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Acceptable Use Policy for Internet Use

Saint Feichín's National School Cross

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. This policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in Saint Feichín's N.S. It also applies to members of staff, parents and others who access the internet in Saint Feichín's N.S.

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.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 the AUP will be reviewed regularly.

When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected:

- To treat others with respect at all times.
- Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources.

School Strategies

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

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in Saint Feichín's N.S. based on guidance from the Webwise website.
- Teachers will have access to continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software from the NCTE is used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- 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, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.

Web Browsing and Downloading

- Pupils and staff 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.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Pupils will use the school's internet connection only for educational activities. Occasionally they may be allowed to use the internet for entertainment purposes, however, all websites will be vetted by the class teacher.
- Pupils will not engage in online activities such as uploading or downloading large files that result in heavy network traffic which impairs the service for other internet users.
- Pupils will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Downloading of materials or images not relevant to pupils' studies is not allowed.
- Pupils and staff will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information.

Email / Internet Chat

Pupils will use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.

- Pupils should not use school email accounts to register for online services such as social networking services, apps, and games.
- Pupils should be aware that email communications are monitored.
- Pupils will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and 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, telephone details or pictures. Pupils, while at school, will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they know only through email or the internet.

- Pupils should immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication.
- Pupils should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, pupils should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders. Pupils will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Pupils will not have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication fora.

Social Media

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow us to interact and keep in touch. While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy set out the principles that members of our school community are expected to follow when using social media.

The principles set out in this policy are designed to help ensure that social media is used responsibly so that the confidentiality of pupils and staff and the reputation of the school is protected.

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Saint Feichín's N.S.:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, G Chat, Tiktok etc. is not allowed by pupils in Saint Feichíns N.S.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is with expressed permission from teaching staff.
- Staff, parents and pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff or other members of the Saint Feichín's N.S. community.
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Saint Feichín's N.S. community on social media.
- Staff and pupils must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Saint Feichín's N.S. into disrepute.

Personal Devices

Pupils using their own technology in school, such as leaving a device turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages, or the unauthorised taking of images, still or moving is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy. Pupils are not permitted to bring personal mobile phones or other internet enabled devices to school.

Images & Video

- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- At Saint Feichín's N.S., pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is allowed once care is taken that no harm is done to staff or pupils of Saint Feichín's N.S.
- Written permission from parents will be obtained before photographs or videos of pupils are published on the internet.
- Pupils must not share images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.
- Sharing explicit images and in particular explicit images of pupils and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other pupils automatically incurs suspension as a sanction.

Cyberbullying

This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying.

Access to technology means that cyber-bullying can happen around the clock and the pupil's home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Pupils are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. The nature of these technologies means digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and is almost impossible to delete permanently. While cyber bullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can be felt in school.

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, Saint Feichín's N.S. considers that a once-off offensive or hurtful public 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.

- When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times.
- Engaging in online activities with the intention to harm, harass, or embarrass another pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.
- Measures are taken to ensure that staff and pupils are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. This definition includes cyber-bullying even when it happens outside the school or at night.
- Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.
- The prevention of cyber bullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

School Websites

The following points apply to the school's website and social media profiles including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Youtube etc

- The website and social media sites will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of pupils or staff.
- Webpages allowing comments or user-generated content will be pre-moderated and checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain any inappropriate or offensive content. All parties are being asked to 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. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in a permanent ban from our social media accounts.
- The publication of pupil work will be coordinated by a teacher.

- Saint Feichín's N.S. will endeavour to use only digital photographs, audio or video clips of focusing on group activities.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will not be published on Saint Feichín's N.S. web pages.
- Saint Feichín's N.S. will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions without the explicit permission of parents.

Distance Learning using the Internet

Teachers in the school may choose to use a number of tools for classroom communication. Examples include Google Classroom, Zoom and SeeSaw.

In relation to the use of the SeeSaw app, pupils will maintain their own digital learning journals and may post images, videos and audio recordings related to their classwork on their own journal. Parents should only have access to their own child's journal content. All uploads, including comments should be approved by the class teacher or Special Educational Needs Teacher.

Consent for the use of online platforms is provided on enrolment to the school.

The school observes the best GDPR practice in the management of data uploaded by pupils to their online learning platforms. Pupil data should not be shared with third parties without the consent of the Parents/Guardians.

Some online learning platforms provide synchronous video opportunities whereby a staff member directly speaks to the children 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.
- 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 members have the right to mute participants or discontinue an online session if a child behaves inappropriately.
- Staff will not meet any child alone using an online meeting. If there is a need for a meeting between a child 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 child's family to ensure that any interaction is appropriate. Any interaction from a pupil that could be deemed as inappropriate may result in the child's removal from the lesson or, where appropriate, a referral to Child Protection services.

Legislation

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

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

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____.

Chairperson

Board of Management