

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

School Name: Scoil Naomh Mhuire Primary School

School Address: Castlegal

Roll Number: 15337T

Date of Adoption: June 2026-2027

Ratified by Board of Management: June 2026

1. Introduction

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils, staff, parents/guardians and other members of the school community use school digital technologies, devices, internet access and online services in a safe, responsible and respectful manner.

The school recognises that digital technology is an important part of teaching and learning. The internet, digital devices and online resources provide valuable opportunities for education, communication, creativity, collaboration and research.

At the same time, the school recognises the potential risks associated with online activity, including exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, privacy breaches, online scams, misuse of images, excessive screen time and inappropriate communication.

This policy supports the school's commitment to providing a safe, positive and inclusive learning environment.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All pupils of the school
- All members of teaching and support staff
- The Principal and Board of Management
- Parents/guardians
- Visitors, volunteers and other persons using school ICT facilities
- School-owned devices and equipment
- Personal devices used on school premises where permitted
- School internet and Wi-Fi networks
- School email and online accounts
- Online learning platforms and educational applications

- Digital photographs, videos and recordings
- Social media and other online platforms where their use affects the school community
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools and applications

This policy applies both during school hours and, where relevant, to online behaviour outside school where that behaviour has an impact on members of the school community or the safe operation of the school.

3. School Technology and Internet Use

The school's digital facilities are provided primarily for educational and administrative purposes.

Users must:

- Use school devices and internet access responsibly.
- Follow instructions given by teachers and school management.
- Use technology in a manner that supports learning.
- Treat school devices and equipment with care.
- Report damaged, lost or malfunctioning equipment to a member of staff.
- Use only websites, applications and online services that are appropriate and permitted by the school.
- Respect the privacy and personal information of others.
- Keep passwords and login information confidential.
- Log out of accounts when finished using a device.
- Report anything online that causes concern, distress or discomfort.

Users must not:

- Attempt to access inappropriate, illegal or offensive material.
 - Attempt to bypass school filtering or security systems.
 - Download unauthorised software or files.
 - Install applications without permission.
 - Deliberately damage or interfere with ICT equipment.
 - Attempt to gain unauthorised access to another person's account.
 - Use another person's password or account.
 - Engage in online activity that could harm another person or bring the school into disrepute.
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4. Use of Personal Devices

The use of personal mobile phones, smartwatches, tablets or other personal digital devices by pupils is subject to the school's Mobile Phone/Personal Device arrangements.

Where personal devices are permitted, pupils must follow school rules regarding:

- When devices may be used.
- Where devices may be stored.
- Taking photographs or recordings.
- Accessing the internet.
- Messaging and communication.
- Sharing content.
- Use during breaks, lunchtime, trips and other school activities.

Pupils must never use a personal device to photograph, record, message, intimidate, embarrass or otherwise harm another pupil or member of staff.

The school reserves the right to respond appropriately where misuse of a personal device impacts on the school community.

5. Online Safety

The school will promote safe and responsible use of the internet as part of its educational programme.

Pupils will be encouraged to:

- Think before they post, share or send.
- Keep personal information private.
- Use strong and secure passwords.
- Treat others respectfully online.
- Recognise inappropriate or harmful content.
- Understand that online content may be permanent or difficult to remove.
- Tell a trusted adult if something online makes them feel uncomfortable, worried or unsafe.
- Understand how to report inappropriate online behaviour.

Pupils should never arrange to meet someone they have only met online without the knowledge and involvement of a trusted adult.

6. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is not acceptable under any circumstances.

Cyberbullying may include:

- Sending threatening or abusive messages.
- Deliberately excluding someone from online groups.
- Posting humiliating or embarrassing material.
- Sharing photographs or videos without permission.
- Creating fake accounts or profiles to impersonate another person.
- Spreading rumours online.
- Encouraging others to target an individual.
- Sharing private information without consent.
- Using online platforms to intimidate, threaten or harass another person.

Any concerns regarding cyberbullying should be reported to a teacher, Principal or another trusted adult.

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy will apply where appropriate.

7. Social Media

Pupils are not permitted to use social media during school activities unless specifically authorised for an educational purpose.

Pupils and parents/guardians are reminded that content posted online can be copied, shared and remain accessible even after it has been deleted.

Members of the school community are expected to behave respectfully online.

Online activity which targets, threatens, harasses or seriously impacts another member of the school community may be addressed under relevant school policies.

Staff members should follow the school's Staff Social Media Policy and professional requirements when using social media.

8. Photographs, Videos and Recordings

Photographs, videos and recordings may only be taken or used in accordance with school procedures and applicable data protection requirements.

Pupils must not:

- Take photographs or videos of other pupils without permission.
- Record teachers or other staff without permission.
- Upload school-related images or recordings to social media without appropriate permission.
- Share images of another person in a manner that could embarrass, threaten or harm them.

The school will follow its relevant data protection and photographic/recording procedures when taking, storing or publishing images.

9. Personal Data and Privacy

The school is committed to protecting personal data in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and the school's Data Protection Policy.

Users must respect the privacy of others.

Personal information should not be shared online unless there is a legitimate educational or school-related reason and appropriate safeguards are in place.

Pupils should not share information such as:

- Full home address
- Personal telephone number
- Passwords
- Personal photographs
- Family information
- School account details
- Other private or confidential information

without appropriate adult guidance.

10. Passwords and Account Security

All users are responsible for protecting their account information.

Users must:

- Keep passwords confidential.

- Use secure passwords where required.
- Never share passwords with other pupils.
- Log out of accounts after use.
- Report suspected unauthorised access.
- Never attempt to access another person's account.

Staff should follow the school's procedures for managing passwords and school accounts.

11. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The school recognises that Artificial Intelligence tools are increasingly used in education and society.

AI tools may only be used by pupils where permitted and supervised by a teacher.

Where AI is used for educational purposes, pupils will be encouraged to:

- Use AI responsibly and safely.
- Understand that AI-generated information may be inaccurate.
- Check information against reliable sources.
- Protect personal and confidential information.
- Avoid entering personal data into AI systems.
- Acknowledge the use of AI where required by the teacher.
- Use AI as a learning support rather than simply copying answers.

Pupils must not use AI to:

- Bully, threaten or impersonate another person.
- Create harmful or inappropriate material.
- Generate false or misleading content about another person.
- Share private or confidential information.
- Circumvent school rules or security measures.

Staff using AI tools must follow school procedures concerning privacy, data protection, professional responsibilities and the use of pupil information.

12. Email and Online Communication

School email accounts and online communication platforms must be used appropriately.

Users must:

- Communicate respectfully.
- Use appropriate language.
- Consider the audience before sending messages.
- Avoid sharing confidential information unnecessarily.
- Report inappropriate communication.

Pupils should only communicate through school-approved platforms and under appropriate supervision.

13. Downloading and Copyright

Users must respect copyright and intellectual property rights.

Users should not:

- Download or distribute copyrighted material without permission.
- Copy another person's work and present it as their own.
- Download illegal or inappropriate material.
- Use images, music, text or other content without considering copyright requirements.

Pupils will be encouraged to acknowledge sources when completing research or digital projects.

14. Online Gaming

Online gaming during school time is not permitted unless specifically authorised as part of an educational activity.

Where educational games are used, pupils must follow the instructions of the teacher.

Pupils must not use school devices or networks to:

- Access inappropriate games.
 - Communicate inappropriately with strangers.
 - Share personal information.
 - Engage in bullying or abusive behaviour.
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15. Filtering and Monitoring

The school will take reasonable measures to provide a safe online environment, including the use of appropriate filtering, security and monitoring arrangements.

Filtering and monitoring systems are not a substitute for supervision, education and responsible behaviour.

Where concerns arise regarding online activity, the school may investigate the matter in accordance with its policies, legal obligations and appropriate procedures.

16. Education and Digital Citizenship

The school will provide age-appropriate education in:

- Online safety
- Digital citizenship
- Cyberbullying
- Privacy and personal data
- Responsible communication
- Critical evaluation of online information
- Digital wellbeing
- Appropriate use of social media
- Artificial Intelligence
- Copyright and responsible use of online content

The school will promote the principle that good behaviour and respect apply both online and offline.

17. Digital Wellbeing

The school recognises the importance of maintaining a healthy balance between digital and non-digital activities.

Pupils will be encouraged to:

- Take appropriate breaks from screens.
- Participate in physical activity.
- Spend time interacting face-to-face with others.

- Develop healthy technology habits.
- Understand the potential impact of excessive screen use.

The school will use digital technology where it enhances learning while recognising the importance of active, creative, social and practical learning experiences.

18. Responsibilities of Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

1. Follow this Acceptable Use Policy.
 2. Follow instructions from teachers and school staff.
 3. Treat digital equipment with care.
 4. Respect other people's privacy.
 5. Behave respectfully online.
 6. Keep passwords secure.
 7. Report inappropriate or concerning online activity.
 8. Use school technology for appropriate purposes.
 9. Follow the school's rules concerning personal devices.
 10. Take responsibility for their own online behaviour.
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19. Responsibilities of Staff

Staff members are expected to:

- Model safe, respectful and responsible digital behaviour.
 - Follow school procedures relating to ICT and online safety.
 - Protect pupil and staff personal data.
 - Use appropriate professional communication.
 - Supervise pupils appropriately when using digital technologies.
 - Report online safety concerns in accordance with school procedures.
 - Follow the school's Data Protection Policy.
 - Follow the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.
 - Use AI and other emerging technologies responsibly and appropriately.
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20. Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians are encouraged to support the school's approach to online safety.

Parents/guardians should:

- Discuss online safety with their children.
- Encourage respectful online behaviour.
- Monitor age-appropriate use of devices and online services.
- Be aware of the apps, games and social media platforms being used by their children.
- Encourage children to report online concerns.
- Inform the school where online activity is having a significant impact on a child's wellbeing or the school community.

The school encourages parents/guardians to seek advice if they have concerns regarding their child's online activity.

21. Breaches of the Policy

Any breach of this Acceptable Use Policy will be dealt with appropriately.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the breach, the school may:

- Speak to the pupil.
- Restrict or withdraw access to school ICT facilities.
- Contact parents/guardians.
- Apply the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Apply the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Apply the school's Child Safeguarding procedures where appropriate.
- Refer the matter to the Principal or Board of Management where necessary.
- Report serious matters to the appropriate authorities where legally required.

The response will take account of the age and developmental stage of the pupil and the circumstances of the incident.

22. Reporting Concerns

Any member of the school community who becomes aware of inappropriate or unsafe use of technology should report the concern to:

Class Teacher: _____

Principal: Róisín O'Grady

Designated Liaison Person (DLP): Róisín O'Grady

Deputy DLP: Olive Kenny

Concerns involving child protection will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and relevant statutory requirements.

23. Related School Policies

This Acceptable Use Policy should be read in conjunction with relevant school policies, including:

- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Code of Behaviour
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Mobile Phone/Personal Device Policy
 - Internet Safety Policy
 - Social Media Policy
 - Special Educational Needs Policy, where relevant
 - Health and Safety Statement
 - Attendance Policy
 - Complaints Procedure
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24. Ratification and Review

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of June 2026

The policy will be reviewed regularly and updated where necessary to reflect changes in legislation, Department of Education guidance, technology and school practice.

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Principal

Date: _____

PUPIL ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

I understand that using computers, tablets, the internet and other digital technology in school is a privilege and a responsibility.

I agree to:

- Use technology safely and responsibly.
- Follow my teacher's instructions.
- Treat school equipment with care.
- Be respectful to other people online.
- Keep passwords private.
- Tell a trusted adult if something online worries or upsets me.
- Never use technology to bully, threaten or embarrass another person.
- Never take or share photographs or recordings without permission.
- Use school technology only for appropriate purposes.
- Follow the school's rules about personal devices.
- Use AI tools only when my teacher gives me permission.
- Remember that my behaviour online can affect other people.

Pupil Name: _____

Class: _____

Pupil Signature: _____

Date: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

I/we have read the school's Acceptable Use Policy and understand the expectations regarding the safe and responsible use of digital technology.

I/we agree to support the school in promoting safe and respectful online behaviour.

I/we understand that the school may respond to serious online behaviour that impacts on the safety and wellbeing of members of the school community.

Pupil Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

STAFF ACCEPTABLE USE DECLARATION

I confirm that I have read and understood the school's Acceptable Use Policy and agree to comply with the school's requirements regarding:

- ICT and internet use
- Data protection and confidentiality
- Online communication
- Social media
- Digital images and recordings
- Cybersecurity
- Online safety
- Artificial Intelligence
- Professional conduct

Staff Member: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

