

Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

St. Mark's Community School

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that all users will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources in a safe and effective manner. This is in line with the school mission statement and is guided by the digital vision of the school as set out in the school's [Digital Learning Plan](#) (DLP). The vision of the school is to create a better learning environment through the integration of digital technology into the everyday life of the school. The ethos is centred on creating a safe, happy and caring environment for students in every aspect of their school life including their use of digital technologies.

As digital learning becomes embedded in teaching and learning, internet use will play a greater role. Technology is evolving constantly; there are new trends, developments and threats online. It is vital that the school monitors emerging risks to ensure safe internet use for everyone. It is envisaged that all stakeholders: teachers, ancillary staff, parent and student representatives, and the Board of Management will revise the AUP annually. An agreed policy approach promotes good practice and safe, responsible use of the internet.

This policy applies to all members of the school community (including staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, visitors, community users) who have access to and are users of school ICT systems, both in and out of the school.

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and a privilege for students. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions, as outlined in the AUP, will be imposed.

All students of St Mark's Community School must agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy and sign the AUP Form. This form must be countersigned by the students' parents/guardians (Appendix A). Students must countersign the forms "My Digital Promise" (Appendix B) and "St Mark's Community School Video Conferencing - Student Agreement" (Appendix C).

Development/ Monitoring/ Review of the Policy

	Date of Revision	Reviewers
AUP v1 reviewed	2015	Working group (Paper copy)
AUP reviewed (Version 2)	2017	- ICT coordinator - ICT Team - School Principal
AUP ratified (Version 2)	April 2017	Board of Management
AUP subsequently revised (Version 3)	8th March 2019 9th April 2019	- ICT coordinator - Teaching and Learning coordinator - Principal - Digital Learning Team - Teachers
AUP will be reviewed with all stakeholders	12th April 2019 29th April 2019	- Students - Parent representatives
Proposed date for ratification by BOM	30th April 2019	Board of Management
AUP updated (Version 4)	18th June 2020 22nd June 2020	- Principal - Deputy Principal - ICT coordinator - Teaching and Learning Coordinator
Future revisions will take place as part of the school's Digital Learning Planning	Annually	- Digital Learning Team - Students - Parents - Board of Management
Should serious online safety incidents take place, the following external persons / agencies should be informed		- Gardai - Tusla
A paper copy of this AUP is available to parents and the wider community on request. The digital version will be made available through our school website.		http://stmarkscs.ie/

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 30th April 2019.

This updated version was approved by the Board of Management on 24th June 2020.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chairperson

Legislation that governs and guides the AUP:

- 1) The Video Recordings Act, 1989: This prohibits the distribution of videos, which contain obscene or indecent material, which may lead to the depravation, or corruption of the viewer.
- 2) The Child Trafficking and Pornography Act, 1998: This Act legislates against anyone who knowingly produces, prints, publishes, distributes, exports, imports, shows, possesses or sells child pornography.
- 3) Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003: Electronic communication is permanent, and St. Mark's CS stores most of its records electronically. Such records may be demanded from the school in connection with legal proceedings by parents and other parties. Accordingly, all electronic communications must be as carefully worded as other formal written correspondence.
- 4) The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018: This Act was passed to deal with data processing, privacy issues arising from the increasing amount of Information kept on computers about individuals.

School Policies that govern and guide the AUP:

- 1) Child Safeguarding Statement: Guided by the Children First Act 2015 & the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.
- 2) Bullying Prevention and Response Policy
- 3) Health & Safety Policy: IT workstations have been ergonomically designed with care and are suited to student classwork, thus providing a comfortable working environment for all. Safety is of paramount importance within the IT lab and users of this room, must follow any teacher Health & Safety instruction at all times.
- 4) All users are guided by the VSWare data processing agreement, Data Protection Privacy Statement and GDPR, and must treat all student personal data as confidential.
- 5) Assistive Technology User Agreement
- 6) St Mark's Community School Video Conferencing Protocols
- 7) A Social Media Policy for staff is currently being developed.

The procedures used in the school for safe internet use include the following:

General Procedures:

- All students and staff will be issued with a student computer account (username and password). Students must log onto computers using their own personal log in.
- Raspberry Pi devices do not need a log in. These devices will only be used under the supervision of a teacher.
- All students and staff within the school community are provided with a school google account (@stmarkscs.ie).
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school may monitor students' internet usage.
- The IT Coordinator and the Principal reserve the right to access all information stored on computers.
- All computer activity is tracked and logged for reference purposes. These individual user logs may be accessed at any time by the IT Coordinator. On occasion, the IT technician may have access to data during maintenance or repair. If policy violations are discovered they will be reported immediately.
- Virus protection software is used and updated on a regular basis.

When using digital technology in the school...

- Users will treat all computer hardware and software with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school's name into disrepute.
- The unauthorized capture of images, video or audio on any device is in direct breach of the school's AUP.
- Students will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Users will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials immediately to the teacher in charge. Teachers will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials immediately to management.
- Users will not copy information into assignments without acknowledging the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement). Subject teachers will work with students on how to correctly reference material.
- Users will obey copyright rules.
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information except with the permission of a parent or teacher.
- The downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- Users will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information or images, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security, safety (personal or emotional) and/or network management reasons.
- Users will not send 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, without prior permission of their class teacher or the other student/person.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through email 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 that have been approved by the school.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- No image will be used on school Google profiles.
- When using Google Drive and Classroom to collaborate on documents, students and teachers will use their school Google accounts i.e. @stmarkscs.ie domain
- Teachers will use Google Meet (through @stmarkscs.ie domain) when video conferencing with students. Users of the Google domain should familiarise themselves with the Google for Education privacy policy.

https://edu.google.com/training-support/privacy-security/?modal_active=none

Email

- All students and staff within the school community are provided with a school email account (@stmarkscs.ie).
- When teachers and students communicate via email for learning purposes, school-specific email accounts must be used i.e. joe.bloggs@stmarkscs.ie
- Emails should be sent or scheduled to send, between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday, except in the case of an emergency or where a local agreement exists between staff.
- All use of school email (@stmarkscs.ie) and the school's internet connection is for the purpose of educational, career development and other school related activities.
- The school email account of any user, and any information contained in it including content, headers, directories and email system logs, remains the property of St Mark's CS.

School Website

The school website operates under the authority of the BOM and is managed by a member/s of the senior management.

- Students may 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.
- The website will be regularly checked by management and IT administration to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of students or staff.
- Websites using facilities such as guestbooks, noticeboards or weblogs will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain personal details.
- The publication of student work will be coordinated by subject teachers.
- 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.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. 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 will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – Students' names in image file names or ALT tags will not be used if published on the web.
- Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

School Twitter account and social media

The school TWITTER account is managed by a member of the senior leadership team. The following applies to the school Twitter account and/or personal Twitter accounts that use the school twitter handle in a tweet (@stmarkscs1977):

- Students' work will appear in an educational context on Twitter.
- The school Twitter will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- Staff and students must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, staff, or other members of the St Mark's CS community.
- Staff and students must not discuss personal information about students, staff or other members of the St Marks CS community on social media.
- Staff and students must not use the 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 St Marks CS into disrepute
- Staff and students must not represent their personal views as the views of St Marks CS on any social medium.

A section covering Social Media is currently being developed and will be included as an appendix

Personal Devices

- Students' personal devices (e.g. mobile phones, iPods, tablets, game consoles), are not to be used on school premises. Each student must ensure devices are SWITCHED OFF in the school building
- In occasional circumstances, students will be allowed to use their device with the EXPLICIT PERMISSION of the Principal through their teacher and in consultation with the IT Coordinator.
- The unauthorized capture of images, video or audio is in direct breach of the school's AUP.
- Connecting or attempting to connect to the school's network system (wired or wireless) without authorisation is in direct breach of the school's AUP.
- Students using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending text messages, or the unauthorized taking of images, still or moving, will be in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy and will face sanctions..

Cyberbullying

- Cyber-bullying in all forms, including harassing, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyber-stalking, will not be tolerated in the school.
- The school will support students, teachers and parents in dealing with cyber-bullying in line with our school anti-bullying policy.
- Engaging in any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will be viewed as a breach of this policy.
- Hate mail, harassment, nasty personal comments, discriminatory or racist remarks and other antisocial behaviour are prohibited on the network regardless of whether it is accessed using school or personal equipment.
- Posting of photographs or references to staff members on the internet or any social networking site is strictly forbidden and will be viewed as an extreme breach of this policy.
- The school reserves the right to discipline a student for actions taken outside the school if they are intended to have an effect on a student or staff member or if they adversely affect the safety and well-being of a student or staff member while in school.

Video Conferencing

- This section is covered in Appendix D.

Support Structures

The school will provide information and support in the areas of safe internet usage including social media, cyberbullying etc. The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the internet. This will be placed in the student journal.

Sanctions

If this policy is breached parents/guardians will be notified. Students will be given an opportunity to explain their actions. The following are some of the sanctions that may apply

- Suspension of network and computer privileges
- Suspension from school and/or school-related activities
- Expulsion

The school will report any illegal activities/abuse to the relevant authorities; i.e. An Garda Siochana, TUSLA etc.

A student who has damaged hardware or software on the School Network will be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement.

Appendix A

Parent/Guardian Agreement for use of Digital Technology in St. Mark's Community School

Name of student:

Class:

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and give permission for them to access the internet. 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 students access unsuitable websites.

In relation to the school website and social media, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my son/daughter's work may be chosen for inclusion on the website and/or social media. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing student's work on the school website and/or social media.

I have discussed the AUP with my son/daughter and I will support them in keeping the Digital Promise and Video Conferencing Student Agreement which they have signed.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Appendix B

My Digital Promise

When using digital technology in St. Mark's Community School...

- I will treat all computer hardware and software with respect.
- I will only log in to school devices using my own personal log in. When I am finished, I will log out. Raspberry Pi devices do not need a log in. These devices will only be used under supervision of a teacher.
- If the computer/device I am using is logged in by someone else, I will tell the teacher immediately, without attracting the attention of those around me.
- When using my school google account (@stmarkscs), I will not use any image on my profile.
- I will only use my @stmarkscs.ie email and will never access my personal email account in school.
- I will only send or schedule to send emails from this account between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday except in the case of an emergency.
- I am fully aware that everything I do on a school computer/device can be seen by the school.
- I will not use any device to take photos of people without my teacher's permission.
- I will not use any device to make sound or video recordings without my teacher's permission.
- I will not upload any content without my teacher's permission.
- I will only go on websites that have been approved by my teacher.
- I will use the Internet and digital media only for work related to my learning in school. This means that I will never download images or words that have nothing to do with my school work.
- If I accidentally access an inappropriate site or image, I will minimise the page and tell the teacher immediately, without attracting the attention of those around me.
- If I need to copy information into my work, I will acknowledge the source.
- I will obey copyright laws.
- I will never access chat rooms in school.
- If I bring a mobile phone to school it will be switched off and in my bag until I leave the school premises.
- I will use emails and posts to discuss school-related content only.
- I will use appropriate grammar instead of texting language.
- I will never send emails or make comments online that are harmful or hurtful to another person and I will use a respectful tone.
- I will never give out my name, address, phone number to anyone online.
- I will not share personal information about another person online.
- I will always use a username and not my real name on websites so that I can protect my identity.
- My passwords (email, etc) are my own and I will not share them – even with my best friend.
- I have read and signed the St Mark's Community School Video Conferencing - Student Agreement

When using social media outside of school...

- I will not harass, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, staff, or other members of our St Mark's CS community.
- I will not discuss personal information about students, staff or other members of our St Marks CS community.
- I will not use my school email address for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- I will not engage in activities involving social media which might bring our school into disrepute.
- I will not represent my personal views as the views of St Marks CS on any form of social media.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

St Mark's Community School Video Conferencing - Student Agreement

You must think of a Google Meet as a normal classroom where school rules apply including the Code of Behaviour, AUP, your Digital Promise and this agreement. Remember, you have the right to keep your microphone muted and your camera off if you choose. You can use the message feature if you prefer not to speak.

- 1.** You must find a private space for the meeting as it is for the students in the group only.
- 2.** Make sure your device is charged.
- 3.** Join on time.
- 4.** Inform your teacher if you're not able to attend for any reason as attendance will be recorded.
- 5.** Make sure you are able to turn on/off (mute/unmute) your microphone.
- 6.** Mute your microphone when you are not speaking because background noise interferes with the lesson.
- 7.** Make sure you are able to turn on/off the camera.
- 8.** When using the camera, position it with only yourself in view and remember it is best to look into the camera, not at the screen, when you are speaking.
- 9.** Turn off notifications as they will interfere with your concentration during the lesson.
- 10.** Respectful behaviour is expected during a Google Hangout lesson just as it is in the classroom
- 11.** Only one student at a time may speak as directed by the teacher.
- 12.** Recording the lesson or part of it or taking photos of the lesson is not allowed, as already agreed in your Digital Promise. A breach of privacy is a very serious matter.
- 13.** Leave the Meet at the end of the class by pressing the 'hang up' button and do not rejoin. Don't forget to thank your teacher!
- 14.** Make a note of your learning in your Journal

When you accept an invitation to take part in a Google Meet arranged by a teacher or SNA, you are agreeing to all of the above.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D

St Mark's Community School Video Conferencing Protocols

Google Meet is the adopted St. Mark's CS Video Conferencing software for any online Teaching & Learning. These protocols are an addition to our AUP, Student Digital Promise and Student Video Conferencing Agreement. We have a responsibility to ensure that security and privacy are protected in all our communications. We only use **Google Meet** when video conferencing with students.

- Parents have been made aware by text and on the website about the use of Google Meet during a school closure. The Student Agreement and Digital Promise are published on the school website.
- Clear expectations must be set and agreed with students in advance.
- Remember students have the right to keep their microphone muted and their camera off if they choose.

Before a meeting:

- It is advisable to trial with a small number of students until you and the students are familiar with the technology and classroom procedures. Large groups can be difficult to manage.
- If using Google Calendar to set up the meeting, untick the "invite others" box.
- Prepare yourself and your surroundings being mindful of your privacy.

The meeting:

- Teachers find it useful to use a 'check-in' to welcome students (like in circle time). Remind students they can check-in using the message feature if they prefer not to speak.
- Record attendance.
- Check that student microphones are muted and remind them that they do not have permission to record.
- Decide if you wish to allow students to use the video option and let them know.
- If you plan to record the meeting you must request student permission. They may wish to turn off their camera.
- 'Check out' with students before finishing the meeting. Again, students can use the message feature if they prefer.
- To end the meeting, request that students press the 'hang up' button and do not rejoin.
- You must leave the meeting **last**.

During a school closure:

- A booking form will be available as a shared Google Sheet with a tab for each Year Group. Please enter your name, subject and class at your scheduled time giving as much notice as possible.
- Students are expected to let their parents know when a meeting is scheduled and you are asked to remind them to do this when you schedule a Google Hangout.

The original version of this document was approved by the Chairperson of the Board of Management, Mr Paul Mulhern on 1st April 2020.

This version (v2) was approved by the Board of Management on 24th June 2020.