

Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP)

For Internet Use



St Benignus NS, Balscadden

1.0 Introduction

St Benignus NS, Balscadden is committed to ensuring that every child receives a quality education. The aim of this Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) for Internet Use 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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions outlined in the AUP will be imposed. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Code of Good Behaviour, the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Anti-Cyber-Bullying policy and the Mobile Phone policy.

2.0 The policy's relationship to the school's mission statement and ethos

St Benignus NS aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. We endeavour to equip each child with the skills and positive self-esteem to empower them to contribute to their community, their home life and become lifelong learners. We believe that this AUP is essential for achieving that goal.

3.0 School's strategy

The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

3.1 General

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.

- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems from the PDSTTiE will be used in order to minimize the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. It is currently set at Level 3 internet filtering.
- The school will monitor pupils' internet usage.
- Senior class pupils will be 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.
- The use of memory sticks or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Pupils will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute (cf Anti-Bullying Policy).

3.2 World wide web

- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials to their class teacher.
- Pupils will use the internet for educational purposes only during class time.
- 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 Usage Policy (AUP).
- 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.

3.3 Email

- Pupils will only use approved e-mail accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Pupils will be provided with Google credentials (without email facility) for accessing other communication tools such as Google Classroom.
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone.
- Pupils will note that sending and receiving files is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Pupils should not open emails from senders they do not know.

3.4 Internet

- Pupils will not have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication fora.
- The internet has become a two way communication system for the school and the wider community. Services such as Databiz, Textaparent, Facebook, Google Classroom and email are currently being used by the school to communicate with parents/guardians and also for parents to communicate with the school. These services, although not owned by Balscadden National School, 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 and Social Media Policy for further information.

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 school asks parents and pupils:

- Not to post messages or comments of any kind on the school website. Any messages of any kind on social media or on the school website will be treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
- Not to copy photographs from the school website or use them on social media sites. The school will continue to own the copyright of any photographs published and does not give permission for this.
- Not to request to 'friend' or 'follow' a member of staff in the school. The staff would like to keep their personal lives personal. It may be awkward for a staff member to be asked to ignore a Facebook/Twitter/Instagram or other social network request. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Snapchat and other social networks should not be used to contact staff members.
- Not to post digital photographs, audio or video clips of pupils or staff on social media sites or on any part of the internet.
- Abide by our Social Media Policy as published on our website
- Not to allow their children to have a social media account of any kind. We do not believe that primary school children are mature enough to cope with the demands of social media.
- Not to 'tag' photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- If you are uploading a photograph that it does not identify the child in any way.
- To ensure that online messages and comments to the school are respectful. Any messages written on social media are treated the same way as written messages to the school.
- To avoid negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts including but not limited to Whats app, facebook etc. 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.
- To not add advertisements to our social media account without prior permission of the principal.
- Failure to keep to the above rules will result in a permanent ban to our social media accounts (cf our Social Media Policy).

3.5 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, Google Classroom etc.
- 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.
- The publication of pupils' 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 of focusing on group activities. Photographs, audio and video clips will be used. Video clips will not be password protected.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website will avoid publishing the full name of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use pupils' names in image file names if published on the web.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
- Where names appear with pupils' work, only first names will be used.

4.0 Digital platforms and remote learning

Teachers in the school may choose to use a number of tools for classroom communication. Examples include Google Classroom, Webex, Seesaw etc. This will be of particular importance during periods of enforced school closures. All postings on this platform by parents and pupils come under the remit of this policy. Teachers may also choose to use synchronous video opportunities whereby a staff member speaks directly 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 or through a link in their personal Google Classroom login. 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 "kick out" 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.

Parents will be informed about how to access the school's digital platform by text message, letter etc. A dedicated and monitored email address will also offer technical support.

5.0 Personal devices

In line with our Mobile Phone Policy, no electronic devices of any kind are allowed in school. If detected, these devices will be immediately confiscated and will only be returned to a

parent/guardian. This limitation also applies to all school activities including but not limited to school trips, football matches etc.

6.0 Video recording

Parents/guardians who record the Christmas play shall not put any footage on social media websites.

7.0 School Photographs

Permission will be sought from the parents of incoming junior infants to allow school appointed photographers to take photographs of the pupils. Permission slips will be sent home for Communion/Confirmation photographs.

8.0 Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, pupils and parents should familiarize themselves with:

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003).
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act (1998).
- Interception Act (1993).
- Video Recordings Act (1989).
- The Data Protection Act 1988.
- Children First (2018)

9.0 Support Structures

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet. Written parental consent will be sought from parents/guardians at enrolment with regard to the AUP.

10.0 Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet or any of the terms of this policy 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 activities to the appropriate authorities up to and including Tusla and the Gardaí.

Refer to our Code of Good Behaviour and our Anti-Bullying policy for the full range of possible sanctions that may be used.

11.0 Evaluation and review

This policy will be evaluated and amended according to the extent to which it serves the needs of the school and protects the safety of its pupils.

Reviewed September 2003

Reviewed February 2014 with the co-operation of the relevant parents' sub-committee.

Reviewed 11/6/2018

Reviewed 1/3/2021

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ (date)

Signed: _____

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: _____

Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____