



St. Patrick's N.S.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

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General Approach

The aim of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from the 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. If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

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 the right to privacy of all other members of the school community.
- Respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in St. Patrick's N.S.

It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and school visitors who access the internet in St. Patrick's N.S.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

St. Patrick's N.S. will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of pupils or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases St. Patrick's N.S. will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions.

St. Patrick's N.S. implements the following strategies to promote safer use of the internet:

- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in St. Patrick's N.S. through our SPHE curriculum. The school also regularly uses support material from Webwise and other sources.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- St. Patrick's N.S. participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer and more effective use of the internet.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed regularly by the following stakeholders:

- Board of Management, teaching staff, and support staff.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.
- Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the Principal should be informed.

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the principal, teaching staff and support staff of St. Patrick's N.S.

Content Filtering

St. Patrick's N.S. has chosen to implement the following content filtering on its network- Clean Browsing Family Filter Blocks access to all adult, pornographic and explicit sites. It also blocks proxy and VPN domains that are used to bypass the filters. Mixed content sites (like Reddit) are also blocked. Google, Bing and Youtube are set to Safe Mode. Malicious and Phishing domains are blocked.

Pupils taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. Accidental accessing of inappropriate online material will be reported to the class teacher.

Web Browsing and Downloading

Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials. Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom to their teacher. Pupils will report accidental access of inappropriate materials in school but outside the classroom to their class teacher. Pupils and staff will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content. 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 use the school's internet connection only for educational purposes. 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 by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.

Email and Messaging

While in school,

- The use of personal pupil email accounts is not allowed and is not necessary at St. Patrick's N.S.
- Students will not be given access to email. However, they will be provided with Google credentials for accessing other communication tools such as Google Classroom.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, 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 passwords, addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know online
- Students will note that sending and receiving files is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Students will not have access to email, social media, chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication fora.

Social Media

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

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Google Chat etc. is not allowed by pupils in St. Patrick's N.S.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is with express permission from teaching staff.
- Staff and pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, other members of the St. Patrick's N.S. community
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the St. Patrick's N.S. community on social media.

- Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring St. Patrick's N.S. into disrepute.
- Staff and pupils must not represent your personal views as those of St. Patrick's N.S. on any social medium.

The Internet has become a two way communication system for the school and the wider community. The school has a website and a Twitter account which we use regularly to communicate with parents. We also use the Aladdin school management system to communicate with parents. Please 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.

Personal Devices

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, and digital music players in St. Patrick's N.S:

- Pupils are not allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into St. Patrick's N.S.
- On the very rare occasion that pupils bring an internet-enabled device to school, this device will be stored in the principal's office and can be collected at home time.

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 carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website and Twitter account.
- 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.

Cyberbullying

- 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 cyberbullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

School Website

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website and Twitter account.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.
- The publication of student work will be coordinated by a team of teachers.
- St. Patrick's N.S. will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on St. Patrick's N.S. web pages.
- St. Patrick's N.S. will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

Distance Learning/ Direct Communication

Teachers in the school may choose to use a number of tools for classroom communication. Examples include Google Classroom, Google Meet, SeeSaw, and ClassDojo. Where required, parental consent will be sought prior to using these online platforms. These tools will be used to set homework, allow pupils to showcase their work and to complete class and individual projects.

Some of these tools 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. These types of lessons will only take place in exceptional circumstances (e.g. prolonged school closures) and with the prior approval of the Principal and Board of Management. 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.
- The staff member has the right to remove any person being disruptive from a synchronous lesson.
- 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 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 AUP complies with the following legislation relating to use of the Internet:

- EU General Data Protection Regulations 2018

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Children First 2018
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

Support Structure

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including 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.

Signature of Principal:

Date:

Signature of Chairperson:

Date:

Permission Form

At the beginning of each school year, parents are asked to read the Acceptable Use Policy and to agree to its contents through a permission slip on the Aladdin communication app.