



## **St. Fintan's National School**

### **Digital Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from the fantastic learning opportunities offered by the school's digital and 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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP and / or the school's Code of Behaviour – will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school and Board of Management representatives will revise the AUP regularly in line with developing technological issues, as necessary. Before acceptance, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are understood.

The Anti-Bullying policy also applies, which also deals with the issue of cyberbullying. This policy is available at [www.stfintansns.ie](http://www.stfintansns.ie)

#### **School's Strategy:**

St. Fintan's NS employs a number of digital and internet learning strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These are outlined in the school's Digital Learning Strategy.

#### **General Considerations for Acceptable Use of Educational Digital Technologies:**

- Digital technology sessions in school will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in school in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Pupils and teachers are regularly provided with training in the area of internet safety.
- 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, tablets, laptops or other digital equipment / media is not normally allowed. If these are to be used in school in exceptional circumstance this requires special permission.
- School digital resources should be kept free of personal material at all times.
- Pupils will treat others with respect at all times while online and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school or themselves into disrepute.

#### **Considerations for Using the Internet for School Purposes:**

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

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- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Pupils will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Pupils 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.
- Pupils 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.

#### **Considerations for Using Email / Communication Apps for School Business:**

- Pupils will only use approved school email accounts / apps with parental consent, for school business and with supervision from a teacher and or a parent (eg. If working from home).
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details beyond what is considered appropriate by the relevant school teacher for their learning.
- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know online.
- For email communication, parents must only communicate through the official school email address ([info@stfintansns.ie](mailto:info@stfintansns.ie) or if appropriate [safety@stfintansns.ie](mailto:safety@stfintansns.ie) ).

#### **Considerations for Pupil Online Communication for School Business:**

- Pupils will only have access to communication facilities, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication that have been approved by the school.
- Educational software (eg. Microsoft Teams and SeeSaw), will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised by the class teacher, while pupils are in school. If used outside of school by pupils, usage must be supervised by a parent.

#### **Use of the St. Fintan's School Website: [www.stfintansns.ie](http://www.stfintansns.ie)**

- Pupils may, from time to time, be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- From time to time, school related photos / videos / audio of school pupils may be published to the school's website.

#### **Distance Learning: Available in the event of COVID-19 related absence**

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In the event that the school is required to provide distance learning, in line with Department of Education and Skills requirements due to COVID-19, the following arrangements will apply:

- Parent emails [safety@stfintansns.ie](mailto:safety@stfintansns.ie) declaring child to be absent for Covid-19 reasons, in line with Department of Education and skills requirements.
- In this email, parent informs school of how many days the absence is likely to last and that they want distance learning provided for the child for those days.
- Such emails will be read on weekdays by the school and thereafter, within 24 hours of receipt, the school will endeavour to provide the following (subject to parental consent having been given to the school's Digital Technologies Acceptable Usage Policy):
  - Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup> class: Class material will be provided through SeeSaw app for each day of absence. A teacher will provide a short video / audio message for the child each morning and afternoon, mainly to check-in and support their wellbeing. Twice a week minimum (in any 5 day absence), a teacher will also link in with live video calls to the pupil. Pupils in receipt of the above will be able to submit samples of their completed work daily for assessment to the school, through the relevant software.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class: Class material will be provided through SeeSaw app / Microsoft Teams for each day of absence. A teacher will provide a short video / audio message for the child each morning and afternoon, mainly to check-in and support their wellbeing. Twice a week minimum (in any 5 day absence), a teacher will also link in with live video calls to the pupil. Pupils in receipt of the above will be able to submit samples of their completed work daily for assessment to the school, through the relevant software.

### **Guidelines for good online communication in St. Fintan's N.S:**

Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.

1. Staff, families and pupils are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online at all times.
2. It is the duty of parents/guardians to supervise children while they are working online and to ensure any content which they are submitting to their teacher is appropriate.
3. Staff members can communicate with pupils and their families via Aladdin or through an established app (eg. Seesaw, Microsoft Teams).
4. Pupils and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified (Seesaw, Microsoft Teams)
5. Parental permission will be required before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication forum – through acceptance of this Digital Technology Acceptable Usage Policy.
6. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.

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7. St. Fintan's N.S cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are hacked.

### **Guidelines for staff members using online communication methods:**

Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.

1. Staff members will communicate with pupils and families during the hours of 8.50am – 2.30pm, where possible.
2. Staff members will have high expectations regarding pupil behaviour, with any communication which takes place online.
3. Staff members will seek to become familiar with apps before using them with pupils.
4. Staff will check that consent has been given, before setting up a pupil profile for an online app.
5. Staff members will report any concerns regarding online behaviour or interactions to school management.
6. Staff members will only admit participants to video conferences, if they recognise the email address/username as being connected to a pupil.

### **Rules for pupils using online communication methods:**

For submitting learning:

1. Submit work and pictures that are appropriate - have an adult take a look at your work before you send it.
2. Use kind and friendly words.

For video / audio calls:

1. Pictures or recordings of the call are not allowed.
2. Remember our school rules - they are still in place, even online.
3. Set up your device in a quiet space, with no distractions in the background.
4. Join the video with your microphone muted.
5. If there is more than one pupil on the video call, raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class.
6. If you have the chance to talk, speak in your normal voice, using kind and friendly words.
7. Show respect by listening to others while they are speaking.
8. Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the video call.
9. Be on time - set a reminder if it helps.
10. Enjoy! Don't forget to wave hello to everyone when you join!

### **Guidelines for parents and guardians:**

For learning

1. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.

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2. Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate.
3. Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils.

For video / audio calls

1. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of calls.
2. Ensure that the school has the correct email address if necessary for inviting you to join apps and meetings.
3. The main purpose of a video / audio call to a pupil is to maintain a social connection between the school staff and pupils at this difficult time. Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience.
4. Be aware that when participating in group video calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
5. Please ensure that your child is on time for a scheduled call if required, or they may be locked out.
6. Make sure to familiarise your child with the software in advance. For video in particular, show them how to mute/unmute and turn the camera on/off.
7. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
8. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for any video call.
9. For detailed information on GDPR please see the St. Fintan's NS Data Protection Policy available at [www.stfintansns.ie](http://www.stfintansns.ie)

It is important to note that any breach of the above guidelines will result in a discontinuation of this method of communication. A breach may also result in a person being immediately removed from a call or in a call being immediately terminated. In this case, the child's parents will receive a report on the incident.

### **Personal Devices**

Any pupil's personal devices must be switched off in school and handed to the class teacher at the beginning of the school day (unless prior consent has been granted eg. for medical reasons). They will be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day.

### **Sanctions**

Misuse of the digital technologies may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy (available at [www.stfintansns.ie](http://www.stfintansns.ie)) apply at all times when pupils are engaging with the school on school business, using school resources and or school accounts. The school reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

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