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Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Introduction and Rationale:

This document outlines the school's policy on permitted usage of the internet and the use of personal electronic devices including mobile phones. The policy applies to all internet users of CNS schools and all methods of internet access, including desktop computers, laptop computers, mobile telephony, tablets, personal digital assistants (PDA's) and other devices capable of accessing the internet. The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed. It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP biannually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

Internet Use:

School's Strategy:

The school employs several strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

General:



1. Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher. The 'Teacher' software on iPads ensures that pupils are carefully monitored while using iPads for educational purposes. Every class must use this software when iPads are being used by students.
2. Filtering software (filter level 6) and/or equivalent systems will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
3. The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage.
4. Students and teachers will be provided with training in internet safety (see support structures) via the SPHE curriculum and CPD courses.
5. Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
6. Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
7. The use of personal floppy disks, memory sticks, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
8. Students will observe good 'netiquette' (i.e., etiquette on the Internet) at all times and treat others with respect. Students will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

World Wide Web:

- Teachers will select sites which will support pupils' learning. Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful, or otherwise inappropriate material.
- Students must tell a teacher immediately if they encounter any material that is inappropriate or material that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Students will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information online.
- Students must only download images that are educationally relevant. Downloading any other images is a direct violation of the AUP.
- Students will be made aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

Email:



- Where applicable, students will use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or inappropriate in any way.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

School Website:

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the world wide web in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- Website using facilities such as guest books, noticeboards or weblogs will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain personal details.
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.

The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will not be published on the school website without the parental permission. Video clips may be password protected.

- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use pupils' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Social Media:



- The school will mainly use Instagram as its preferred choice of social media account. The school also has a Twitter/X account which is used sparingly (mainly to enter competitions only available on that platform).
- The school's Instagram account is to be kept on 'private mode'. It will only follow other educationally relevant pages (e.g., other schools, local companies, local sports and youth clubs etc.). Followers will only be accepted if they are family members of students and staff, staff members themselves, or the aforementioned educationally relevant pages.
- The school's Instagram will refrain from posting isolated pictures where children are clearly identifiable and instead focus on group pictures and examples of the work and activities being carried out in the school. On the rare occasions where student faces are posted, it will be first checked that the parents of the child in question have given permission for their child's image to be shared online.
- Photos will now be stored and shared via Aladdin Frame. Aladdin Frame is a photo management system which will allow school staff to securely take photos of student work and activities using the Aladdin Frame dedicated camera app. All photos will automatically bypass the camera roll on personal devices and be stored directly and securely in Aladdin. Any photographs that will be shared in future will be based on photo permissions collected from parents.

Whole Class Internet Sessions/Browsing:

- The use of blogs, social networking sites, instant messaging and/or chat rooms may be used on a whole class basis at the teacher's discretion. This will be done on the interactive whiteboard and will be for educational purposes only.
- At times, teachers may wish to use images to inform teaching. If carrying out an image search using a search engine e.g. Google images, teachers will ensure that their interactive whiteboards are set to 'no show'. This will ensure that the students are not exposed to any inappropriate results. The teacher may then deselect the 'no show' button when he/she has found an appropriate image to inform his/her teaching.
- YouTube is a video sharing forum and, at teacher discretion, is permitted for educational/recreational use in whole class settings. When teachers are conducting a video search using YouTube, teachers must ensure that their interactive whiteboards are set to 'no show' and that the audio is switched off/muted. This will ensure that the students are not exposed to any inappropriate results/advertisements. The teacher may then deselect the 'no show' button and switch on/unmute the audio when he/she has found an appropriate video to inform



his/her teaching or for recreational purposes. Teachers will have previewed any video segment in advance of showing it to the whole class.

- Pupils may use AI tools *only* under teacher supervision and for designated tasks. Any AI tool being used by children must first be previewed by the school's IT committee to ensure that it is appropriate and aligns with the values of the school. The generating of AI images by students is prohibited under any circumstances.

Digital Wellbeing

In an increasingly digital world, Scoil Aoife acknowledges the importance of limiting pupil access to screens and technological devices to protect their wellbeing. Teachers will be encouraged to limit the amount of time their students are using devices with screens and accessing the internet during lessons. The following steps will be taken by the school:

- Teachers will only show videos that are educationally relevant and will ensure no advertisements are displayed on interactive whiteboards to pupils. Films may be shown as a whole class treat on special occasions.
- Teachers will be encouraged to limit lessons in which digital devices are used by students.
- Teachers will pre-check websites and apps they are planning to use during a lesson to confirm their suitability.
- Children will be encouraged to report any inappropriate content they may come across to staff.

GDPR

As part of the AUP, the school will be GPDR compliant at all times when using digital technologies to store sensitive information of students. The following steps are being taken to ensure compliance with GDPR.

- Any sensitive information relating to a student will be stored in a password protected document.
- Once the information is no longer needed, it will be erased from file.
- To protect a child's anonymity, an initial will be used instead of names on certain documents.

Communication Technologies:



Communication Technologies	Permitted	Conditions	Permitted with staff and parent oversight	Not permitted
Mobile Phones		Mobile phones may be brought to school by students from 3rd to 6th Class (must be off during school)	✓	
		Use of mobile phones in lessons		✓
		Use of mobile phones in social time		✓
Hand-held/wearable smart technologies		Use of handheld devices e.g. PDAs, PSPs, Smart Watches/ wearables		✓
Recording		Taking photos/videos/ recording on mobile phones or other camera/ smart devices		✓
Communication Portals		Use of personal email addresses in school, or on school network		✓
		Use of chat rooms / facilities		✓
		Use of instant messaging		✓



		Use of social networking sites		✓
AI tools		Only under teacher supervision and for designated tasks.	✓	
Generating AI images		Not Permitted	X	✓

Mobile Phone Use Rationale:

- Pupils from 3rd – 6th class, whose parents wish them to bring a mobile phone to school, must sign the attached request form and this form must be returned to the school and kept in the child’s file. This permission will be kept on file.
- If a parent has given permission for their child to have a mobile phone during school hours, pupils and their parents / guardians must first read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy.
- This AUP Policy applies to pupils during school trips and extracurricular activities.

Mobile Phone Safety and Security:

- Scoil Aoife CNS accepts that some parents who allow their children to walk / cycle to and from school alone may give their child a mobile phone to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety and to allow them to contact home.
- It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone may give parents reassurance that they can speak with their children quickly while children are on their way to or from school.
- Where parents / guardians propose to provide mobile phones to their children, they should first satisfy themselves that it is absolutely necessary for them to do so to ensure their child’s safety.

Mobile Phone Responsibility:

- It is the responsibility of students (3rd – 6th class) who have permission to bring a mobile phone to school, to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this policy.
- Permission to have a mobile phone at school or while under the school’s supervision is contingent upon parents / guardians signing the Consent Form attached to this policy and permission being granted by the principal teacher.

- If a student disrespects the Acceptable Use policy, the principal has the right to revoke permission for the child to bring a mobile phone to school. In such cases, parents will be called to a meeting with the child's class teacher and/or the principal. Arrangements will be made for the collection of the device.

Acceptable Uses of Mobile Phone:

- If a child is granted permission to bring a mobile phone to school, it must be powered off during school hours, including break times and must be kept in the child's school bag at all times.
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school telephone remains the appropriate and quickest point of contact.
- Parents should never contact their child via mobile phone during school hours.

Unacceptable Uses of Mobile Phones

- Children's mobile phones must be powered off at all times during school hours. It is therefore in breach of school rules for children to disrupt the school day by phones ringing or beeping.
- This also applies to school trips and other supervised out-of-school activities.
- Should there be any disruption during the school day caused by a pupil's mobile phone, the pupil responsible may face disciplinary action under the school's Code of Behaviour.

Theft or Damage of Mobile Phones:

- The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones on the school premises or while travelling to and from school.
- Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be given to a teacher.
- It is strongly advised by the school but ultimately the responsibility of parents/guardians that pupils use passwords or pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls are not made on their phones. Pupils should keep their passwords / pin numbers confidential.

Inappropriate Conduct of Mobile Phones, Personal Communication Technologies Electronic and Personal Electronic Devices:

- Pupils using mobile phones to bully or harass other pupils will face disciplinary actions under the school's Code of Behaviour, whether this happens during the school day or outside of school.



- Any pupil who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language towards another pupil while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary actions under the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Pupils with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks on other pupils, harass other pupils or post private information about other pupils using phone calls, SMS, WhatsApp, Snapchat, images, videos or social media posts. e.g. YouTube, Facebook, Instagram or any other form of social media.
- Any pupil who feels threatened or disturbed by any message or phone call they receive should report this immediately to a teacher (if it happens at school or on school-related activities) or to a parent / guardian (if it happens outside of school).
- Non-observance of these rules may result in the mobile phone being confiscated and privileges restricted or withdrawn.
- If the mobile phone is confiscated and the parent will have to attend a meeting with the child's class teacher and/or the principal to collect the device.
- Any other Communication Technologies or Electronic devices brought to school will be confiscated and the parent will have to attend a meeting with the child's class teacher and/or the principal to collect the device.

Legislation:

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the internet which teachers and parents should familiarise themselves with. Examples are listed below:

- **Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003**
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2003/en/act/pub/0006/index.html>
- **Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998**
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1998/en/act/pub/0022/index.html>
- **Interception Act 1993**
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1993/en/act/pub/0010/print.html>
- **Video Recordings Act 1989**
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1989/en/act/pub/0022/index.html>
- **The Data Protection Act 1988**
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1988/en/act/pub/0025/index.html>
- **Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022**
<https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2022/act/41/enacted/en/html>
- **Digital Services Act (EU)** <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj/eng>

- Ireland's Online Safety Code (OSC) <https://www.cnam.ie/industry-and-professionals/online-safety-framework/online-safety-code/>
- Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2020/act/32/enacted/en/print>
- National Cyber Security Bill 2024 / NIS2 transposition <https://www.ncsc.gov.ie/nis2/>
- New EU Guidelines on Protection of Minors under DSA (2025) <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/commission-publishes-guidelines-protection-minors>

Support Structures:

Teachers will give instruction on appropriate use of the internet and how to use it safely via the teaching of the SPHE curriculum. The 'Life Skills' programme delivered by School Completion will also address online safety. Staff, students, and teachers are encouraged to visit websites offering support and advice about internet safety. The following is a selection:

- NCTE - <http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety>
- WebWise - <http://www.webwise.ie>
- Make IT Secure - <http://makeitsecure.ie>
- Safe Internet - <http://www.saferinternet.org/>
- Think Before You Click www.thinkb4uclick.ie
- Safety, Facts, Awareness and Tools - <http://www.saftonline.org>

The following guides/manuals are available in school:

- WebWise Primary Teachers Handbook (National Centre for Technology in Education)
- WebWise AUP Guidelines (National Centre for Technology in Education)
- Think before You Click 'Empowering Students to be Effective, Autonomous and Safe Users of New Media' (National Centre for Technology in Education)
- ICT Framework Guidelines (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment)

Complaints Procedures:

Should any parent, student, or staff member have a complaint regarding potential malpractice or misuse of digital technologies in the school, they should arrange an appointment with the principal and digital lead of the school. The school will use these



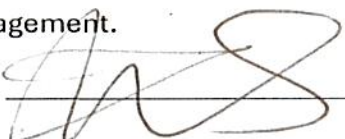
complaints/suggestions to assist in the review and update of the policy which will occur every two years.

Sanctions:

Misuse of the internet or communication devices may result in disciplinary action and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour and anti-bullying/ Bí Cineálta policy. The school now uses Restorative Practice to resolve conflicts in school and staff will be encouraged to use this when resolving conflicts between students involving digital technologies. Any malpractice will be filed in a monitoring log so that the policy can be reviewed in light of potential breaches. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Ratification and Review:

This policy was ratified by the BOM on 09/12/2025 It will be reviewed as deemed necessary by management.

Signed:  _____

Date: 09/12/2025 _____

