

Scoil Éanna Acceptable Use Policy

Introduction

At Scoil Éanna we recognise that access to technology gives pupils, parents and teachers greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life and citizenship. We are committed to help pupils develop 21st Century technology and communication skills, within the confines of our budget.

While social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks to keep in mind when using these tools. In the social media world, the lines are blurred between what is public or private, personal or professional.

Rationale

This original policy was formulated in the last term of 2005 when the computer suite was opened in Scoil Éanna. It was reviewed in June 2009 for the launch of the school website.

This version was formulated following a review conducted by the Principal, Staff, the Student Council, the Parents' Association and the Board of Management early in 2017. This policy will be subsequently reviewed as issues and matters arise relating to the acceptable use of IT. This policy is to be read in conjunction with our Anti-bullying policy which also deals with the issue of Cyberbullying.

Relationship to Mission Statement

This policy has been developed in line with the school's mission statement which advocates a safe and caring learning environment for pupils and staff. As the school embraces new technologies of the digital age there is an increasing need to raise awareness around respect for the individual and the safety of those engaging with these communication tools.

Aims

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) 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 a privilege for pupils. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

By revising this policy we aim to bring the guidelines for internet use within the school into line with current best practice. Consequently we hope that this policy will

- Produce a set of strategies for pupils that will allow them to use technology safely and responsibly.
- Protect the integrity and good name of all members of the school community from online abuse.
- Outline behaviours which are unacceptable and the consequences for engaging in these.
- Provide guidance for staff on the appropriate use of Social Media.
- Outline procedures for school community members who find themselves the victims of inappropriate social media behaviour.

Guidelines

We've created these social networking/media guidelines for all to follow when representing the school in the virtual world.

- We expect you to use good judgement in all situations
- You must know and follow the school's Code of Behaviour and AUP
- Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared on your social network is public information
- Always treat others in a respectful, considerate and positive manner
- If you are approved to represent the school, unless you are specifically authorised to speak on behalf of the school as a spokesperson, you should state that the views expressed in your postings etc. are your own. Stick with discussing school-related matters that are within your area of responsibility.
- Be open about your affiliation with the school and the role/position you hold.
- Do not publish, post or release information that is considered confidential or not public. If it seems confidential, it probably is!
- Online "conversations" are never private. Do not use your birth date, address or mobile phone number on any public website.
- To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide. Avoid talking about personal schedules or situations.
- NEVER give out or transmit personal information of pupils, parents or school staff.
- Don't take information you may receive through social networking (such as e-mail addresses, customer names or telephone numbers) and assume it's the most up-to-date or accurate.
- Always respect the privacy of the members of the school community.

Netiquette

Users should always use the internet, network resources and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner. It should also be recognised that among the valuable content available online, there is also much unverified, incorrect or inappropriate content. Always use trusted sources when conducting research via the internet. Remember not to post anything e.g. text, snapchat etc. online that you wouldn't want parents, teachers or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online it's out there – and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended or imagined.

Personal Safety

If you see a message, comment, image or anything else online that makes you concerned for your safety, bring it to the attention of an adult immediately. (Teacher if in school or parent when at home)

- Users should never share personal information including phone number, address, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission.

- Users should recognise that communicating over the internet brings implied anonymity, however, there are associated risks, and all should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in these behaviours or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained by others – you have an on-line footprint!

School's Strategy

The 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 will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems (via NCTE) will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage.
- Pupils and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.
- 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.
- Pupils will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

World Wide Web

- Pupils will not visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Pupils will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Pupils will never 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.
- Pupils 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.

Email

- Pupils may use approved class email accounts under supervision of or with permission from a teacher.
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene or 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.
- Pupils will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

Internet Chat

- Pupils will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication that have been approved by the school. Access will only be available while under the supervision of the teacher.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via internet chat is forbidden.

School Website – www.scoileanna.ie

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual pupils will not be published on the school website without parental permission. Video clips may be password protected.
- Personal pupil information including name, home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Scoil Éanna N.S. Facebook Page

The purpose for having a school Facebook page is

- To continue to advance our school communication system with information shared via Facebook, along with the existing methods of paper notes, text messages and the school website.

- To communicate with parents regarding specific events and activities.
- To publicise school events and increase awareness about school fundraising.
- To announce any updated information.
- To highlight positive school achievements in a forum where they can be shared by the school community e.g. photos of pupils' projects, activities, field trips etc.
- To make school announcements e.g. school closure due to snow etc.
- To use Facebook as a means of marketing the school to a wider audience.
- To engage the community that Scoil Éanna serves and act as a key component of our school's online presence.
- To facilitate communication and networking opportunities between parents especially new or prospective parents.
- To maintain contact with past parents and past pupils.

Terms of use of Scoil Éanna Facebook Page

- Users cannot advertise products or services on our Facebook page.
- Users should not post anything on the page that could be deemed as offensive.
- Inappropriate or harmful comments or content will be removed immediately.
- Users should not engage in giving negative feedback on Facebook. It is more appropriate to deal with the school directly on such matters.
- Users will not mention individuals in a negative way – pupils, staff or other members of the school community – on the school Facebook page.
- Users should not ask to become “friends” with staff as failure to respond may cause offence.
- Users cannot tag or name pupils on photographs on the school Facebook page.
- Users should not add comments which could identify pupils on Facebook (e.g. tagging or naming their parents)

The minimum sanction for any user breaking these terms is an automatic removal from our Facebook page.

Points to Note

Facebook lists a minimum age requirement of 13, and all parents are reminded that pupils under the age of 13 should not be on Facebook. Therefore, current pupils cannot be accepted as users.

Unacceptable uses of Social Media sites and their Consequences

Users are responsible for their own behaviour when communicating with social media and will be held accountable for the content of the communications that they post on social media locations.

Unacceptable use of Social Media sites will include

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, negative comments, threatening messages or images that may cause harm to any member of the school community.
- Forwarding or ‘Liking’ material that is likely to cause offence or hurt to a third party.
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage the school's image or reputation.
- Creating a fake profile that impersonates another member of the school community.
- Sending or posting material that is confidential to the school.

- Uses that violate copyright law, fail to observe licensing agreements or infringe on others' intellectual property rights.
- Participating in the viewing or exchange of inappropriate images or obscene material.
- Plagiarism should be avoided and credit should always be given to the original author.

While all cases involving the inappropriate use of social media will be dealt with on an individual basis, the school and its Board of Management considers the above to be serious breaches of our Code of Behaviour. Disciplinary action will be taken in the case of inappropriate use of social media tools.

Personal Devices

Pupils using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages, or the unauthorized taking of images, still or moving, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy. **[See also Mobile Phone Policy]**

Sanctions for Policy Infringement

Infringements of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including, (but not exclusively):

- Confiscation of devices if found on school grounds or on school related activities
- Notification to parents
- Suspension of network and computer privileges
- Written warning
- Detention
- Suspension from school and/or school-related activities
- Exclusion in the case of serious misconduct which brings the school into disrepute or defames, slanders or bullies any member of the school community.
- Legal action and/or prosecution including the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP every three years. The AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on 21st February 2017

Signed _____ Dated _____

Chairperson