

Scoil Mhuire  
Ballymore Eustace  
Co. Kildare  
18055B



# Acceptable Use Policy for Internet Use

## Introduction

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.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 this policy will be revised regularly. Before enrolling, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood. It is assumed that the parent accepts the terms of the AUP unless the school is specifically notified.

This version of the policy has been updated to incorporate new Department of Education guidance around Distance Learning.

## School's Strategy

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

### General

- Internet sessions within the school building will always be supervised by a staff member.
- Filtering software from the PDST TiE (Schools' Broadband) is used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal memory sticks or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute. (cf Anti-Bullying Procedures)

### World Wide Web

- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will generally use the Internet for educational purposes only. However, at times, they may be allowed to use the Internet for entertainment purposes. In these instances permission must first be obtained from the teacher and all web sites must be vetted by the teacher before use. However, pupils cannot use social media accounts or record images, audio or video of other pupils or staff.

- 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.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- Students will be 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 / Internet Chat**

- Students will not be given individual email accounts. However, they may be provided with Google credentials for accessing other communication/ digital tools such as Google Classroom.
- Teachers may choose to set up class email accounts as a communication or project tool. However, this email account must be created within the school domain (@bmesch.ie) and will be shared between all pupils. The teacher and Principal will retain administrator and password access to it.
- 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 passwords, addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know online.
- Students will note that sending and receiving files is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Students will not have access to personal email, personal social media accounts, chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication fora.

### **Internet**

The Internet has become a two way communication system for the school and the wider community. Services such as Aladdin, YouTube, ClassDojo, Weebly, Twitter and other social media 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.

The safety of our pupils 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.

The schools asks:

- 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, Instagram, Snapchat etc. until

they are the appropriate age. Many social media sites will be used by teachers in class, for example, Twitter. However, all interactions will be under the supervision of the teacher. Children will not be allowed to use their own personal accounts for social media.

- 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 make sure photograph size is kept as small as possible (no bigger than 1200 pixels)
- 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.
- Please do not add advertisements to our social media account without prior permission of the principal.
- Failure to keep the above rules may result in a permanent ban to our social media accounts.

### **School Website**

- Please note that the following points apply to the school’s website and social media profiles, including, but not limited, to Twitter, Weebly 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 student work will be co-ordinated by a staff member.
- 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.

### **Direct Communication using Internet**

Teachers in the school may choose to use a number of tools for classroom communication. Examples include Email, Aladdin, Zoom and ClassDojo. Some of these tools provide synchronous video opportunities whereby a staff member directly speaks to the pupils live - e.g. through a webinar or online meeting. The staff member invites pupils and their families to these meetings using a code. The following are ground rules for synchronous lessons online:

- All meetings will be password protected
- All people involved in the meeting will conduct themselves in a similar manner that would be expected in a regular class.
- All people involved in the meeting must be identifiable (pupil's name or family name) or they will not be admitted to the meeting.
- The staff member has the right to "kick out" any person being disruptive from a live lesson.
- 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.
- Staff will not meet any pupil alone using an online meeting. If there is a need for a meeting between an individual pupil with a staff member, another adult must be present at the meeting and/or the meeting must be recorded.
- While chat may be available in an online meeting, it is the responsibility of the pupil's family to ensure that any interaction is appropriate. Any interaction from a pupil that could be deemed as inappropriate may result in the pupil's removal from the lesson or, where appropriate, a referral to Child Protection services.

### **Personal Devices**

A mobile device policy is currently being drafted by the Board of Management. At present personal devices may only be brought to school with the expressed permission of the Principal or class teacher.

### **Legislation**

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

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Children First 2018
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

### **Support Structure**

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

**Sanctions**

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

**Ratification.**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The policy will be reviewed and updated as required.



01/03/2021

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Chairperson, Board of Management

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Date



01/03/2021

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Principal

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Date