

Acceptable Use



Policy Document

Acceptable Use Policy

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1. Introduction

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to students who have access to and are users of, personal devices, school devices , the internet and Google Workspace for Education in St. Michael's Community College

2. Aims of the Policy

Obligations on organisations to safeguard children and young people

One of the main objectives of the Children First Act 2015 is to ensure that children and young people are kept safe from harm while using the services of relevant organisations. The Act does this by placing the following specific statutory obligations on organisations:

- To keep children safe from harm while they are using the service
- To carry out a risk assessment to identify whether a child or young person could be harmed while using the service
- To develop a Child Safeguarding Statement that outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks which have been identified
- To appoint a relevant person to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement.

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered using the internet, online resources, school and personal devices, including mobile phones in a safe school environment. Internet access and the increased use of school devices / personal devices / mobile phones are now a regular feature of teaching and learning. Acceptable use is critical for student's wellbeing, safety and learning. It is facilitated by adhering to the guidelines and instructions set out in this policy.

3. School's Strategy

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise the benefits and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

Respect & Responsibility

- Students will treat others with respect at all times.
- Students will play their part in the prevention of cyberbullying as defined in the Anti Bullying Policy.
- Students will respect themselves, others, and their school community, and shall not undertake any actions that may bring any of the above 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.
- Each student is responsible for the activity that takes place in his or her account and will be held responsible for it.
- Students are expected to keep their passwords safe. A student who suspects that others know his /her password must report this to have passwords reset. Accessing other school accounts is an offence.
- A student's school account in Google Workspace for Education is the digital equivalent of a school diary, book and copies; as such, parents have the right to access their son/daughter's accounts.

Safety

- The school has chosen to implement level four on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network. This level allows access to millions of websites 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 may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention, and in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.
- A teacher will always supervise internet / device use for teaching and learning in class.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Teachers will be provided with training in the area of internet safety.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to students through ICT & SPHE classes and the Student Support Team.
- Parents are strongly advised to avail of the advice and information on www.webwise.ie
- 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 is not permitted. Google Workspace for Education (GSuite) has a set of online tools to replace the need for such items.
- Each student will be issued with a school email account for educational purposes only. All users will be confined to sending and receiving emails within the @stmichaelscc.ie domain.
- Use of cameras (school or personal) - The user agrees that the camera will not be used to take inappropriate or explicit photographs or videos, nor will it be used to embarrass anyone in any way. Any use of the cameras in toilets or changing rooms, regardless of intent, will be treated as a serious violation. The camera will only be used with the expressed permission of a teacher.

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 to the Principal /Deputy Principal/Year Head
- Students will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- 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

- Students will use approved school email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, or 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 addresses or telephone numbers or pictures. Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.
- Students must not use school email accounts to register for online services such as social networking services, apps, games, and college / grant applications.
- Students should immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication.
- Students should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, students should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.

Images & Video

- 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 St. Michael's Community College, teachers and students must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.
- 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 annually, for use of photographs of students on the school website or social media sites
- Students 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.
- Sharing explicit images and in particular explicit images of students and/or minors is an unacceptable and prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other students automatically will incur serious sanctions.

School Website / School Social Media Accounts

- Students may sometimes be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website / social media accounts. Parental permission is required.
- The website / social media accounts will be regularly checked.
- Students' work will appear in an educational context on web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission. Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
- The school will use photographs on the website and social media accounts. The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities where individuals will not be named. Content focusing on individual students will not be published on the school website without parental permission. Video clips may be password protected.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website/ social media accounts will not identify students in images and videos.

Personal Devices/mobile phones

Students using their own technology or mobile phones 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:

- Students are allowed to bring internet-enabled mobile phones into school. Phones must be stored away for the school day. We are in the process of developing policy in this area following the issue of the Department of Education Circular - [see this link](#)
- **Phones must always be set to silent and may only be used in class with the teacher's express permission.**
- Phones being used for classwork (with teachers permission) **must be placed flat on the desk** to ensure the camera is out of use and the privacy of all is protected and respected
- Students are only allowed to bring other internet-enabled devices into St. Michael's Community College with expressed permission from staff.
- Students are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices or mobile phones during social time.
- All messages, to and from parents should be routed through school reception.
- Students using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or unauthorised use it in class, sending nuisance text messages, or the unauthorised taking of images with a mobile phone camera, still or moving are in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Use Policy. Abuse of rules on Student Personal Devices will result in **immediate confiscation of device, parental request for collection and may incur further sanctions up to and including suspension and expulsion.**
- Invasion of privacy by recording or sending images of staff or students will result in suspension.

Social Media in General

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in St. Michael's Community College:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, etc. are not allowed in school.
- Use of blogs such as WordPress, Tumblr etc. are not allowed in the school.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. are allowed, only with express permission from teaching staff.
- Members of the school community must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, staff, other members of the school community
- Members of the school community must not discuss personal information about students, staff and other members of the St. Michael's Community College community on social media.
- School email addresses may not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- Members of the school community must not engage in activities involving social media, which might bring St. Michael's Community College into disrepute.
- Members of the school community must not represent personal views as those of bring St. Michael's Community College on any social medium

This policy also extends to use, in and out of school, of social media. It applies to posts, comments, "likes", photos, video and media such as Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp, blogs etc, other messaging and social media sites that may give rise to issues for teachers, school staff, their fellow students and the school. Unacceptable behaviour on social media can affect wellbeing, learning, conduct in school, and the right to privacy. Sanctions will apply in the case of a breach that affects any member of the school community.

4. Procedures for development and review.

This policy has been developed with the aid of information provided on www.webwise.ie and will be subject to review by the Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, students, parents/carers, and representatives of the Board

of Management. The Board of Management, teaching staff, students, and parents will review this policy and its implementation annually.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.
- Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).
- Internal monitoring data for network activity.
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of students, parents, and teaching staff.

The Principal, Deputy Principal or a teacher must be informed immediately if any issue causing concern or breaching this policy arises. The ICT team will monitor the implementation of this Acceptable Use Policy.

5. Sanctions

In the event of a disciplinary issue for the breach of this policy:

- Students are afforded natural justice, including the right to be heard.
- A restorative approach may be taken depending on the circumstances.
- The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

If the school's Acceptable Use Policy is not adhered to, **internet access will be withdrawn**, and appropriate sanctions will be imposed in accordance with the Code of Behaviour and the Anti-bullying Policy.

Misuse of ICT devices and internet resources may result in disciplinary actions including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. Abuse of rules on a student's personal device will result in immediate confiscation of the device and request to parent /guardian to collect the device. It may incur sanctions from the Code of Behaviour, up to and including suspension and expulsion.

Online incidents that take place outside school and impact on the wellbeing of students or staff will be dealt with under this policy, and under associated Code of Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policies. In such cases St. Michael's Community College will, where known, inform parents/guardians of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions

6. Use of school devices

- School devices are provided to support teaching and learning and therefore are for taught classes only.
- Chromebook may not be used during supervised classes
- Damage to school devices, Chromebooks, desktops, chrome boxes, keyboards etc must be reported immediately in order to have the device repaired and ready for use by students as soon as possible.
- Deliberate damage to a school device will result in sanctions as per the Code of Behaviour.

Relevant Legislation

Data Protection Act 1988 (and Amendment Act 2003)

<http://www.dataprotection.ie/>

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1988/en/act/pub/0025/index.html>

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2003/en/act/pub/0006/index.html>

Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1998/en/act/pub/0022/index.html>

Interception Act 1993

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1993/en/act/pub/0010/print.html>

Video Recording Act 1989

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1989/en/act/pub/0022/index.html>

School Website and Social Media Platforms

Use of student's images.

Official school social media accounts are closely monitored and screened. The pages are well received and appreciated by all members of the school community. Inappropriate comments are very rare and swiftly dealt with through the schools supporting policies. We use photographs and videos of school life and school events to share experiences and to highlight student achievements. This is also a means of promoting and highlighting school life and achievements.

Our site/pages

You may wish to view how we use images on our website and social media pages. The relevant addresses are:

- **www.stmichaelscc.ie (public)**
- **Instagram user name : stmichaelscommunitycollege (public)**
- **Facebook: www.facebook.com/stmichaelsckilmihil/ (public)**
- **Google Workspace for Education—google sites private to the school community (not public)**

Child safeguarding

If an image or video is used by the school, the student/students will not be identified by name.

If, in acknowledging a particular individual achievement by name, we will not include the individual's image with it.

Exception are made for past students (over 18) achievements and shared public posts.

Permission

Please visit our pages and view our content before you sign. Then proceed to give your permission in section A or to withhold your permission in section B. This will apply for the entire time that the student is enrolled in school unless you wish to withdraw permission in the future.