

SCOIL BHRÍDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Killane, Edenderry, Co. Offaly.

Phone / Fax: 046-9773451 email: info@scoilbhrideps.com

Acceptable Usage Policy

Aim

The aim of this Acceptable Usage Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's digital technologies and internet resources in a safe and effective manner. 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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the Code of Behaviour– will be imposed. It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP regularly. Before enrolling, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood. It is assumed that the parent accepts the terms of the AUP unless the school is specifically notified.

School's Strategy

Scoil Bhríde Primary School employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the internet.

These strategies are as follows:

General

- Internet sessions are always supervised by a teacher.
- Students and teachers are provided with training in the area of Internet Safety.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software by staff and students is not permitted.
- Virus protection software is used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal memory sticks or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Students are expected to follow the same rules for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline – See Code of Behaviour Policy.
- The school's broadband connection is provided by the Department of Education Schools Broadband Programme. As a result, there is content filtering which ensures that inappropriate websites and content are not accessible from within schools. We are currently working on a system that will operate Level 3 filtering for student WIFI and Level 4 access for teacher WIFI.

World Wide Web:

- Students are not permitted to intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students are encouraged to report accidental accessing of unpleasant material to help protect other pupils.
- Students are allowed to use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will learn not to copy information into assignments without acknowledging the source or author of the original work (plagiarism and copyright infringement).

- Students are reminded never to disclose or publicise personal information.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's **Acceptable Use Policy**.
- Students are made 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.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Artificial Intelligence (AI), including generative AI tools, is a rapidly developing area of technology that is increasingly being explored within education. Scoil Bhríde Primary School recognises the potential of these tools to support teaching and learning while also recognising the need for careful and responsible use.
- At present, pupils are not permitted to use generative AI tools in school or for school-related work.
- Members of staff may use AI tools such as Chat GPT or Gemini to assist with professional tasks such as lesson planning, generating teaching ideas or preparing educational resources. However, these tools must be used in a responsible and professional manner and in accordance with the school's data protection obligations.
- Under no circumstances should any personal, confidential or sensitive information relating to pupils, parents/guardians, staff members or the school be entered into an AI system. Staff must ensure that any content generated by AI is carefully reviewed for accuracy, appropriateness and suitability before being used in the classroom.
- The school will continue to monitor developments in Artificial Intelligence and will review this policy as national guidance evolves.

Email

- This will be relevant to staff only, nevertheless, students may be taught how to use email.

In the above case:

- Students are not permitted to send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students are reminded not to reveal their own or other people's personal details; such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students are reminded never to arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Students are reminded that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

School Website – www.scoilbhrideps.com

- Pupils are given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website.
- The website is regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- The publication of student work is co-ordinated by a teacher.
- Pupils' work appears in an educational context on web pages.
- The school endeavours to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students is not published on the school website.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details is omitted from school web pages.

- The school website avoids publishing the names of individuals in photographs.
- The school ensures that the image files are appropriately named –they do not use pupils’ names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
- Pupils continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Social Media

Web Services such as Aladdin Connect, Google Classroom, Facebook and Seesaw are being used by the school to communicate with parents and also for parents to communicate with the school. These services, although not owned by Scoil Bhríde Primary School, form part of our web services and all content that is placed on these services falls under this policy. For example, any content on the school’s Facebook account follows the same safety rules, e.g. the showing of photographs, video, etc. The safety of our children on the web is of utmost importance so the following rules apply to the school and parents:

- Many social media sites have minimum age requirements. While the school will not monitor this, we advise parents against allowing their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, X, Instagram, Tik Tok, ChatGPT, etc. until they are the appropriate age.
- Some digital platforms may be used by teachers for educational purposes. All online interactions must take place under the supervision of the teacher and through school-approved platforms.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to regularly check their child’s online activity / digital footprint.
- Parents are encouraged to check social media apps (e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram, Tik Tok etc) on mobile phones and electronic devices to ensure they are aware of their child’s online interaction with others and approve of same.
- Staff are advised not to “tag” photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- All stakeholders in the school are advised 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.
- All stakeholders in the school are advised to avoid any negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts.

Images & Video

- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.
- Permission from parents or guardians is obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website.
- 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.
- Photographs or videos taken using school devices (including school iPads) as part of school activities remain the property of the school and are managed in accordance with the school’s Data Protection Policy. Such images may only be stored, used or shared with the permission of the school.

Cyberbullying

- All pupils, parents and staff are expected to use the internet and digital technologies in a respectful and responsible manner 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.

- Cyberbullying is a form of bullying behaviour and is defined in the Department of Education's *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as bullying behaviour carried out through the use of information and communication technologies. This includes, but is not limited to, text messages, instant or direct messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles and chatrooms.

Cyberbullying behaviour may include:

- sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive or intimidating messages or images;
 - posting personal, private or sensitive information without consent;
 - creating or participating in fake or impersonation accounts to humiliate others;
 - deliberately excluding a pupil from online groups, accounts or games.
- Access to digital technology means that cyberbullying can occur at any time and beyond the school day. Students are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. Digital content can be shared instantly with a wide audience and is often difficult or impossible to remove permanently. While cyberbullying frequently takes place outside school hours and off school premises, its impact can be felt within the school environment.
 - In line with *Bí Cineálta*, the school is not expected to investigate bullying behaviour that occurs when pupils are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where such behaviour has an impact on a pupil in school, the school will support the pupils involved. If the bullying behaviour continues within school, it will be addressed in accordance with the school's *Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying Policy*.
 - A single online post or message may be regarded as bullying behaviour if it is intended to be shared with a wide audience or has the potential to be viewed or repeated multiple times. A once-off public offensive or hurtful message, image or statement placed online is therefore considered bullying behaviour. Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a private message, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be addressed under the school's Code of Behaviour, as appropriate.
 - The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of the school's *Anti-Bullying Policy*. In conjunction with our Parents' Association, we encourage parents to be fully aware of the capabilities and risks associated with any device, app or digital platform used by their children.

Personal Devices

Personal devices include (but are not restricted to) mobile phones, iPads, gaming devices, laptops tablet devices and smart watches.

Children are not allowed to have personal devices in school or at any school events which include (but is not restricted to) school tours, Panto trips and extra-curricular activities. If a student is found in possession of, or using, a personal device at school, the device will be confiscated and placed securely in a safe box at reception. A text message will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) informing them of the confiscation. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must collect the device from reception before 2:30 pm on the same day, or as soon as possible thereafter. The school's Code of Behaviour will also be applied. A student found in possession of a mobile phone will receive a yellow card, which must be signed by a parent/guardian. If a student is found using a mobile phone, they will receive an orange card, which must be signed by both a parent/guardian and the Principal.

The school will not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage to mobile devices.

Legislation

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

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

Support Structures

Scoil Bhríde Primary School, endeavours to have support structures in place to ensure the appropriate use of electronic devices in school and to ensure staff, parents and pupils feel supported in same.

- The school will provide Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying talks bi-annually for pupils from 2nd – 6th class.
- The school will provide Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying talks for parents and guardians biannually to all parents in the school. Pupils from 4th – 6th class are permitted to attend this talk.
- Community Gardaí link in with classes re Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying annually.
- Staff will regularly partake in Continuous Professional Development in relation to AUP, internet safety and Cyber Bullying.
- The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

Remote Learning

Google Classroom

In the event of a closure, students will engage in remote/online learning through use of Google Classroom (Spraoi classes) and See Saw/Google Classroom (Sonas classes). All parents will be given a unique code and instructions on how to join google classroom. Codes will be communicated via Aladdin Connect.

These platforms will be used for providing children with their curriculum learning and as a medium for communication between teachers and parents during school closures.

Zoom Live Lessons

In the event of a school closure the school will endeavour to provide each class level and students on stage 3 of the Continuum of support with one live zoom session per week. To ensure the safety of staff and students the following safety protocols will be enacted:

- Two staff members will be on a zoom call at any given time.
- All calls will be recorded and saved.
- Messaging functions between students will be deactivated.
- A new zoom link will be created for each meeting.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be notified of the following safety protocols and will be informed that the code of behaviour and associated sanctions will be used.

Supporting Vulnerable students

The school will endeavour to support vulnerable students during school closures by providing them with school issued devices (laptop/tablet). The school will use its discretion when issuing devices and parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be asked to sign out the devices and accept responsibility for their use outside school premises. (see Appendix 1)

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, as outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour. Sanctions can include written warnings, withdrawal of access and privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Board of Management Ratification

This policy is hereby ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde Primary School.

Signed: *Nichola Hogan*

Date: 27/04/2026

Ms. Nichola Hogan (Chairperson BOM)

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APPENDIX 1

I _____ take responsibility for the use of this device and confirm the following:

Please read carefully	Please tick to confirm you are agreeing to the following:
- The device will be used for accessing children's learning online only and will not be used for personal use.	
- I take responsibility for any loss damage theft to the device during school closure.	
- I will return the device to the school once the period of school closure has ended.	

Signed: _____

Date: _____