

# **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

## **Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa**

### **Ballymurn**

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.

Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa will employ a number of strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Education
- Filtering/Monitoring

#### **Pupil Access to the Internet**

The school is pleased to offer the internet as an available resource to both pupils and teachers for reference purposes, researching project materials, playing interactive educational games, learning to touch-type and for lesson reinforcement. Access to online resources will enable pupils to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards throughout the world.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation for living and working in this information age. The school will integrate such information as appropriate within the curriculum, and staff will provide guidance and instruction to pupils in the appropriate use of such resources, as outlined in this policy. Pupils' use of telecommunications and electronic information will be taught and provided for from Infants – 6<sup>th</sup> class and will only be permitted upon submission of permission and agreement forms by parents of all pupils, and also by pupils themselves in the case of 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> class.

1. Pupils will not be given access to the Internet without teacher supervision
2. Internet will be used for educational purposes only.
3. Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
4. Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher.
5. Filtering software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
6. The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage.
7. Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety, using webwise.ie and other internet safety resources available to teachers.
8. Pupils will be taught to evaluate the content of internet sites.
9. Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues, through regular discussion at staff meetings.
10. Uploading and downloading of non-approved material is banned. Non-approved material refers to any material the teacher has not sanctioned for use.
11. Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
12. The use of personal external storage devices or CD-ROMS in school is prohibited
13. Pupils will observe good 'netiquette' (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring a school into disrepute.
14. 'YouTube', social media (and similar sites) are not to be used by pupils.
15. Email is not to be used by pupils.
16. Any type of internet chat rooms, or other sites where communication with outsiders can occur are not to be used by pupils.

#### **School Website/Facebook page**

Pupils may create projects, artwork, writing or audio-visual recordings which would be suitable for publication on our school's website. Teachers will manage the publication of material on the school website/ media sites adhering to the stipulations below.

1. Personal pupil information, home addresses and contact details will not be published
2. Class lists will not be published
3. Pupils' full names will not be published beside their photograph
4. Digital photographs, video clips and audio clips will focus on groups and group activities rather than on individual pupils when possible
5. Pupils will be given an opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website
6. Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such
7. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

### **Education and Internet Awareness**

Scoil Croí Ró Naofa will undertake an education programme to educate children on the safe, responsible use of the Internet. Cyber-bullying has become a significant threat for teenagers. Through education and awareness, we aim to limit our children's susceptibility to it as they progress to secondary school. 21<sup>st</sup> century life presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation from which children and young people need to be protected. At the same time, they need to learn to recognise and avoid these risks – to become internet wise.

Resources that may be used to implement this programme include:

- Use of the 'Kids' section on the [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) website
- SAFT Internet Safety Awareness Education Programme and exemplars
- Other recommended resources for internet safety

### **Filtering**

The school will use the Internet filtered by the PDST (Professional Development Service for Teachers). 'Filtering' is a term used to describe a way of limiting the content of web pages, emails, chat rooms and other electronic data to which users may be exposed. No filter is 100% accurate. The most effective filtering tool is adult vigilance. At Scoil Croí Ró Naofa, we believe that the advantages to pupils having access to information resources and increased opportunities for collaboration far exceed the risk of disadvantages.

The access to websites from all school computers is monitored and regularly reviewed by the PDST. Websites are only allowed through following a verification of their suitability.

Many browsers have their own built in filtering tool e.g. Google. Google's search engine has a built-in "Safe Search". This filter eliminates sites that contain pornography and explicit sexual content from search results. It is easily applied by clicking on the **Preferences** link on any Google page. Unfortunately it is also easily removed.

Windows XP has a built-in firewall. Firewall software can be purchased or downloaded free from the Internet. Scoil Croí Ró Naofa has installed firewall software.

### **Tablets/Other devices**

Every site that is accessed within the school network or by a school machine can be monitored and reports of all access can be acquired by management. Each tablet has a number and the children of each class will be designated a specific number.

### **Use of ICT devices that have been granted to pupils with S.E.N**

Use of laptops or other devices granted to pupils with special educational needs that travel between home and school are subject to all stipulations, procedures and sanctions outlined in this policy 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Parents of children who have been sanctioned such devices are instructed to be vigilant in monitoring their use in the home, as per procedures for school. Parents of all children are advised to keep laptops in a common area (i.e. kitchen or living room) with the screen

visible to others while a child may be on the internet. The use of devices by children in their bedrooms is not recommended.

**Sanctions**

If a pupil does not follow the direct instructions of school staff relating to internet usage, deliberately misuses the internet or email, is found running searches on inappropriate topics or attempting to access inappropriate/unsuitable websites, this will result in disciplinary action, including the withdrawal of I.T. access privileges.

Parents/guardians will receive notification of misuse by a pupil.

**The following procedures will apply if devices/internet are misused:**

- 1. Failure to follow staff instructions relating to internet usage on the first occasion: 1 month withdrawal of access

Second offence: 2 months withdrawal of access.

Third offence: Withdrawal of access for the remainder of school year.

- 2. If a pupil is found to be using a school device to access, or attempt to access, inappropriate content: This will result in instant loss of access for the remainder of the school year, to be reviewed by the principal for the following school year. This will also result in Level 2 or 3 sanctions, as appropriate to the offence from the school Code of Behaviour.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and reviewed in September 2024.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary/Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Responsible Internet Use - Pupil Undertaking for 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Class

### Using the internet/tablets/classroom laptop:

- I will seek permission before using the internet
- I will not log into or join any websites without prior adult permission
- I will never access any type of social media or Youtube in school
- I will report any unpleasant material to my teacher immediately
- I will not partake in any inappropriate activity on the internet
- I will not download or install any apps
- I will use the tablet/laptop as directed by the teacher
- I know that the school may check my files and monitor the sites I visit.
- I understand that if I break these rules, I could be stopped from using the internet on the tablets/computer and my parents will be informed.
- I know that any breach of these rules that the principal deems to be serious in nature, will be dealt with in the same way as all other Level 2 or 3 behaviours in the school Code of Behaviour.
- I will not bring smartphones, smartwatches or other devices into school

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ Pupil

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Internet Permission Form for All Parents/Guardians**

Name of Pupil(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Class(es): \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent or legal guardian of the above child, I have read the Internet Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for

\_\_\_\_\_ (name(s): son/daughter) to access the Internet. I understand that school internet usage is for educational purposes only and that every reasonable precaution will be taken by the school to provide for online safety.

I accept my own responsibility for the education of my child(ren) on issues of Internet Responsibility and Safety.

I understand that whilst the school has endeavoured to adhere to all of the enclosed precautions , the school staff or the board of management will not accept any responsibility if my child succeeds in accessing unsuitable material.

**Signature:** 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Legal Guardians

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

