ICT Acceptable Use Policy

Reviewed:	August 2026
Next Review Due:	July 2027
Applies To:	Whole Community
Owner:	Head of School
Approved By:	Chair of Board of Directors

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission
To inspire our children to reach their full potential by fostering curiosity and an interest in learning, awakening their minds and illuminating their world.

Vision
To create an affordable international secondary school with a high standard of education where children learn through practical and project-based work. To develop our students' moral and intellectual capacity, and to encourage creativity and adaptability.

Aim
An education that is broad, balanced and challenging, with an emphasis on developing strong connections to our host country, Uganda.

Values
Desire for lifelong learning; an ability to adapt; be innovative and reflective thinkers; open minded, and empathetic while achieving high academic success according to individual potential

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1. Purpose of the Policy

7Hills is committed to providing students with safe, responsible, and effective access to information and communication technology (ICT). This policy outlines the expectations for the ethical and appropriate use of ICT resources by all users.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure the safe and responsible use of ICT across the school
- protect students through effective online safeguarding
- maintain the integrity and security of school systems and data
- promote professionalism and appropriate digital conduct
- support the ethical use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence

All users are expected to act responsibly, respectfully, safely and with integrity when using ICT systems

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students from Years 7 to 13, all staff and all users accessing school ICT systems.

It covers:

- All school-owned devices and networks.
- Personal devices used on school premises or for schoolwork.
- Internet, email, and online platforms (including Google Workspace, school email accounts, and approved educational applications).
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other technologies.

Additional expectations apply to Years 10–13 due to increased use of laptops, internet research and AI tools.

3. Core Expectations for All Users

All users must use ICT in a way that reflects the values of the school and protects the safety of others. Users are expected to:

- use ICT for legitimate educational or professional purposes
- communicate respectfully and appropriately at all times
- protect personal information and respect the privacy of others
- use only their own login credentials and keep passwords secure
- follow instructions from staff and IT systems regarding safe use
- report any concern, misuse or safeguarding issue immediately

Users must not engage in behaviour that risks harm, disruption or reputational damage to the school.

4. Acceptable Use of ICT Systems

ICT systems must be used in a manner that supports learning, teaching and school operations.

4.1 Students

Students must:

- use ICT for learning purposes and teacher-directed activities
- access only appropriate and authorised content
- submit original work and acknowledge sources appropriately
- follow specific expectations for their year group

4.2 Staff

Staff must:

- use ICT primarily for professional purposes
- maintain high standards of communication and conduct
- ensure all digital interactions reflect safeguarding expectations
- model responsible and appropriate ICT use

Staff are personally responsible for all activity carried out under their accounts.

5. Internet and Digital Communication

Students at 7Hills must ensure the appropriate use of the internet and digital communication:

- use the internet only for educational tasks or teacher-approved activities
- access only age-appropriate and school-appropriate websites
- avoid attempts to bypass school security systems (e.g. VPNs, proxies)
- communicate through approved platforms such as Google Classroom, school email or other approved applications
- not send or post offensive, discriminatory or threatening messages

6. Safeguarding and Online Safety

ICT use is directly linked to safeguarding responsibilities. All users must:

- avoid accessing or sharing harmful, offensive or inappropriate content
- report any content or communication that causes concern
- avoid contact with unknown individuals through school systems
- respect boundaries in all digital communication

Staff must always maintain professional boundaries and must not communicate with students through personal accounts or platforms. Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately in line with school procedures.

7. Data Protection and Confidentiality

All users must handle data responsibly. Confidential or sensitive information must:

- only be accessed where authorised
- only be shared where necessary and appropriate
- be stored securely using approved systems

Staff must ensure that personal data is protected at all times, including when working remotely. Unauthorised access, sharing or loss of data constitutes a serious breach.

This aligns with best practice expectations that ICT use must protect systems and personal data from misuse, loss or unauthorised access.

8. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

AI must be used responsibly and in line with academic integrity.

8.1 Permitted AI Use

- research support (fact-checking, idea generation, summarising)
- practice exercises (language learning, coding examples, revision)
- teacher-approved creative tasks (story prompts, brainstorming)

8.2 Prohibited AI Use

- completing assignments or exam work without teacher permission
- generating essays, reports or solutions to submit as original work
- using AI to create or share inappropriate, harmful or discriminatory content

All AI use must reflect academic integrity and professional judgement, consistent with emerging best practice frameworks.

9. Personal Devices and Mobile Phones

Personal devices may be used only in line with school expectations.

- students must follow year group rules regarding device use
- staff must ensure personal device use does not compromise professionalism or safeguarding
- use of personal devices for capturing images or information must follow school procedures

9.1 Mobile Phones

Any student who brings a phone to school must hand it in at Reception upon arrival. The phone will be kept securely and returned at the end of the school day.

The use of personal devices for capturing images or information relating to students must follow school procedures. Any such data must be transferred to school systems and removed from personal devices promptly.

10. Year Group-Specific Rules

10.1 Years 7–9 (IMYC)

- Only school-issued Kindles may be used.
- No mobile phones, personal tablets, or laptops are allowed during the school day.
- All digital work is to be completed through approved platforms.

10.2 Years 10–11 (IGCSE)

- Students may use laptops for academic purposes.
- All work must be submitted through Google Classroom unless otherwise instructed.
- Mobile phones remain prohibited during the school day.
- Laptops must be kept in lockers when not in use.

10.3 Years 12–13 (A Level)

- Students must bring laptops daily for academic use only.
- Mobile phones are prohibited during the school day.
- All AI use must follow the permitted guidelines in Section 8.

11. Cybersecurity and System Protection

All users must contribute to the protection of school systems. This includes:

- not opening suspicious links or attachments
- reporting potential security threats immediately
- following IT guidance on updates and security practices

Deliberate or negligent actions that compromise system security are treated as serious breaches.

12. Monitoring and Privacy

The school reserves the right to monitor internet usage, device activity and email accounts.
In addition, browsing history, files and communications may be reviewed by authorised staff if misuse is suspected. Students and parents should have no expectation of complete privacy when using school ICT resources.

13. Digital Citizenship and Online Safety

7Hills is committed to developing students as safe, responsible, ethical, informed and active digital citizens. Digital citizenship extends beyond compliance with ICT rules and includes the knowledge, skills, values and judgement required to participate positively and responsibly in digital environments. Students are supported to:

- communicate respectfully, responsibly and inclusively in digital spaces;
- understand their digital rights and responsibilities and respect those of others;
- protect their privacy, personal information and digital identity;
- understand that online activity contributes to a lasting digital footprint and may affect personal wellbeing, relationships, reputation and future opportunities;
- critically evaluate the accuracy, credibility, purpose and potential bias of online information;
- recognise misinformation, disinformation, scams, manipulation and other forms of harmful or misleading online content;
- respect copyright, intellectual property and the ownership of digital content;

- acknowledge sources appropriately and maintain academic integrity when using online resources and artificial intelligence;
- consider the ethical and social consequences of creating, sharing or responding to digital content;
- contribute positively to online communities and report harmful, unsafe or inappropriate online behaviour; and
- maintain a healthy and balanced relationship with technology.

Digital citizenship and online safety are shared responsibilities involving students, staff and families. The school supports the development of these competencies through curriculum learning, pastoral education, staff guidance, age-appropriate awareness activities and communication with parents and guardians.

14. Digital Wellbeing & E-Safety

At 7Hills International School, we recognise the importance of promoting healthy, balanced and mindful use of technology to support students' academic success, personal wellbeing, and social development. As a result, we encourage students to:

- Limit recreational screen time and take regular breaks.
- Report any form of cyberbullying immediately to a teacher or safeguarding lead.
- Never share personal information (address, phone number, passwords) online.
- Be aware of online risks such as scams, phishing, and misinformation.

15. Prohibited Activities

To maintain a safe, respectful and focused learning environment, certain uses of technology and the internet are strictly prohibited at 7Hills. These restrictions are in place to protect students, staff and the wider school community and to ensure compliance with legal, safeguarding, and academic integrity requirements. This includes:

Unacceptable use includes, but is not limited to:

- accessing, viewing or sharing illegal, harmful or inappropriate material
- accessing or distributing violent, extremist or offensive content
- cyberbullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour
- sending or posting offensive, threatening or inappropriate messages
- attempting to bypass school security systems (e.g. VPNs, proxies or filters)
- accessing, modifying or attempting to access data without permission
- sharing confidential or personal information inappropriately
- installing unauthorised software, applications or systems
- damaging, interfering with or attempting to disrupt ICT systems or networks
- using ICT in a way that brings the school into disrepute
- using personal devices to bypass school restrictions or safeguards
- recording, photographing or sharing images of others without consent
- using artificial intelligence to:
    - complete assignments or exam work without teacher permission
    - generate essays, reports or solutions to submit as original work

- create or share harmful, inappropriate or discriminatory content

This list is not exhaustive. The school reserves the right to determine unacceptable use based on professional judgement.

15.1 Personal Devices and Data Handling Expectations

In addition:

- personal devices may only be used in line with school expectations
- students must follow year group rules regarding device use
- staff must ensure personal device use does not compromise professionalism or safeguarding
- any use of personal devices to capture images or information relating to students must follow school procedures
- all such data must be transferred to school systems and removed from personal devices promptly

16. Use of Earphones and Earbuds

To maintain focus, safety and respectful communication, students must not use earphones or earbuds during school hours, unless specifically authorised by a teacher.

- Earphones/earbuds must not be worn in classrooms, corridors or outdoor areas during school time or school events.
- They may only be used under direct teacher supervision for approved educational purposes or when given specific permission by a staff member.
- This rule applies to both wired and wireless devices.
- Students who breach this rule may have their devices temporarily confiscated in line with the school's behaviour policy.

17. Consequences of Misuse

The school adopts a clear and proportionate approach based on severity and frequency.

17.1 Low-Level Misuse

- verbal warning
- temporary restriction of device use
- behaviour recording

17.2 Repeated or Moderate Misuse

- restriction of ICT access
- behaviour sanctions
- parental communication
- closer monitoring

17.3 Serious Misuse

- removal of ICT access
- formal disciplinary action
- safeguarding referral

- involvement of senior leadership
- potential involvement of external agencies

Staff misuse will be addressed through formal disciplinary procedures.

18. Training and Awareness

The school provides guidance and support to ensure all users understand expectations.

- students are taught safe and responsible ICT use
- staff receive training on safeguarding, data protection and ICT conduct

19. Distribution and Access

This policy is available to all staff, students and parents via:

- the school website
- the school Google Drive
- printed copies on request

20. Policy Review and Approval

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required to reflect:

- technological developments
- safeguarding requirements
- CIS expectations
- operational needs

21. Acceptance

All users must confirm that they have read, understood and agreed to this policy.
Access to school ICT systems is conditional upon acceptance.

Acceptable Use Agreement Form - Student Declaration

I have read and understood the 7Hills ICT Acceptable Use Policy. I agree to use all technology in a safe, responsible and respectful manner at all times.

I understand that I must:

- use ICT only for appropriate learning and school-related purposes
- behave respectfully in all online communication and not engage in bullying, harassment or inappropriate behaviour
- protect my own privacy and the privacy of others, and not share personal information or images without permission
- use artificial intelligence and online tools honestly and only as directed by my teachers
- follow all school rules regarding devices, internet use, headphones and digital conduct
- report any unsafe, inappropriate or concerning content or behaviour to a member of staff immediately

I understand that:

- my use of ICT may be monitored by the school
- misuse of ICT will result in disciplinary action and possible restriction of access

Name	Signature	Date

Parent/Guardian Declaration

I have read and discussed the 7Hills ICT Acceptable Use Policy with my child. I understand the expectations placed on students and will support the school in reinforcing safe and responsible use of technology.

I understand that:

- the school will monitor ICT use where appropriate
- misuse may result in sanctions or restricted access to systems
- online safety is a shared responsibility between school and home

Name	Signature	Date

Staff ICT Acceptable Use Declaration - 7Hills International School

Staff Declaration and Agreement

I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the 7Hills International School ICT Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that my use of school ICT systems is a professional responsibility and that I am expected to model appropriate, safe and ethical use at all times.

In particular, I agree that I will:

- use school ICT systems primarily for professional and educational purposes
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries in all digital communication with students
- safeguard all personal, confidential and sensitive information
- ensure that my use of technology supports the safety and wellbeing of students
- follow all guidance relating to data protection, safeguarding and cybersecurity
- use artificial intelligence tools responsibly and in line with school expectations
- report any safeguarding, data protection or security concerns immediately

I understand that:

- all activity on school systems may be monitored
- misuse of ICT systems may result in disciplinary action
- serious breaches may be referred to external authorities

I accept full responsibility for all activity carried out under my account and for ensuring that my conduct reflects the standards expected of a professional member of staff at 7Hills International School.

Staff Details

Full Name	Position	Department

Declaration

I agree to adhere to the 7Hills ICT Acceptable Use Policy and understand the consequences of any breach.

Signature	Date

Line Manager Confirmation

I confirm that this member of staff has been made aware of the ICT Acceptable Use Policy and expectations.

Signature	Date