



Acceptable Use Policy
Governing Access to Internet

Scoil Náisiúnta Cúil an tSúdaire 2.

Adopted on	29/1/2015
Reviewed	01/03/18
Reviewed	2/5/2018
Modified	19th November 2024

Introduction

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

When using the internet in Sandylane NS students, 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.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP periodically. The policy should be read carefully by parents/guardians to ensure that the conditions of use are understood, and acceptable to them and their child/children. All parents/guardians are required to sign, together with their child/children, the Acceptance Form attached at Appendix 1 if not agreed upon at the time of enrolment. This Acceptance Form will continue in place while your child/children are attending this school.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to students who have access to and are users of the internet in Sandylane NS. It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in Sandylane NS. Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities. Sandylane NS will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of students or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases Sandylane NS will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions. When necessary, parents/carers will be directed to webwise.ie and the wealth of information and support available there.

School's Strategies

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

- Access to the internet will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. The school internet is protected by the firewall provided and is set at Level 4 under School Broadbands.
- 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 CD-ROMs, memory sticks or other digital storage media in school is not allowed unless with permission.
- Pupils will observe good "netiquette" (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

World Wide Web

- Pupils will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- 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.
- 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 be taught appropriate use of the internet, using the www.webwise.ie teaching materials.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

Email

- Pupils will not have access to personal email facilities at school. Any emails to other children/schools, will be sent through the school email address under the supervision, and with the permission, of their teacher.

- 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.
- Pupils will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Video Calls (Using software such as Zoom, Teams) Skype may be used for contacting other children/schools for project work, or penpals. This will only be done under the supervision of the teacher.

Content Filtering

- Sandylane NS has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

Level 4: This level allows access to millions of websites including games and YouTube but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the Social Networking category.

- Students 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.
- When using Seesaw or Google Classroom, the agreed digital platforms for remote learning at home, pupils will be outside of the Sandylane's network. Thus, it will be incumbent upon their parents and guardians to ensure adequate internet safety precautions are taken. In particular, we ask that parents exercise caution in allowing pupils to use social media accounts with minimum age requirements. We would advise parents not to allow their children to have personal accounts on TikTok, Snapchat etc. until they are the appropriate age.

Personal Devices

The use of any personal device, including mobile phones, is not allowed in the school. In the case that a student has written permission to bring in a phone, they must be left given to the teacher in the morning. It is the student's responsibility that they get the phone back when school finishes.

The school is not responsible for the loss of or damage to any personal electronic device on school premises.

Use of devices by students and other non-school personnel is not allowed anywhere on school grounds.

Use of personal devices by staff should be for school purposes only.

Email and Messaging

- The use of personal email accounts is not allowed at Sandylane NS for students.
- Students will use approved school email accounts for accessing Google Classroom.
- Pupils may be assigned a school email address for use from 3rd Class onwards.
- Pupils will not be able to use the email address assigned for email communication. This will be specifically disabled on the Admin Panel of Google Workspace.
- Students should not use school email accounts to register for online services such as social networking services, apps, and games.
- Students will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students must only use their school email for school related activities and for registering on school based activities only. The use of personal email addresses is not allowed for school based work.

Social Media and messaging services for Staff and Students

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 sets out the principles that members of the Sandylane NS 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 other staff and the reputation of the school is protected. This policy applies to personal websites such as social networking sites (for example Instagram and TikTok), blogs, microblogs such as Twitter, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us and content sharing sites such as flickr and YouTube. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media.

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Sandylane NS:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc. is not allowed in Sandylane NS.

- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is with express permission from teaching staff.

Social Media

Sandylane NS may set up a social media page to promote school activities. The Principal and nominated person from the school staff will control content and settings. The following principles apply to this and general use of Social Media.

- All members of the school community must not use social media, messaging services and the internet in any way to harass, impersonate, insult, abuse or defame others.

- Staff and students must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Sandylane NS community on social media.

- Staff and students must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

- Staff and students must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Sandylane NS into disrepute.

- Staff and Students must not represent their own personal views as those of being Sandylane NS on any social medium.

- Students will be provided with guidance on etiquette regarding social media.

- Teachers can read further information about the use of Social Media and Electronic Communication here: <https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latestnews/2021/guidance-for-registered-teachers-about-the-use-of-social-media-and-electroniccommunication.html> Personal Devices and Assistive Technology

Personal Devices and Assistive Technology

Students using their own technology in school should follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if they were using school equipment.

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, phones, gaming devices, and smartwatches in Sandylane NS

- Students are only allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during lessons with expressed permission from teaching staff.

- Smartwatches that can take photographs and record media are not permitted in the school.

- The school is not responsible for the loss of or damage to any personal electronic device on school premises

Digital Learning Platforms (including video conferencing)

In relation to Digital Learning Platforms, it is envisaged that pupils from Junior Infants to 2nd Class will use SeeSaw and pupils from 3rd to 6th Class will use Google Classroom.

Staff will use Google Workspace and Aladdin.

- Students must only use their school email for accessing school digital learning platforms
- Only school devices should be used for the purposes of capturing and storing media on the school's Google Drive (If a personal device is used, all photos and videos should be deleted once uploaded to the school Drive)
- All school-related media and data should be stored on the Sandylane NS Google Drive.
- The use of digital platforms should be used in line with considerations set out in the school's data protection policy (to be done)
- Each staff user of the platform will be provided with their own unique login credentials.
- Passwords for digital platforms and accounts should not be shared.
- Personal email addresses should not be used when creating accounts for pupils on school

Images and Video

The following general principles apply:

- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that students are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- At Sandylane NS students must not take, use, share, manipulate or publish or distribute images of others without their permission.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is not allowed under any circumstances.
- 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 Sandylane NS.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.

- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of students are published on the school website.
- Students must not share or manipulate 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 students and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other students automatically incurs suspension as a sanction

Inappropriate Activities

- Promotion or conduct of illegal acts, e.g. under the child protection, obscenity, computer misuse and fraud legislation
- Misuse and fraud legislation
- Racist material
- Pornography
- Promotion of any kind of discrimination
- Promotion of racial or religious hatred
- Harmful content or threatening behaviour, including promotion of physical violence or mental harm
- Any other information which may be offensive to colleagues or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the school or brings the school into disrepute
- Using school systems to run a private business
- Use systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards employed by the school

Uploading, downloading or transmitting commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, without the necessary licensing permissions

- Revealing or publicising confidential or proprietary information (e.g. financial / personal information, databases, computer / network access codes and passwords)
- Creating or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files
- Carrying out sustained or instantaneous high volume network traffic (downloading / uploading files) that causes network congestion and hinders others in their use of the internet

- Online gaming
- Online gambling
- Online shopping
- Use of social networking sites, instant messaging and online forums
- Child sexual abuse material
- Any other activity considered questionable

School Website

- Students 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.
- Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
- 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 teacher.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Sandylane NS web pages.
- Sandylane NS will avoid publishing names of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.
- Sandylane NS will pixelate or obscure images of pupils that do not have permission to be featured on the school website
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named and will not use students' names in image file names or ALT tags if published online.

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 media, e-mail, messaging, 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 cyberbullying 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. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.

Access to technology means that cyberbullying can happen around the clock and the students home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Students 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 cyberbullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can also be felt in school.

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, Sandylane NS 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, students, 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 student or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Measures are taken by Sandylane NS to ensure that staff and students 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 cyberbullying even when it happens outside the school or at night. In addition, the Department of Education Anti-Bullying Procedures, 2013 defines cyberbullying as "placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or another public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

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

Support Structures

Teachers will give appropriate use of the internet and how to use it safely. Information on internet safety is available through the NCTE, www.webwise.ie and www.safety.ie

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Sanctions

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

Monitoring the implementation of the policy - The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the Principal, staff and the Board of Management.

Reviewing and evaluating the policy

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated after 1 year. On-going review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines (e.g. from the Data Protection Commissioner, Department of Education and Skills or TUSLA), legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, students, school staff and others. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning

Timeframe for Review

This policy will be reviewed in Periodically in line with review of our Digital Plan and Anti-Bullying and any other policy that affects digital usage in the school.

Responsibility for Review

ICT Postholders

School principal

BOM

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 Acts 1988 to 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 and Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
- Children First Act 2015
- Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 (Coco's Law) ● Criminal Damage Act 1991

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 10th December 2024. It will be reviewed periodically as required.

Signed:			
The Ven. Leslie Stevenson		Mr. John Noonan	
Chairperson, Board of Management		Principal	
Date:		Date:	

Scoil Náisiúnta Cúil an tSúdaire 2

Sandylane National School Acceptable Use Policy Governing Access to Internet

Appendix 1:

Acceptance Form

Name of Pupil: 1) _____ Class: _____ Name of Pupil: 2)
_____ Class: _____

Name of Pupil:3) _____ Class: _____ Name of Pupil: 4)
_____ Class: _____

Pupil

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy governing access to the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school.

Signature

Signature:

Pupil: 1) _____ Date: _____ Pupil:
2) _____ Date: _____

Pupil: 3) _____ Date: _____ Pupil:4)
_____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy governing access to the Internet and grant permission for my above named son(s) or daughter(s) or any child/ren in my care to access the Internet in school. I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but the school cannot be held responsible if pupils access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph and allow my child/ren to use the internet in Scoil Náisiúnta Cúil an tSúdaire 2.

Father/Guardian

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____
_____ (Home)

Telephone:

(Mobile) _____ Telephone: _____

Mother/Guardian

Signature: _____

Date:

Address: _____
_____ (Home)

Telephone:

(Mobile) _____ Telephone: _____
