



ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY/Internet Safety Policy

Introduction

The internet is an essential element for education, business, social interaction and is a valuable teaching and learning tool. It provides information and allows people to communicate with others and share information. It can develop children's independent research skills and promote life-long learning. The internet also supports the professional work of staff and enhances the school's management, information and business administration systems. This Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will address all rights, privileges, responsibilities and sanctions associated with access to and use of the internet in Naíscoil Íde. This AUP will be revised regularly.

Aim of Policy:

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. This Acceptance Use Policy should be read carefully by parents/guardians to ensure the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

Internet Safety Strategy:

This policy was drawn up in order to protect the children from the risks associated with the internet while at school. Parents are advised however that while the children may be given internet -based homework from time to time, the school take no responsibility for the internet usage of the students while they are outside the 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.

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

- On enrolment, parents are asked to agree to the terms of our AUP by signing a section of the enrolment form.
- Internet safety usage will be taught.
- Webwise.ie will be highlighted as a useful site for parents and staff.
- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems are used in order to minimize the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. This filtering system is the Schools Broadband Programme (SBP,) managed by the National Centre for Technology in Education(NCTE) (www.ncte.ie).

- Teachers shall be particularly vigilant and must preview material presented in order to ensure that it is age appropriate and adheres to the conditions of this AUP (auto play is not to be on any site).
- Students shall never attempt to upload or download software, music or videos
- The use of personal memory sticks, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students and staff 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.

World Wide Web:

- The School has restricted access to the world wide web and only sites of General and Educational and Educational internet are accessible. Inappropriate sites have been blocked by SBP (as detailed above).
- Pupils will be supervised by the teacher when using the web.
- Pupils will use the web for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- All internet users 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.
- All internet users will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Children should inform their teacher if they inadvertently access information that makes them in any way uncomfortable. In the unlikely event that this should happen, the offending URL will be noted and the service provider will be informed.

Email and Chat Rooms:

- Email should only be used as a whole class activity, not individually, for particular educational purposes eg requesting information for a project, using an approved class/teacher email account under supervision from a teacher.
- Pupils will only be allowed email in the presence of the teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, and 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.
- Electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Students will only have access to electronic communication forums that have been approved by their teacher.

School Website (naiscoilide.ie)

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork, or school work on the World Wide Web in accordance with approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.
- The website will be regularly checked by the Post Holder with responsibility for the website to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- The publication of student work will be coordinated with the class teacher/ICT coordinator.
- The school website will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on groups rather than individuals.

- Personal pupil information including names, home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.

Personal Devices:

- Pupils may only bring in their own personal computers and electronic devices to school with the permission of their teacher. Students may never connect these devices to the school's network, without prior permission from their teacher. As per our Mobile Phone and Devices Policy, pupils should not bring their mobile phones to school. Pupils using their own technology in school to send text messages, or the unauthorized taking of images, still or moving, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy, behaviour policy and mobile phone and devices policy

Distance learning

- In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers will use Microsoft 365 Education, Aladdin, Zoom, SeeSaw and the school website, as well as other platforms agreed with the principal, as the main platforms to facilitate remote/distance 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.
- Teacher/Pupil communication will be via the parent's email address in order to facilitate parental supervision.
- Parents/guardians will be provided with all account and password information. The role of the parent/guardian is to monitor the safe and appropriate use of technology and internet.
- In giving permission for use of such platforms, parents/guardians agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons/communication conducted on the Online Platforms.
- Where necessary the school may need to create an online classroom such as Microsoft Teams. In order to interact with such a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) the students will be issued with a Microsoft 365 Education account. The restrictions on this account will limit the student's activity to Microsoft Teams and will not facilitate email communication or access to other apps as determined by the school. Parents would be provided with the password of access; parents would be responsible for the students online activity using the account.

Staff Use of Computer Facilities:

- School Personnel should use the web for educational and professional purposes only during the school day 8.50 – 3.00.
- Equally School Personnel who are engaged in after school activities should restrict their use of the web to professional and educational purposes only while pupils are present.
- If a staff member wishes to access the web for personal purposes it should be done outside of pupil-teacher contact time.
- Special Needs Assistants can use the computer facilities in the school with the permission of, and under the supervision of, the class teacher.
- Any students on placement from the teacher training Colleges, transition year pupils or students on a work experience placement can only have access to the computer facilities under the supervision of the class teacher. Permission should be sought from the class teacher prior to use.
- Use of the internet by staff members to access inappropriate material whether it be pornographic, racist or offensive, is strictly prohibited at all times. No person will in any way alter the filtering preferences.

Legislation:

There is no specific legislation governing Internet safety at school level. Complicating this issue is the fact that the Internet functions in a global context whereas the law operates in a localized one. There are, however, a number of legislations that have relevance to Internet safety. They are briefly described as follows:

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 www.dataprotection.ie

This amendment extends the data protection rules to manually held records and also makes improvements to the public's right to access data.

- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 www.acts.ie

This act legislates against anyone who knowingly produces, prints, publishes, distributes, exports, imports, shows, possesses or sells child pornography.

- Interception Act 1993 www.acts.ie

The Interception of Postal Packets and Telecommunications messages Regulation Act 1993 stipulated that telecommunication messages can be intercepted for the purpose of an investigation of a serious offence. Authorisations are subject to certain conditions.

- Video Recordings Act 1989 www.acts.ie

This act prohibits the distribution of videos which contain obscene or indecent material which may lead to the devaluation or corruption of the viewer. It would apply where someone in the State supplied this kind of video over the Internet.

- The Data Protection Act 1988 www.dataprotection.ie

This act was passed in order to deal with privacy issues arising from the increasing amount of information kept on a computer about individuals.

- Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000. The Law governing copyright in Ireland.

Support Structures:

There are a number of organizations who deal with internet safety and can prove to be a source of support for Parents and Teachers alike. These organizations can be accessed through the following sites:

- www.webwise.ie: A guide to safe internet usage for children.
- www.hotline.ie : Reporting illegal or harmful content on the internet.
- www.makeitsecure.org : National security site for children.
- www.safekids.com : Family guide to internet safety.
- www.getnetwise.org : Safety, spam, privacy and security site.
- www.ncte.ie : Government support agency.

Sanctions:

Misuse of the Internet by members of staff or the school is not expected but if it occurs it may result in disciplinary action, including verbal and 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. Staff misuse of the internet will be dealt with through disciplinary action procedures by the Board of Management.

Timeframe:

This version of the Acceptable Use Policy was created in May 2010 by the teaching staff and parents of Naiscoil Ide.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in June 2010.

This policy was reviewed in 2020 and will be reviewed in 2025 or before if deemed necessary.

This policy will be subject to regular review according to the Department of Education and Skills and the safety guidelines of the school community.