



# Internet Acceptable Use Policy

## Introduction

The Board of Management and the Staff of Scoil Mhuire recognize that access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gives our pupils enhanced opportunities to learn, engage, communicate and develop skills. To that end, we provide access to ICT for pupil use. The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's ICT resources in a safe and effective manner. The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire reserves the right to amend this policy to adapt to changing circumstances entirely at its discretion.

## Purpose

This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviours that our pupils are expected to follow when using current and future school technologies. Pupils are expected to follow the same rules for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline. These rules are found in the Scoil Mhuire Code of Behaviour. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the Scoil Mhuire Anti-Bullying Policy and Scoil Mhuire Behaviour Policy.

## Scope

This policy has been drawn up to protect our pupils from the risks associated with the Internet while they are at school. Parents and Guardians are advised however that while the children may be given internet-based homework assignments from time to time, the school takes no responsibility for the internet usage of the pupils while they are outside school. It is important that all parents and guardians monitor their own child's internet usage at home and ensure that their children are aware and respectful of the risks involved.

## Policy Statement

The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximize learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the internet while they are in school.

## These strategies are as follows:

### General

- Pupils will be taught about safe internet usage.
- Students, Parents/Guardians and staff are advised to visit websites such as [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) and [staysafe.ie](http://staysafe.ie) for information on the safe usage of the internet.
- Staff will receive regular CPD on Internet Safety
- The school's filtering system will be used in order to minimize the risk of exposure to inappropriate material in school.
- ICT sessions will always be supervised by a teacher and children's use of the Internet will be monitored.
- Teachers using interactive whiteboards and projectors will be particularly vigilant and will preview the material being presented in order to ensure that it is age appropriate and adheres to the conditions of this AUP.
- Pupils should not upload or download software, music or videos without prior permission from a staff member.



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- The use of any form of removal storage (such as memory sticks, CD-ROMs etc.) must be with the permission of a staff member.
- Pupils will observe good 'netiquette' (i.e. etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute. Good netiquette will be demonstrated to the children through activities on sites such as [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)

## World Wide Web

- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will be taught about copyright issues relating to online learning. Students who copy information or images from the Web into their assignments will acknowledge the source.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Pupils will be aware that any usage, personal, will be monitored.
- Staff will educate students about the risks associated with the taking, using, sharing, publication and distribution of images. In particular, teachers will recognise the risks attached to publishing their own images on the internet
- Staff are permitted to take digital/video images to support educational aims but must follow school policies concerning the distribution of those images
- When taking digital/video images ensure that students are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute
- Pupils must not take, use, share, or publish images of others without consent
- Pictures to be published on the school's website, or elsewhere, which include pupils will be selected carefully and will comply with good practice guidance on image use
- Pupils' full names will not be used anywhere on a website or blog, particularly in association with photographs
- Written permission from Parents/Guardians will be obtained before photographs of students are published on the school website
- Pupil's work can only be published with the permission of the student and Parents/Guardians for School Use of the World Wide Web.

## Email / Internet Chat

- Pupils will not be given access to email. However, the pupils in the senior classes will be provided with Google credentials for accessing other communication tools such as Google Classroom. The pupils and the parents of pupils in the junior and middle classes will be given credentials for accessing the Seesaw platform.
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as passwords, addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.



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- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know online.
- Pupils will note that sending and receiving files is subject to permission from their teacher.
- If students have any concerns about the content of any email they receive at school, they will inform a member of staff immediately. Internet chat and forums
- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school – Google Classroom, Google Meet. This list will be updated on an ongoing basis.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.

## Internet

The Internet has become a two way communication system for the school and the wider community. Services such as Emailing, Aladdin, Text a Parent, SeeSaw and Google Classroom are being used by the school to communicate with parents and also for parents to communicate with the school. These services, although not owned by Scoil Mhuire, form part of our web services and all content that is placed on these services falls under this policy. Please refer to the school's Data Protection Policy for further information on how the school utilizes 3rd party services.

The safety of our children on the web is of utmost importance so the following rules apply to the school and parents. The Internet is open to potential dangers when used inappropriately.

- Many social media sites have minimum age requirements. While the school will not monitor this, we would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Twitter, etc. until they are the appropriate age.
- Please do not “tag” photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- If you are uploading a photograph, please ensure that it does not identify the child in any way.
- Please ensure that online messages and comments to the school are respectful. Any messages written on social media are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
- Avoid any negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts. If you have an issue with something in the school, social media is not the place to raise it. Comments of this nature will be deleted.
- Please do not request to “friend” a member of staff in the school. Most staff would like to keep their personal lives personal. It may be awkward for a staff member to be asked to ignore a Facebook or other social network request.

## School Website

- Please note that the following points apply to the school's web site and social media



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- profiles, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube
- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work 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.
  - The publication of pupil's work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
  - Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages and the school's social media.
  - The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips of focusing on group activities. Photographs, audio and video clips will be used.
  - Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
  - The school website will avoid publishing the full 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.

## Distance Learning & Direct Communication using Internet

- Teachers in the school may choose or in circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers and SNAs, acting under the direction of teachers, may use a range of online platforms including Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom, Seesaw, Padlet, Skype, Microsoft Teams, Class Dojo, and other platforms approved by the principal, to assist with distance teaching and learning.
- The school has signed up to the terms of service of the online platforms in use by the school.
- The school has enabled the most up to date security and privacy features which these online platforms provide.
- Staff members will adhere to school guidelines on the use of platforms for live engagement.
- Previously agreed upon usernames must be used to access the meeting.
- Parents/guardians must agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons and to be in the room with the child for any one-to-one meetings or classes.
- The staff member invites pupils and their families to these meetings using a code.

## Code of Behaviour for Online Classes or Meetings

- Our Code of Behaviour for online classes or meetings is, like our Code of Behaviour at school, based on respect for oneself and others. We expect the same high standards of behaviour as we would in school. To help us get the most benefit from teaching and learning online, we ask that the following guidelines be followed:
- All meetings will be password protected.
- A family member is expected to be close by when a pupil is engaging in a meeting. They should monitor all online interactions from the pupil.



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- Be aware of your surroundings. Choose a room with as little distraction as possible but with an adult close by.
- Be mindful of noise from other people or pets.
- Ensure that you have a clean, work-appropriate background with good lighting. It is worthwhile testing out your camera and audio before your start.
- Try to have all of your head showing especially your mouth, this ensures everyone can see who is talking.
- Mute your microphone when you're not speaking. Only turn it on if you are invited to speak. Muting your microphone when you're not speaking allows others to share their thoughts without distraction or frustration.
- Use the hand icon to show you would like to speak
- Do not use the chat function unless invited to by your teacher. Be respectful at all times when using Chat.
- Eliminate distractions and focus on the class or meeting.
- If you are using your phone/tablet or laptop to attend the online class or meeting, close all other apps and mute notifications.
- No eating allowed during online classes or meetings.
- Stay seated and stay present during online classes or meetings.
- Do not leave the room or talk to others not participating in the class or meeting.
- Staff will not meet any child alone using an online meeting. If there is a need for a meeting between a child with a staff member, another adult must be present at the meeting and/or the meeting must be recorded.

## **Sanctions:**

If a pupil does not follow these guidelines and repeatedly disrupts their own learning and that of others, the pupil can be removed from the class or meeting, either for a specified period or for the entire session.

If the poor behaviour is repeated, the teacher, in the first instance, or the principal, will engage with you and your parents or guardians.

Staff Guidelines for Using Zoom has many controls meeting hosts can use to maximise the privacy and security of their meetings.

## **One-to-one Classes or Meetings**

One-to-one classes or meetings between individual children and teachers or SNAs can only take place with an adult in the room with the child Group Classes or Meetings.

Staff should engage with children using the same level of professionalism as in school – the environment may seem more informal but be wary of adopting an approach that could be considered too casual.

## **Mobile Devices**

- Scoil Mhuire may provide students with laptops, tablets, digital cameras, digital recorders or other devices to promote learning both inside and outside of the school.



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Students should abide by the same acceptable use policy, when using school devices off the school network, as on the school network.

- Students are expected to treat these devices with respect. They should report any loss, damage, or malfunction to their teacher immediately.
- Use of school issued tablets will be monitored.
- Teachers will decide what apps are appropriate for their class.
- Students must not move away from the app their teacher has opened for them to work on unless they have been instructed by their teacher.
- Students may not access the Play Store or download apps to the tablets.
- Students may not delete or move apps or folders.

## Personal Mobile Devices

- Students may not use personally owned digital devices in school without the explicit permission of the teacher
- Appropriate online behaviour and adherence to the acceptable use policy should always be used.
- The school will take no responsibility for loss or damage to personally owned digital devices when in the child's possession.

## Use of Mobile Phones: Students

- In exceptional circumstances, parents may apply in writing for permission for their child to bring a mobile phone to school.
- Permission must be renewed annually.
- No child may bring a mobile phone to school unless the Principal has given permission in writing.
- Students are not permitted to use phones as cameras under any circumstances in school, on school trips or during extra-curricular activities.

## Use of Mobile Phones: Staff

- All staff members keep their phones on silent during school times.
- Teachers and SNAs switch on phones when out of the school on trip.

## Security:

We ask that our students use common sense if they think a website does not look 'right'. They must not click on anything they feel is not right. Students are expected to alert their teacher immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

## Personal Safety:

- If pupils see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes them concerned for their personal safety, they should bring it to the immediate attention of a teacher if they are at school or a parent / guardian if they are at home Stay Safe tells children to Stop Block and Tell: STOP – don't reply to the message but do take a screen shot BLOCK– block the sender TELL – a trusted adult



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- Pupils should never share personal information about themselves or others, including phone numbers, addresses, PPS numbers and birthdates over the Internet.
- Pupils should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life.
- Pupils must not take, use or share images of or from other students on school online platforms.

## **Cyber-Bullying:**

- Pupils must not send messages or post comments or photos with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Should pupils engage in online activities intended to emotionally harm another person on a site not controlled by the school, the school will ask parents / guardians to refer this to the site provider.
- Harassing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyberstalking are all examples of cyber-bullying. Such bullying will not be tolerated in Scoil Mhuire.
- In some cases, cyber-bullying is a crime. Scoil Mhuire is committed to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Circular 0081/2017) and will act as required. The school will support students, teachers and parents in dealing with cyberbullying.

## **Data Protection Responsibilities**

- Staff are personally responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of a student's personal data.
- Passwords should not be 'remembered' on any personal or classroom device.
- If student information is put onto a USB, the files on the USB must be encrypted.
- Staff should log off any workstation (CTRL+ALT+DEL) once finished.
- When communicating information about pupils, staff should use codes/abbreviations or numbers, rather than pupil names.
- Every effort should be made to not view information of staff or pupils in public (on public transport or in public places).
- If your job involves the processing of personal data (data that identifies a living individual), this must be done in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) May 2018.

## **Recordings & Transcripts**

Messages sent via chat are not saved.

Participants cannot save a transcript of the call

Permission must be sought to record any aspect of an online meeting.

## **Additional security**

Files cannot be transferred via chat





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Only the host can share their screen unless the host asks a child to do so.

## Recommendations

All staff must use Scoil Mhuire Google account rather than any personal account.

## Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

- Violations of this policy in Scoil Mhuire may have disciplinary repercussions, including: Suspension of ICT privileges. Notification to parents/guardians in most cases.
- Sanctions in accordance with the Scoil Mhuire Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.
- The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities. We make a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of school technologies.

**Support Structures** The school will regularly update students and parents of key support structures and organizations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

## Roles & Responsibilities

The Board of Management is responsible for the formulation of this policy.

The Principal and teaching staff are responsible for the implementation of this policy during the school day.

Parents and guardians are responsible for the internet usage of the students while they are outside school.

It is important that all parents and guardians monitor their own child's internet usage at home and ensure that their children are aware and respectful of the risks involved.

## Ratification & Communication:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and will be communicated to parents thereafter.

This policy will be published in the Scoil Mhuire Information Booklet.

## Implementation & Review

This policy supersedes all assessment policies to date and is effective from November 2020.

This policy and its associated procedures will be monitored on an ongoing basis but will be undergo full review in 2022, or earlier if necessary.