



St. Patrick's NS Strangsmills

# AUP – Acceptable User Policy

Revised: 2025

[www.strangsmillsns.ie](http://www.strangsmillsns.ie)  
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# Acceptable Usage Policy for Internet Use

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

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.

The first version of the AUP was created on 2012. It was revised to take account of changes in technology use in 2018 and further updated in May 2020 to include Distance Learning. The most recent review took place in June 2025.

## 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 from the PDSTTiE is used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' usage through classroom observation
- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Teachers may limit access to certain apps during I-pad use.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Pupils co-sign with their parents, an undertaking on the responsible use/rules for laptops / I-Pads.
- All staff laptops have been encrypted and are password protected.

- The use of personal memory sticks and 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. (See Bí Cineálta policy and Procedures)

### **Photograph, Video and other Media**

- The staff of our school often share images, videos and other media of the pupils to celebrate and recognise the work of the pupils. Two members of the Leadership team have access to the school's Facebook account where they have administrative rights to share media on behalf of the school. Staff sometimes use their own personal devices to record this data and are asked to delete it regularly from their device and cloud storage. The school is not responsible for any data found on a staff member's device and staff members take responsibility for any content on their own devices or cloud storage in their name.
- While most photography is shared electronically, there are times when photographs are shared in physical form. This includes local newspapers, national media, pupil projects, school displays such as proud cloud, committees and other publications. When giving consent for a child's image to be recorded in the school, it is taken that the consent is for both digital and physical recordings. In order to reduce any possible errors, consent can either be given for all media to be recorded or none. For example, one cannot consent to an image being used for a local newspaper but not for social media, for example.
- The school will not display the full names of children next to photographs. The school holds no responsibility for a member of the public tagging a child's name or commenting using the child's name although the school will make efforts to delete comments that identify a child's name.

### **World Wide Web**

- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only during class time. All websites will be vetted by the class teacher. However, children cannot use social media accounts or record images, audio or video of other pupils or staff.
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Students 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.
- Students 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 / Internet Chat**

- Students will not be given access to school email accounts but in senior classes they are provided with Google credentials for accessing other communication tools such as Google Classroom, google docs, slides etc.
- 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, phone numbers or pictures.
- 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.

#### **Internet**

The Internet has become a two way communication system for the school and the wider community. Services such as E-mail, Google classroom, SeeSaw and Facebook 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 St. Patrick's NS, form part of our web

services and all content that is placed on these services falls under this policy. Please refer to the school's Data Protection Policy for further information on how the school utilises 3rd party services.

The safety of our children on the web is of utmost importance so the following rules apply to the school and parents. The Internet is open to potential dangers when used inappropriately.

The schools asks parents:

- To take note of social media sites minimum age requirements. While the school will not monitor this, we would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Instagram etc. until they are the appropriate age.
- Please do not "tag" photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- If you are uploading a photograph, please ensure that it does not identify the child in any way.
- 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.
- Avoid any negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts. If you have an issue with something in the school, social media is not the place to raise it. Comments of this nature will be deleted.
- Please do not request to "friend" a member of staff in the school. Most staff would like to keep their personal lives personal. It may be awkward for a staff member to be asked to ignore a social network request.
- Please do not add advertisements to our social media account without prior permission.
- Failure to keep the above rules will result in a permanent ban to our social media accounts.

## **School Website**

- Please note that the following points apply to the school's web site and social media profiles, including but not limited to Facebook.
- 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/Facebook.
- The website/Facebook 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 and the school's social media.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Video clips will not be password protected.
- Personal pupil information will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website/Facebook will avoid publishing the full name of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – we will not use pupils' names with image files if published on the web.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

## **Direct Communication using Internet**

Teachers in the school may choose to use a number of tools for classroom communication. Examples include Google Classroom, Zoom and SeeSaw. 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. 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.

### **Personal Devices**

Please see mobile device policy for further information.

### **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
- 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.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

This policy will be monitored by the Principal and the ICT co-ordinator in the school. Staff, parents and pupils have individual responsibilities as outlined within the policy.

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed in 2029 or sooner if the need arises.

## **Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the BOM on June 24<sup>th</sup> 2025.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Kieran Leahy, Chairperson