



Áth Fhirdia

SCOIL MUIRE NA TRÓCAIRE

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY POLICY

1. Introduction

Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment where all students, including those with additional needs, have equitable access to education. Assistive technology (AT) plays a crucial role in supporting some students with disabilities, helping them to engage with the curriculum and achieve their full potential. This policy aligns with **Department of Education Circular 0010/2013** and relevant guidelines.

2. Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures for applying for, acquiring, implementing, and maintaining assistive technology (AT) for qualifying students in accordance with Circular 0010/2013.

3. Definition of Assistive Technology

Assistive technology refers to any equipment, software, or system that enhances the functional capabilities of students with disabilities. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Laptops and tablets
- Visual impairment supports (e.g. braille keyboard, magnification software)
- Speech-to-text and text-to-speech applications
- Audiology supports (e.g. FM radio system, sound field system)

4. Eligibility and Application Process

Eligibility for assistive technology is determined based on professional assessments and recommendations from relevant specialists (e.g. occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, educational psychologists). Provision under this scheme is made for those pupils whose degree of physical and/or communicative disability is such that without technological support it will not be possible for them to access the school curriculum.

The school follows these steps:

1. Identification of need by teachers, parents, or external professionals. A professional assessment with supporting documentation from the relevant professional(s) is needed to support an application for assistive technology.
2. Application form and recommended equipment quotes submitted to the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO), following the guidelines in Circular 0010/2013.
3. Submission of required professional assessments and reports.
4. Approval and funding decision by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE).
5. Purchase of AT equipment as per DoE sanction letter.
6. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) sign appendix 1 of this policy.

Provision under this scheme is made for those pupils whose degree of physical and/or communicative disability is such that without technological support it will not be possible for them to access the school curriculum.

5. Implementation and Use

Once assistive technology is approved:

- The school SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) and principal manage assistive technology in our school.
- Training, when required, is provided for staff.
- Where pupil AT tuition is required, a school support plan is drawn up with targets for learning to use the AT and integrate it into the classroom.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Principal:** Oversees the AT application process and ensures compliance with guidelines.
- **SENCO/SET Teacher:** Completes and submits paperwork for applications, ensures appropriate training of students in AT use, and monitors AT use.
- **Class Teacher:** Integrates AT into classroom teaching and learning. Teacher is responsible for the appropriate use, safe storage and care of the AT in their classroom.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Support the use of AT at home, if available, and provide feedback.
- **Students:** Engage with and use the AT as per their individual learning needs.

7. Maintenance and Review

- The school is responsible for the maintenance and safe storage of AT devices whilst on school property.
- Regular reviews assess whether the AT remains suitable for the student.
- If a student no longer requires AT, the school will liaise with the SENCO regarding reallocation.

8. Transfer/ Retention of Equipment

Although equipment is sanctioned to support a particular pupil, the equipment is sanctioned to the school and will, as a general rule, remain the property of the school and be available for allocation to other or subsequent pupils with similar needs.

When a pupil moves to another school (primary or post-primary), the decision to transfer or retain Assistive Technology rests with the Principal of Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire. The principal may choose to retain the equipment for another eligible student, in which case the new school must submit a fresh application for Assistive Technology. Alternatively, the Principal can transfer the equipment directly to the new school. This decision will be communicated to the principal of the new school with the SENCO copied in correspondence.

9. Property

It is important to note that all Assistive Technology equipment, approved by the Department of Education (DoE), is the property of the school, not the individual pupil, and must only be used within the school setting. Assistive technology is covered under school insurance when on school property.

10. Home Use

The school recognises that in some circumstances a pupil may benefit from using the sanctioned assistive technology at home. Home use can support continuity of learning, allow for extended practice of skills, and help the pupil to complete homework or work more independently. In such cases, a written application must be made to the principal by the parent or guardian, outlining the need and intended use. If approved, the equipment must be used solely by the pupil for educational purposes, handled with care, and returned to the school during school hours or upon request. Any damage, loss, or misuse may result in the withdrawal of home use permission, and parents will be expected to ensure appropriate supervision and adherence to the school's Acceptable Use Policy. Assistive technology is not covered by school insurance if it leaves the school grounds. It must be covered by home insurance if taken off the school premises. Any repairs necessary due to damage caused to equipment while in the care of the pupil and off school premises must be incurred by the parent/guardian.

11. Parent/Guardian Purchased Devices

In certain circumstances and at the discretion of the principal, pupils may use devices purchased by their parent(s)/guardian(s) to support their needs at school as a result of a recommendation of outside professionals. The device will remain the property of the parent(s)/guardian(s) and use of said device must adhere to the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

12. Policy Ratification and Review

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 10th November 2025 and will be reviewed every two years or at an earlier date if necessary.

Signed: Ger McCormack (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: Deirdre Sweeney (Principal)

Date:10/11/2025

Appendix 1

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment of Assistive Technology (AT) Policy

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire supports the use of Assistive Technology (AT) to enhance learning for students with additional educational needs. The use of AT is guided by the school's Assistive Technology Policy and the Department of Education Circular 0010/2013.

Please review the following statements, complete the information required and sign below to acknowledge your understanding and acceptance.

Acknowledgment and Consent

1. I have received and reviewed the Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire Assistive Technology Policy.
2. I understand the purpose, use, and expectations regarding the Assistive Technology provided to my child.
3. I agree to support the appropriate use of Assistive Technology by my child in accordance with the policy.
4. I understand that the misuse or non-compliance with the policy may result in review of AT usage and appropriate follow-up actions by the school.

Pupil Name: _____

Class: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: *(Print)* _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____