure to adhere to the Internet Safety Policy and network policies and rules may subject users to warnings, usage restrictions, and disciplinary actions such as the following:

- Suspension or permanent loss of access to the Verbum Dei computer network.
- Disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension and expulsion, depending on the gravity of the offense, at the principal's discretion.
- Involvement of law enforcement agencies.

Inappropriate use of the Internet outside the school may also result in disciplinary action.

Acceptable Use

At the beginning of each school year students and parents are required to read and sign the Computer Network User Agreement and Parent Permission form in order to use the computers on campus. This agreement broadly covers the issues relating to acceptable use of school computers by students.

Appropriate Online Behavior Training

All incoming students are trained on how to behave online in an appropriate manner during their Computer Applications class and during their Corporate Work Study SOAR (Summer Opportunity for Academic Readiness) program. Both of these classes include interacting with others in chat rooms and social networking sites along with the discussions involving cyberbullying.

Adult Usage

The faculty and staff of Verbum Dei High School are also required to adhere to the Internet Safety Policy of Verbum Dei High School. Further, the faculty and staff are required to sign a computer and network user agreement provided by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and to adhere to those requirements. Failure to adhere to the Internet Safety Policy by faculty and staff members may subject users to warnings, usage restrictions, disciplinary actions or legal proceedings.

Supervision and Monitoring

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Verbum Dei High School staff to supervise and monitor usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Children's Internet Protection Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the Director, Information Technology Services or designated representatives.

Adoption

This Internet Safety Policy was adopted by the Verbum Dei High School following normal public notice, on December 9, 2008. It was revised June 1, 2010.