

Approved Date:	
Review Date:	March 2027

Internet Acceptable Usage Policy

Introduction:

Scoil Cholmcille recognizes that access to ICT enhances the opportunity for our pupils and staff to learn, engage, communicate and develop skills that will prepare them for many aspects of their lives. However, just like in the real world, the Internet has access to people and certain kinds of information that are unsuitable for children – and may potentially have a negative impact on their attitudes, behaviour and well-being. It is important for us to equip our pupils with the necessary information and skills to navigate safely on the internet. This policy applies to all of the school’s “Devices”, which means all computers, chromebooks, iPads, laptops, smartphones and other IT resources that connect to the school’s network. This policy applies to staff and pupils of Scoil Cholmcille. The school reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time at its discretion. This policy should be read carefully to ensure that the content is accepted and understood.

Rationale:

The rationale of this policy is to give guidance and direction for the acceptable use of ICT for teaching and learning and communication as appropriate for all members of the school community in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. If the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

Aim:

The aim of the Acceptable Use Policy (“AUP”) 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 allow the pupils and parents know of the school’s administration and monitoring of the schools devices, equipment and networks.
- To respect the use of all school ICT equipment and use it responsibly in accordance with school policy.

- To treat others users with respect at all times and respect the right to privacy of all members of the school community,
- To respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources.
- To discourage the misuse of ICT resources in a manner that would bring the school into disrepute

Responsibilities of staff

Scoil Cholmcille's computers and networks are to be used in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. Management reserves the right to monitor this usage.

Employees will:

- Follow the guidelines set out in this AUP.
- Supervise pupil use of ICT Model and provide instruction in the ethical and appropriate use of technology in a school setting.
- Maintain a curricular focus.

School Strategies

Scoil Cholmcille will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and minimise risks associated with the Internet.

These strategies include, but are not limited to the following:

- A central filtering system is used on all school Devices through the School Broadband Programme to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material and to block unsuitable sites.
- Virus protection software is used on school Devices and updated regularly.
- The School 'search engine has a built-in 'safe search' feature. The 'safe search' feature will be enabled on all search engines on school Devices.
- Staff, pupils and parents/guardians will be informed of webinars and other information relevant to Internet Safety.
- Online safety will be promoted routinely through webswise, parent-teacher meetings, staff conferences, during class lessons and Internet Safety Week.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software on school Devices will not be permitted.
- A teacher/SNA will supervise Internet use 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.
- Pupils will observe good 'netiquette' (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Pupils will use appropriate care and follow rules when working with school devices.

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 1993

Support structures and Education

Scoil Cholmcille endeavours to have support structures in place to ensure the appropriate use of electronic devices in school and to ensure staff, parents/guardians and pupils also feel supported in this manner.

- The school will inform pupils and parents/guardians of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.
- The school will run a programme on acceptable internet usage, for pupils and parents/guardians. This will cover several topics including cyber-bullying.
- Scoil Cholmcille will link in with community guard in relation to Internet Safety and Cyberbullying annually.
- Parents/Guardians must not use social media or the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, or other members of the school community.
- Parents/Guardians or other visitors to the school should not upload images or videos featuring pupils or staff of Scoil Cholmcille to any social media platform. This includes images from in- school concerts, sports day events etc.

- Parents/Guardians must not engage in activities involving social media or any form of communications technology, which could bring Scoil Cholmcille into disrepute. Parents/Guardians should ensure that their children adhere to the minimum age requirements for the use of messaging services and social networks. 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, etc. until they are the appropriate age
- Parents/Guardians are expected to take responsibility for their child's use of ICT and electronic devices (including mobile phones) and should monitor their child/ren's online behaviour outside of school. School authorities cannot be responsible for pupil online behaviour that arises outside of the school environment. However the school will cooperate in monitoring so far as is possible with parents/guardians in dealing with reports of inappropriate online incidents that impact on the wellbeing of pupils and/or staff. Parents/guardians will be advised to report these inappropriate online incidents to the Gardaí.

Acceptable Use of the Internet for pupils

- Pupils will be taught specific lessons on online safety by teachers. (eg. Web wise, Zeeko 5 in 1 Rule and lessons from All Aboard for Digi town). Internet Safety talks may also be given by the Gardaí.
- Pupils will not knowingly attempt to visit Internet sites on school Devices that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials and the school will not be responsible for any attempts taken in this regard. In the event of accidentally accessing any of the above sites, the pupil will be expected to alert and report the incident to a teacher.
- The internet will be used to enhance learning and will be used for educational purposes.
- Pupils will not upload, download or otherwise transmit material that is copyrighted on school Devices. Pupils will be taught about ethical behaviour, fair use and copyright.
- Pupils will not disclose or publicise personal or confidential information to others online. Examples of this are, but not limited to, their own or peers' home addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, online profile information or name and location of their school.
- Pupils will not examine, change or use another person's files, username or passwords.

- Pupils will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving any information, school-related or personal, may be monitored and disciplined accordingly.
- The school takes every reasonable precaution to provide for online safety, but it cannot be held responsible if pupils access unsuitable websites either deliberately or inadvertently.

Email / Google Drive

- When using Google Classroom and the G-Suite Apps, pupils will use approved class email accounts under supervision of a teacher or parent/guardian.
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory, or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the Internet.

Distance Learning

- In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers may use primarily Google Classroom Class Dojo, along with others such as Padlet, Zoom, Google Meet, Zoom, SeeSaw, Study Ladder, or other platforms approved by the Principal as platforms (the "Online Platforms") to assist with remote teaching where essential.
- 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.
- 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.
- If teachers are using Google Meet/Zoom, parents/guardians must consent to their child accessing such lessons. (Appendix 3: Parental Consent for Distance Learning)
- Parents/Guardians must also agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons conducted on the Online Platforms.(Appendix 2 Distance Learning Code of Behaviour)

Internet Chat

Discussion, such as “Chat” on online platforms will only be used for educational purposes and will always be guided by a teacher and supervised by a parent/guardian. Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through the Internet and this is forbidden. An opportunity presents here for the teaching of web safety skills e.g. Webwise.

Discussion forums on Google Classroom/Zoom will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.

Personal Devices

Pupils who are found with personal electronic devices in their possession or turned on during school hours will have them confiscated. They will be kept by the teacher until the teacher contacts the parent/guardian to collect it.

Pupils 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.

The use of E-readers may be permitted under the supervision of the teacher.

Assistive Technology Devices will be used for educational purposes only - please refer to Appendix 1: Policy with regard to ICT/Assistive Technology in the Special Education Setting

School Website and affiliated Social Media sites, School App.

- The school’s website address is www.mounthanoverns.ie
- The School’s Parents’ Association has a closed facebook group.
- The School uses the Aladdin administrative tool.
- The School uses Class Dojo as a communication app.
- Pupils 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 pupil including their full 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 pupils will not be published on the school website and/or affiliated pages, without prior parental/guardian permission.

- The photos/videos on our website/Class Dojo 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 on social media 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.

Class Dojo. The Use of Class Dojo as a Communication Tool

The teachers use Class Dojo as a motivational and communication tool. A few pointers about the use of the App and what it is intended for:

Teacher Use:

- 1) Teachers will use Dojo to share photos and work from the children's school day from time to time.
- 2) Teachers will use it to give messages/information of importance to parents.
- 3) From time to time, teachers will arrange meetings with parents using Dojo.

Parents Use:

- 1) To arrange a meeting with the teacher.
- 2) To make the teacher aware of any urgent information about your child that cannot wait until a meeting is arranged.

This urgent information falls into the following categories :

- He/She forgot their lunch/drink/homework folder
- He/She has an appointment and needs to leave early/will be late
- He/She was not feeling well that morning.

If you do send a Dojo message please allow 48 hours for a reply. Messages will only be replied to within a reasonable timeframe.

Queries will only be dealt with between Monday and Friday.

As teachers are busy in class they may not see an urgent message posted during the day. If there is something urgent please contact the school on 0419839405 or email mounthanoverns@gmail.com and the principal will alert the teacher to the same, if necessary.

Use of Information Communication Technology (“ICT”) Resources

- Scoil Cholmcille’s information and technology resources (e.g. e-mail, computers, computer applications, networks, internet, intranet, 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 email or accessing inappropriate websites (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.
- Pupil 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’ General Data Protection Regulation (“GDPR”)
- Staff 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’ 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 pupils who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use.

Review and Ratification

The school will review this AUP Policy and reserves the right to amend or change its use in line with school priorities.

The Board of Management ratified this AUP Policy on _____.

Appendix 1:

POLICY REGARDING THE USE OF ICT/ ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION 2024

INTRODUCTION

Information Communication Technology (ICT) can have an exponential impact on education for pupils with special education needs (SEN). It enhances their access to the curriculum, enables them to improve the presentation of their work and heightens motivation levels, ensuring significantly higher achievements. It is therefore important that teachers and pupils in Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover gain the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding of ICT in order to optimise learning potential for pupils with SEN. It is envisaged that ICT be used in any subject where it is appropriate and is a viable support to the pupil's learning. The assistive technology provided to pupils can be in the form of a laptop computer.

RULES FOR USE

1. As per the Department of Education and Skills (DES) Circular (No 0010/2013 Scheme of grants towards the purchase of essential assistive technology equipment for pupils with physical or communicative disabilities, available on www.education.ie), assistive technology issued by the DES is the property of the DES. Should a pupil transfer to a new school then the principal of the new school must apply in writing to Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover for the device to be transferred for use by the pupil in the new school.
2. Written notification will be issued to the parents/guardians of each pupil who is granted access to assistive technology.
3. Class teachers will be notified by the SEN Team of all pupils using assistive technology so they can determine, in conjunction with the pupil, Special Needs Assistant (where applicable) and the SEN Team, how the technology can be used.

HOW LAPTOPS(ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY) ARE TO BE USED:

1. All school laptops must have anti-virus software installed. The school will undertake to update the antivirus software when required. The pupils must not tamper with this, or any other, software installed by Scoil Cholmcille, Mount Hanover.
2. Careful storage of all technology is required for safe keeping and due care must be shown to prevent unnecessary damage to devices, e.g. laptop must be stored in a secure location.
3. The pupil must endeavour to do no untoward damage to the assistive technology. They should treat it safely and respectfully. No food or drink should be consumed when using the equipment. Similarly, the identifying labels for each piece of technology must not be removed.

4. When the device/equipment is not in use on the school property, the assistive technology should be stored in a secure location in the classroom.