Middle School Digital Citizenship

A good citizen is someone who upholds and respects the laws of their country, but also acts in an appropriate way. Good citizens respect moral and ethical guidelines and behaviours. They show care and concern for themselves, their neighbours and other members of their communities. The good citizen respects other peoples property, and expects others to do the same for them.

The good digital citizen applies the same rules to the cyber-world. A digital citizen is a person who obeys the legal rules about using digital technologies, and acts with respect and care for themselves, others and property. And in return, they expect the same respect to be shown to them.

There are three key parts to digital citizenship. They are looking after yourself, other people and property.

1. Looking after yourself includes:
* Choosing online names that are suitable and respectful.
* Only inviting people you actually know in the real world to be your friends in the online world.
* Only visiting sites that are appropriate and respecting the rules that websites have about age. Some sites are only for adults. If you wouldn't feel comfortable showing the website to you parents or grandparents then its inappropriate.
* Setting your privacy settings so that only the people you know can see you and your personal information.
* Only putting information online that is appropriate and posting pictures that are suitable. Not everyone seeing your profile or pictures will be friendly.
* Always reporting anything that happens online which makes you feel uncomfortable or unhappy.
* Talking to trusted adults, like your parents and teachers, about your online experiences. This includes both the good and the bad experiences.

2. Looking after others:
* Show you care by not flaming (sending hurtful or inflammatory messages) other people, or forwarding messages that are unkind or inappropriate.
* By not getting involved in conversations that are unkind, mean or bullying.
* By reporting any conversations you see that are unkind, mean or bullying. Imagine if the things being written were about you. If you would find them offensive then they are inappropriate.
* Some websites are disrespectful because they show people behaving inappropriately or illegally – or are racist, bigoted or unkind. Show your respect for others by avoiding these sites. If you visit one by accident, close it and tell your teacher or an adult.
* Show respect for other's privacy by not trying to get into their online spaces without invitation, by not stalking them or copying their pictures.

3. Looking after property:
* By not stealing other people's property. It's easy to download music, games and movies, but piracy (downloading media that you have not bought) is just the name given to stealing online.
* By not sharing the music, movies, games and other software that you own with other people.
* By checking that the information you are using is correct. Anyone can say anything on the web, so you need to check that the research is correct by using reliable sites. When in doubt ask your teacher or your parents.
* By looking after other people's websites, acting appropriately when visiting them, not making changes or vandalising them, and reporting any damage that you finds.

By signing this agreement, I undertake to always act in a manner that is respectful to myself and others, to act appropriately in a moral and ethical manner.

I, agree to follow the principles of digital citizenship outlined in this agreement and accept that failing to follow these will have consequences.

Signed:

Name:
Date: _/ /_