

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Scoil Mhuire Junior

1. Introduction

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in Scoil Mhuire Junior. It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, carers and others who access the internet in Scoil Mhuire Junior.

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils and staff will benefit from use of the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Misuse of the internet or negative engagement online 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 or offensive activities to the appropriate authorities

Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to indicate that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

2. General Approach

Scoil Mhuire Junior 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 Scoil Mhuire Junior will, where known, inform parents/guardians of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions.

Scoil Mhuire Junior implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Occasionally, expert speakers on internet safety/usage will be engaged both to speak to pupils and/or parents.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually by the Board of Management, teaching staff, support staff and parents/guardians.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using logs of reported incidents.

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 deputy principal.

3. Content Filtering

Scoil Mhuire Junior has chosen to implement the following level of 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.

Pupils taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action.

4. Web Browsing and Downloading

When using school tablets, pupils will use the app specified by the teacher and will not use the web browser unless directed to do so.

Pupils may at times have access to web browsing. Such web browsing will be done with the above content filter in place. All internet sessions will be supervised by a teacher.

If pupils are asked to search for content or images they will be instructed to use child-safe websites such as www.kiddle.co.

Downloading by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.

Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials to their teacher.

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 and staff will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Staff will not carry out web browsing in view of pupils. Web searches for educational content such as images will be carried out in advance of showing to pupils.

When using Google to search for images, 'safe search' will be turned on.

5. Email and Messaging

All staff members have school google accounts hosted on the school network. These accounts are managed by a school administrator. Pupils do not have access to email accounts.

Staff may use email and Aladdin to communicate with each other and may also use other G-suite apps such as Hangouts. All school messaging accounts are password protected.

Personal Whatsapp accounts are sometimes used for school communications.

Aladdin is used to communicate between staff and parents/guardians through text message, email and Aladdin Connect. All accounts are password protected.

The use of personal email accounts for staff is allowed at Scoil Mhuire Junior.

Seesaw messaging is used by teachers to share one-way messages with pupils and parents/guardians. Pupils and parents/guardians can communicate with staff through the use of comments in Seesaw.

6. Social Media, Blogging and Video Streaming

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Scoil Mhuire Junior:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp etc. is allowed only by staff, volunteers and parents/guardians in Scoil Mhuire Junior.
- Use of blogs such as Word Press is allowed in Scoil Mhuire Junior .
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo is allowed in Scoil Mhuire Junior .

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 or other members of the Scoil Mhuire Junior community.

Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Scoil Mhuire Junior community on social media.

Staff 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 Scoil Mhuire Junior into disrepute.

Staff and pupils must not represent personal views as those of Scoil Mhuire Junior on any social medium.

7. Devices

Pupils are not allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, smart watches and digital music players into Scoil Mhuire Junior.

Staff members, parents/guardians, carers, visiting adults and volunteers may use personal devices in the school and may access the school's broadband network.

Personal devices may be used to access school accounts such as G-suite, Aladdin, Seesaw and Zoom.

In order to use personal devices to access G-Suite, a Google device policy must be installed and agreed to. Devices used to access the school network in this way will be approved and managed by an administrator.

Photographs of students and student work must not be stored on personal devices.

All internet-enabled devices purchased by the school will be set up with school Google accounts and approved by an administrator.

All school devices will be encrypted and virus protection will be installed and updated at intervals.

8. Images & Video

A separate Policy for Use of Photographs and Videos is in place at Scoil Mhuire Junior. Stakeholders are asked to familiarise themselves with the content of this policy.

Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that pupils' safety is not compromised in any way and that they are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute. See Policy for Use of Photographs and Videos.

At Scoil Mhuire Junior, members of the school community must not share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission. See Policy for Use of Photographs and Videos.

9. Cyberbullying

A separate Anti-Bullying policy is in place at Scoil Mhuire Junior. The prevention of cyber bullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

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.

Measures are taken by Scoil Mhuire Junior 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.

10. Sharing and Publishing Work Online

School work may be published online to websites such as Twitter and the school website.

Online school content will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students 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.

The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.

Work published to Seesaw will remain private and will be viewed by staff members, students and parents/guardians only.

11. Online and Remote Learning

Online Learning Platforms

Seesaw will be used in the school as the main online learning platform. Other online platforms such as Class Dojo may also be used.

Online learning platforms will be used for assigning and submitting homework, supporting teaching and learning, maintaining e-portfolios and for remote teaching during periods of emergency school closure.

The focus of the content will be on teaching and learning primarily. Work posted to Seesaw will include worksheets, voice recordings, drawings, photos and videos. A pupil's work is private by default. Teachers must approve any work that is submitted.

All teachers, SNAs and administrative staff will have school Seesaw accounts linked to school email addresses.

Children will be given individual home access codes.

Seesaw activity done at school will be supervised by a teacher at all times. Students will use school tablets and will log in to their individual accounts.

E-portfolios may be used to support assessment and to share work with parents/guardians. The teacher will have to give final approval for any item to be added to his/her portfolio. The teacher controls what is shared and with whom.

Video Conferencing

Zoom and Google Meet may be used for video calls and online classes well as for staff meetings. They may be used for video conferencing with parents/guardians. Only accounts linked to the school's Zoom and Google subscription will be used by staff. The following security measures will apply and will be shared with all stakeholders.

General guidelines for live video calls/lessons:

- Login details for video conferencing will be shared only through email, Aladdin Connect and Seesaw and must not be posted or shared publicly. Passwords will be used by participants to gain access.
- Recurring meetings may be used where the login details and password remain the same each time.
- The waiting room feature must always be used and only identified participants will be admitted.
- Students' devices must be identified by name. Parents/guardians are asked to set up the name for the device in advance. The family name will suffice.
- Teachers must turn on necessary security settings before allowing students to join the call e.g. disable chat feature, include waiting room, etc.
- **A parent/guardian must be present with the child participating at all times during the video call in order to supervise.**
- The teacher always invites the students to the call and acts as host.
- The teacher must always be the first to join and the last to leave the online meeting room.
- The teacher will maintain a log of calls and a record of attendance as in general practice.
- Video calls will not be photographed, recorded or shared by any of the participants including teachers.
- The video conference room is a classroom and the same school behaviour and codes of conduct apply to this environment.
- Protocols will be agreed with students, e.g. using the chat feature for questions, raising hands if they wish to ask a question.
- The teacher will pre-set the video meeting to mute participants' microphones automatically upon entry. Students will need to unmute themselves when invited to do so in order to be heard.
- Break-out rooms may be used to encourage the children to chat in smaller groups. The class teacher will not be able to supervise these breakout sessions so these will only be used when there are multiple teachers present.
- It is the responsibility of all participants to ensure that there is nothing inappropriate (images, text etc) in the background for the video call. It must also be ensured that no inappropriate sound or language can be heard in the background. The teacher may have to quickly remove a participant from the call should this occur.
- If a teacher has any concerns regarding the meeting or is in any doubt, he/she is advised to end the meeting immediately.
- Any concerns around video conferencing should be reported to the school principal.

Legislation

Staff members and parents/guardians should familiarise themselves with information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet:

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

Ratified by the Board of Management on 20th April 2021.

Signed: _____

Eileen Hall
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: _____