

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Educationalists believe in the benefits of curriculum-based internet use. The purpose of the Internet Acceptable Usage Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources, and will be protected from harmful and illegal use of the Internet.

This policy was developed and discussed by staff, pupils, Parents' Association, and the Board of Management of St. Mary's National School in February 2016 and updated to include Distance Learning in May 2020.

Aim

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy 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 Therefore, if the School Acceptable Use Policy is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions –as outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy – will be imposed.

This Policy should be read carefully to ensure that the content is accepted and understood. The aim of the Acceptable Use Policy ("AUP" or "the Policy") is to ensure that students benefit from the learning opportunities offered by internet access in a safe and positive manner. This Policy also aims to establish minimum standards for, and let the students, parents/guardians know of the school's administration and monitoring of, the schools devices, equipment and networks. It applies to all of the school's "Devices", which means all computers, iPads, laptops, tablets, smart phones and other IT resources that connect to the school's network.

Staff/People employed by the school/student teachers/volunteers etc who breach the Acceptable Use Policy may be dealt with by the Board of Management's disciplinary procedures and/or child protection procedures. The Board of Management reserves the right to establish digital platforms in the name of the school. Digital platforms of any description (WhatsApp Groups, Messaging Groups, etc) may only be set up with written permission of the Board of Management.

A positive school culture that supports the Wellbeing of all parties is based on open communication and mutual respect. This Policy aims to protect staff, pupils, parents and all members of the school community, providing a safe teaching and learning environment for the whole school community.

School's Strategy

The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies include, but are not limited to the following:

General

A firewall is used on school Devices to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material and to block unsuitable sites. This is regularly updated.

- Students and teachers will be provided with training by teachers in the area of research techniques specific to the Internet.
- Online safety training will be provided to teachers and will be taught to all students.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software on school Devices will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software is used on school Devices and updated regularly.
- A teacher will always supervise Internet sessions which are conducted on school Devices.
- Websites will be previewed / evaluated by a teacher using a filtering system, before being integrated into lessons conducted on school Devices.
- The School's search engine has a built in 'safe search' feature. The 'safe search' feature will be enabled on all search engines on school Devices.
- It is important to note that the school's Anti-Bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with this Policy. Parents/guardians and students should be aware that placing a once-off, offensive or hurtful internet message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Email / Google Drive

- Students will not be given access to email. However, they will be provided with Google credentials for accessing other communication tools such as Google Classroom.
- When using Google Classroom and the Gsuite Apps, students will use approved class accounts under supervision of a teacher at school or parent/guardian outside school.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory, or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- 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.

Distance Learning

- In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers may use Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom, SeeSaw, Study Ladder, Padlet or other platforms approved by the Principal as platforms (the "Online Platforms") to assist with remote teaching where necessary.
- 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.
- In the case of Google Classroom and Google Meet, Parents/Guardians must grant access to their child to have a school Gmail address such as pupilsname@stmarysncloghan.ie
- Parents /guardians will be provided with the password and will be expected to monitor their child's use of the Gmail address and Online Platforms.
- The Online Platforms are used to communicate directly with the pupils, therefore, only teachers and pupils post messages on it. This gives pupils a voice in a safe, secure learning environment. Parental communication is provided for via email, school phone number and school mobile phone number. These are available on the school website.
- If teachers are using Zoom, parents/guardians must consent to their child having a school email address as above to allow their child access to the lessons. Where the child does not have a school email address, parents can consent by submitting their own email address for their child to access lessons on Zoom.
- Parents/guardians must also agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons conducted on the Online Platforms.

Internet Chat

- Discussion forums on Google Classroom will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the Internet as this is forbidden.

School Website and affiliated Social Media sites, School App.

- The School's website address is www.stmarysncloghan.ie
- The School's twitter account is @marys_nscloghan
- The School's Facebook account is St. Mary's NS Parents Association.

- The School uses the Aladdin System and the school mobile phone for school text messages.
- Students will be given the opportunity to have photos, projects, artwork and other work relating to curricular and extra-curricular school activities published on the school website as per the consent form. Teachers will coordinate the publication of this material.
- Personal information relating to the student including their name, home address and contact details will not be included on school social media or the school's website.
- Digital photographs and audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website and/or affiliated pages, without prior parental/guardian permission. Instead, photographs etc. will focus on group activities, where children will not be named.
- Photos/Videos may be used for the production of the Homework Journal or specific school events e.g. Communion etc. These photos/videos and the photos/videos on our website/App should not be copied or posted to any social media or other website or published in any way.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested not to 'tag' photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested to ensure that online messages and/or comments to the school's social media sites are respectful. Any messages written on social media are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
- The Principal will review the content of the website and the social media sites regularly. The Principal and the Board welcome any suggestions about how the content may be improved.
- If any parent or guardian has any concern about the appropriateness of the content of the website or social media sites, then the Board asks that the matter be brought to the attention of the Principal as a matter of urgency.
- This Policy should be read in conjunction with our Data Protection Policy.

Personal Devices

- Students may not use any personal device with recording or image taking capability while in school or on a school outing. Any such breach of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will be sanctioned accordingly.
- Any images or recordings taken by class teachers on smartphones or other personal devices must be downloaded onto the school server and/or on to the school App/relevant school affiliated website and then immediately deleted from source.
- The use of E-readers may be permitted, under the supervision of the teacher.
- All personal devices are to be turned off during school hours.

Legislation and Regulation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet with which teachers, students and parents/guardians should familiarise themselves where appropriate:

- EU General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Anti-Bullying Guidelines for Primary Schools 2013
- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Video Recording Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988
- Interception Act 1963

Support structures and Education

- The school will inform students and parents/guardians of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.
- On an annual basis, the school will run a programme on acceptable internet usage, for students and parents/guardians. This will cover several topics including cyber-bullying.
- Staff will regularly partake in Continuous Professional Development in relation to the development of AUPs, internet safety and cyber-bullying.

Use of Information Communication Technology ("ICT") Resources

St. Mary's National School information and technology resources (e.g. e-mail, computers, computer applications, networks, internet, intranet, facsimile, phone and other wireless communications devices, telephone, paging and voice mail systems and the like) are school property and are provided solely for school related activities.

Inappropriate use including hacking, pirating software, using school resources for non-school commercial activities, soliciting, distributing literature for outside entities, disclosing confidential information of the school, sending inappropriate e-mail or accessing inappropriate web sites (such as those advocating hate or violence, containing sexually explicit material promoting illegal activities), or using school resources in a way that violates the letter or spirit of the school's policies or reflects negatively on the school is forbidden.

Users of the school's information and technology resources must not share passwords. If you allow others to use your password or assigned resource, you

will be held responsible for their use.

Consistent with national laws, the Board of Management reserves the right to monitor the use of its information and technology resources and to take appropriate disciplinary actions, or denying future access privileges in cases of misuse. Staff/student use of the school's information and technology resources constitutes consent to such monitoring. All such monitoring will be conducted in accordance with law including, where applicable, the EU's General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR").

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet or any activity which is in contravention with this Policy, may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, and, where appropriate, suspension or expulsion in line with the Code of Behaviour.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Access to the Internet will be withdrawn from students who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually or earlier if deemed necessary.

Ratification of Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

St. Mary's National School

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

The staff and Board of Management of St. Mary's National School have recently reviewed the school's Acceptable Use Policy (A.U.P). Please familiarise yourself with this policy, prior to completing the A.U.P Permission Slip. School files will be updated accordingly and this form will be kept on file for no longer than is necessary.

Acceptable Use Policy Permission Slip

Name of student: _____

Class/Year: _____