



St. Francis of Assisi
Primary School
Belmayne Avenue,
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Web:
<https://www.stfrancispsbelmayne.com>

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Date of Commencement: 02/27/2026

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General Approach

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's digital resources in a safe and effective manner. The responsible use of internet and digital technologies, both online and offline and access is considered an integral part of teaching and learning. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, agreed sanctions will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school staff and the board of management will revise the AUP as the need arises. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

When using the internet, students, parents and staff are expected:

- To treat others with respect at all times.
- Not undertake any actions that may bring the school 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.

The school employs several strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Internet use within school will always be supervised by a teacher.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to students who have access to and are users of the internet in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School.

It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including oral and written warnings, parental involvement, withdrawal of access privileges, and, in extreme cases, suspension or



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expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of students or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies.

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE and other curriculum areas.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- St. Francis of Assisi Primary School participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed as the need arises by the following stakeholders: Board of Management, teaching staff, and support staff.

This policy has been developed in consultation with: Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, students, parents/carers, and the Board of Management.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using Logs of reported incidents, internal monitoring data for network activity and surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils, parents, and teaching staff. Should serious online safety incidents take place, the principal should be informed. The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by Board of Management, In-School Management team and Staff.



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Content Filtering

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

Level 4: This level allows access to millions of websites including games and YouTube 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 by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

Internet Use

- Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will be encouraged to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school and outside the classroom to their relevant class teacher or member of staff.
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Students and staff 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.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will not engage in online activities such as uploading or downloading large files that result in heavy network traffic which impairs the service for other internet users.
- Students will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information or passwords.



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- Students will be aware that any usage of the internet and school's digital platform, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, will be monitored.
 - Use of file sharing and torrent sites is not allowed.
 - Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.

Email and Messaging

The use of personal email accounts is not allowed at St. Francis of Assisi Primary School.

- Students will use approved class email accounts only under supervision by or permission from a teacher, if required, using Microsoft 365.
- Students should be aware that email communications and messaging via Teams are monitored.
- Students will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory, or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students should immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Students will not forward email messages or screenshots of emails or "reply all" without the permission of the originator.
- Students must only use their school email for school related activities and for registering on school-based activities only. The use of personal email addresses is not allowed for school-based work.
- Students should not use school email accounts to register for online services, social networking, apps, or games.
- All emails and opinions expressed in email are the responsibility of the author and do not reflect the opinion of the school.



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Social Media and Messaging Services for Staff and Students

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow us to interact and keep in touch. While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that members of your school community are expected to follow when using social media or other messaging services, for example, Whats App, Class Dojo.

The principles set out in this policy are designed to help ensure that social media is used responsibly so that the confidentiality of pupils and other staff and the reputation of the school is protected.

This policy applies to personal websites such as social networking sites (for example Instagram and TikTok), blogs, microblogs such as X, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us and content sharing sites such as Flickr and YouTube. The internet is a fast-moving technology, and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media.

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including WhatsApp, etc. is allowed in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School with express permission from teaching staff between staff.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is allowed at certain times in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is with express permission from teaching staff.
- All members of the school community must not use social media, messaging services and the internet in any way to harass, impersonate, insult, abuse or defame others.
- Staff and students must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the St. Francis of Assisi Primary School community on social media.
- Staff and students must not use 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. Francis of Assisi Primary School into disrepute.



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- Teachers can read further information about the use of Social Media and Electronic Communication here: <https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/2021/guidance-for-registered-teachers-about-the-use-of-social-media-and-electronic-communication.html>

Personal Devices

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as **phones, tablets, gaming devices, smartwatches**, in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School:

- Students are only allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into St. Francis of Assisi Primary School with expressed permission from staff.
- ***These devices need to be switched off and/or kept in school mode and kept in their school bag for the duration of the school day. The school accepts no responsibility for any loss/theft or damage to personal devices. They are not to be taken out of their school bags until they have exited the school gates.***
- ***Smartwatches are to be turned off/ kept in school mode and kept in their school bag for the duration of the day.***
- Students are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during lessons.
- Students are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during social time. This includes any student with assistive technology devices in the classroom.
- Students using their own technology in school to send text messages, or the unauthorized taking of images, video or voice recordings, are in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Use Policy and Behaviour Policy.
- ***As outlined in the school's Behaviour Policy; "Mobile Devices / Electronic Games Use of mobile devices and electronic games during school hours and afterschool activities is not permitted. All phones must be switched off and kept in school bags at all times until children have left the premises. Any infringement of this expectation will involve the confiscation of the phone / other electronic equipment which will be returned to the parent or guardian of the pupil only."***

Digital Learning Platforms (including video conferencing)

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School digital learning platform is owned and managed by the school. They allow for two-way communication. Services such as Microsoft 365, SeeSaw, Class Dojo (*individual teacher choice*) and Aladdin are being used by the school as part of class communication, remote learning and school communication and notices.

Students must only use their school email to access the school's digital learning platform. Only school devices should be used for the purposes of capturing and storing media. All



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school-related media and data should be stored on the school platform. The use of digital platforms should be used in line with considerations set out in the school's data protection plan (GDPR).

Each user of the platform will be provided with their own unique login credentials. Passwords for digital platforms and accounts should not be shared. Personal email addresses should not be used when creating accounts on school digital platforms.

Prior acceptance from parents should be sought for student usage of the schools' digital learning platform.

Remote Learning:

For classroom communication or in circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers will use Microsoft 365 Teams, Aladdin, Zoom, SeeSaw and the school website.

- The school has signed up to the terms of service of the Online Platforms in use by the school.
- The school has enabled the most up to date security and privacy features which these online platforms provide.
- Parents/Guardians will be provided with all account and password information. The role of the parent/guardian is to monitor the safe and appropriate use of technology and the internet.
- In giving permission for the use of such platforms, parents/guardians agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons/communication conducted on the online platforms.
- Where necessary, the school may need to create an online classroom such as Zoom (Junior to 2nd Class) or Microsoft Teams (3rd to 6th). To interact with Teams, the students will be issued with a Microsoft 365 account. The restrictions on this account will limit the pupil's activity to Microsoft Teams and will not facilitate email communication or access to other apps as determined by the school. Parents are provided with password of access and are responsible for the students' online activity using the account.

Audio, images and video

Care should be taken when capturing audio, photographic or video images that learners are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.

At St. Francis of Assisi Primary School, students must not record audio, take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.

Taking audio, photos, or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is not allowed under any circumstances.



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Recording audio, 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/guardians will be obtained before video, audio, or photographs of students are published on the school's website, School Bulletin and/or Aladdin message.

Sharing explicit images/video and in particular explicit images/video of students and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images/video of other students automatically incurs suspension as a sanction.

Inappropriate Activities

- Promotion or conduct of illegal acts, e.g. under the child protection, obscenity, computer misuse and fraud legislation
- Misuse and fraud legislation
- Racist material
- Promotion of any kind of discrimination
- Promotion of racial or religious hatred
- Harmful content or threatening behaviour, including promotion of physical violence or mental harm
- Any other information which may be offensive to colleagues or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the school or brings the school into disrepute
- Using school systems to run a private business
- Use systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards employed by the school
- Uploading, downloading or transmitting commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, without the necessary licensing permissions
- Revealing or publicising confidential or proprietary information (e.g. financial / personal information, databases, computer / network access codes and passwords)
- Creating or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files
- Carrying out sustained or instantaneous high volume network traffic (downloading / uploading files) that causes network congestion and hinders others in their use of the internet
- Online gaming
- Online gambling
- Online shopping
- Use of social networking sites, instant messaging and online forums
- Child sexual abuse material
- Any other activity considered questionable



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School Website

Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork, or schoolwork on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website. Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips that focus on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.

The St. Francis of Assisi Primary School will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named and will not use students' names in image file names or ALT tags if published online.

Cyberbullying

In accordance with the BÍ Cinéalta Procedures for Schools, St. Francis of Assisi Primary School considers that posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others, can be seen as bullying behaviour.

This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social media, e-mail, messaging, apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying.

As cyberbullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyberbullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyberbullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.

Access to technology means that cyberbullying can happen around the clock and the students home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Students are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. The nature of these technologies means digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and is almost impossible to delete permanently. While cyberbullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can also be felt in school.



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In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, St. Francis of Assisi Primary School considers that a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

When using the internet students, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times.

Engaging in online activities with the intention to harm, harass, or embarrass another student or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

Measures are taken by St. Francis of Assisi Primary School to ensure that staff and students are aware that bullying is defined as targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

In accordance with the Department of Education BÍ Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools; St. Francis of Assisi Primary School is *not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school.*

However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their BÍ Cineálta policy.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School recognises the potential benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and is committed to its responsible and ethical use within our learning environment.

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School provides information of training and professional development opportunities for teachers to effectively utilise AI tools in their teaching practices if appropriate, ensuring they stay up to date with technological advancements. The selection of AI tools and technologies in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School aligns with educational goals, including supporting learner agency and promoting critical thinking, aligned with Department of Education and Youth, *Guidance on Artificial Intelligence in Schools* (Oct 2025) and information provided by Oide Technology in Education and Webwise



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St. Francis of Assisi Primary School will make necessary adjustments to our school's adoption and integration of AI based on review and feedback. A regular review of the impact of AI on learning outcomes is to be conducted to ensure continuous improvement.

- School staff and learners receive training on the ethical use of AI technologies, including understanding data privacy, identifying biases, and verifying AI-generated information.
- All AI tools authorised for use in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School comply with data protection regulations (GDPR).
- Entering personal, sensitive, or confidential data into any AI system without proper authorisation is strictly prohibited.
- Staff will be aware of age restrictions and privacy considerations when using GenAI. The inputting of sensitive, proprietary or personal data should be avoided and GDPR applies.
- Learners will not create, share or send any AI generated material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Staff and learners must not use AI in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame learners, their family members, staff, other members of the St. Francis of Assisi Primary School community
- Staff and learners must not engage in activities involving AI generated material which might bring St. Francis of Assisi Primary School into disrepute.
- St. Francis of Assisi Primary School promotes digital literacy and critical thinking skills to help learners understand AI, its implications, and responsible usage. This includes data literacy, verification of AI-generated information, and recognising potential biases in AI tools.
- AI systems used in St. Francis of Assisi Primary School ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability in decision-making processes.
- Learners must attribute AI text and images properly when used in assignments/homework.
- Teachers will attribute AI text and images when used.
- AI Generated material is allowed for the purpose of research, brainstorming, revising text.



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- AI Generated material is allowed for certain activities with prior school permission. If used for research, learners must fact check, check other sources and reference sources for accuracy.

Legislation

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

- Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 and Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
- Children First Act 2015
- Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 (Coco's Law)
- Criminal Damage Act 1991

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.

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet and digital technologies by students of the school is not expected but if it occurs it may result in disciplinary actions as referred to in the school's Code of Behaviour and Bí Cinéalta Policy and related sanctions regarding misuse as appropriate should be outlined therein.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities, including An Garda Síochána.

Review Date: May 2027

Signed:

Chairperson: L. Kennedy
Acting Principal: H. Fields

Date: 19/05/26
Date 19/05/26