



Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Ratified at BOM Meeting on 2nd May 2025

SignedChairperson of Board of Management

Signed Principal

Date of next review: 2027

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy 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 Therefore, if the school's AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

This policy was devised in 2006, using the guidelines from the National Centre for Technology in Ireland, NCTE, the body set up by the Department of Education and Science to oversee the use of IT in schools. It was revised in 2007, October 2013, October 2014, February 2020 and February 2024.

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:

General

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software and /or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- Pupils and teachers 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 and updated on a regular basis.
- Pupils and staff will observe good 'netiquette' (i.e., etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.



- Teachers are required to regularly scan external storage devices (USB sticks etc) and if pupils are presenting work on such devices it is the responsibility of the teacher to scan it before use.

Internet Use:

- Children and parents must sign up to the Internet Acceptable Use Policy and adhere to its guidelines at all times.
- Children will only use the Internet under the direct supervision of a teacher / tutor.
- Children will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Children will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Children will be familiar with copyright issues related to online learning.
- Children will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Children 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.
- Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Children, at times, may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the World Wide Web.
- At times, children may be given Internet-based homework assignments. The school takes no responsibility for the Internet usage of the children while they are outside the school. It is important that all parents and guardians monitor their own child's Internet usage at home and ensure that their children are aware and respectful of the risks involved.
- Children are taught about safe Internet usage every year, particularly on "Safer Internet Day". Internet safety posters are also displayed around the school.
- Schools Broadband Programme (SBP), managed by the NCTE, provides us with content filtered broadband in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material in school. While staff supervise all Internet-based activities, children must adhere to the IAU policy and the iPad contract that they sign.
- Children and staff will observe good "netiquette" (i.e etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute. Good netiquette can be demonstrated to the children through activities on www.webwise.ie.
- Children should inform their teacher if they inadvertently access information/images that make them feel uncomfortable. In the unlikely event that this should happen, the children will be reassured and their parents will be notified. Also, where possible, the offending URL will be noted and the service provider will be informed



- No child is allowed to take photos, share photos/videos, record a video or audio clip of any member of staff or of any other child without permission from a teacher.
- All staff members reserved the right not to be photographed/filmed on the school grounds.
- No-one is permitted to tamper with, upload, download or share any school-related video footage or photos to any platform without the express permission of the school.

Email

- Children in classes from 4th to 6th have their own RaLET email address for the purposes of accessing Google Drive and its features.
- They cannot send emails or make online video calls to any other child in the school.
- Children have access to Google Drive only, where they will be able to use Google Docs/Google slides etc. for projects and work.
- Children may share their work with others in their class when permitted by their teacher.
- Children will create folders and develop their own digital portfolios.
- Children 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 and should never be accessed in school.
- Students should not use school email accounts to register for online services, social networking, apps or games

Personal Devices:

The school does not allow children to access the Internet on school premises using personal devices, such as mobile phones.

In particular, connecting personal devices to the school network is strictly prohibited. At times, a child may be allowed to bring their own personal device into school (on a "Tech Day" for example) and they may be permitted by their teacher to connect to the school network under terms of this policy. The school does not accept any responsibility for the loss/damage of a personal device on school premises.

Children are not permitted to wear smartwatches in school. If a child is found to be wearing a smartwatch (i.e. a portable and wearable computer device in the form of a watch; modern smartwatches provide a local touchscreen interface for daily use, with an associated smartphone app), it will be confiscated and will only be returned to a parent.



The school recognises that a parent or guardian may wish a child from 3rd to 6th class to have a personal mobile phone. Please note that mobile devices must be kept in the child's bag. The school cannot take any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of any device brought into school.

In this case:

- There is zero tolerance for using phones from 8:40am to 2:25pm.
- The phone must not be switched on without a teacher's permission while on the school premises.
- If a child uses a personal device such as a mobile phone without permission, it will be confiscated and will only be returned to a parent. The parent will be contacted to inform them that the phone has been confiscated. A stronger sanction may be imposed, at the discretion of the teacher/principal, for the misuse of a phone/iPad. The usual behaviour steps do not have to be adhered to in these circumstances.

Technology in classrooms:

- The school has 4 iPad trolleys, each containing 16 iPads.
- Trolleys are allocated to each class level: Junior/Senior Infants, 1st/2nd Class, 3rd/4th Class, 5th/6th Class.
- Each year group from 3rd Class signs an iPad contract, where they agree to follow specific rules when using the iPads.
- Each class from 1st to 6th has 5 iPads for use in their classrooms. These iPads stay in that classroom and are not carried on from one year to the next.
- Classes from 3rd to 6th have five laptops at the back of their classrooms for children to use.
- If any child maliciously damages any technology equipment in the school, their parents/guardians will be informed. The school will arrange for the equipment to be repaired/replaced and the parents will be responsible for the payment of such.

Social Media/Chat-Rooms

- All children are prohibited from using social media platforms / in school.
- Children and parents are not permitted to attempt to contact any staff member through social media platforms under any circumstances. Please refer to the school's communication policy for making contact with staff.



- Children will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school and only if they have been given permission to use them by their teacher.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity on public forums that are accessed by others outside our school community.

Parents

We understand that parents may wish to take photos/videos of their children at organised school events. A lot of the time, families taking photos at events, such as school plays or concerts, are done with no intent to post or publish the photos formally. This type of activity falls under the *"household exemption"* under the GDPR, which provides that GDPR does not apply when a person takes a photograph in the course of a purely personal or household activity, e.g. with no connection to a professional, business, official or commercial activity. Photographs taken by parents in this circumstance do not come within the school's data protection policy, and the school are not considered to be the data controllers of this media. The *"household exemption"* can include social networking, and the publishing of photos at these events online is not strictly prohibited under GDPR legislation. However, we ask that parents do not share these images on any social media platform as many of these photos/videos will have other children in them.

Staff

Staff members do not give out their phone number or that of any other staff member to pupils or parents/guardians. Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff in working with children, it is vital that staff be engaged with children at all working times.

The *"household exemption"* does not apply to schools themselves taking photographs or videos at their events. In this instance, schools are acting as data controllers and GDPR applies i.e. they must have a legal basis to process the personal data and they must provide clear and concise information about what it is that they are doing with this personal data.

In terms of data, staff is advised to use any mobile devices responsibly. Staff may use their devices to record any school-related work if they wish. Staff are trusted that they will use these recordings responsibly for school-related activities, e.g. on the school website/class news notice board. Photos may be taken on a staff member's mobile phone; these photos must be uploaded to Google Drive as soon as possible and then deleted from the mobile phone.



Staff and parents should note that no unauthorised recordings of school business must take place. This includes all meetings and events. If a meeting needs to be recorded for any reason, all participants must agree to the recording before it can take place. Any unauthorised recordings of meetings will be dealt with as a breach of disciplinary procedures.

Teachers may choose to show TV programmes/movies from time to time in the classroom, usually with a "U" certificate. However, at times they will also show programmes/movies with "PG" certificate. These will be shown if the teacher feels that they are appropriate for the whole class to watch. If, at any time, a teacher wishes to show a programme/movie with a certificate higher than "PG", they will send an email to parents of that class in advance informing them of what the teacher intends to show. Parents will only respond to this email if they do not wish their child to watch it. By not replying, a teacher will assume consent is given.

Work Calls

Calls to parents/guardians should be kept as short as possible during the school day. Where a lengthy conversation with parents/guardians is required, appointments should be made to meet parents. Calls to other professionals and organisations should be made in consultation with the Principal and classroom supervision will be arranged where appropriate.

Personal Calls

In general, personal calls should be carried out outside of teaching time. In cases of urgency, a staff member should use discretion in making calls and ensure that their classroom is supervised during the call. Incoming personal calls should be reserved for urgent matters and should be conducted in a private space.

School Website

- If a child's work is to be shown on the school website, the publication of children's work will be coordinated by a teacher.
- No material will appear on the school website without prior consultation with the teacher involved and with the ICT coordinator.
- It is prohibited to copy any material from the website without express permission from the school.
- The school strives not to publish digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual pupils on the website. Instead, the emphasis will be on photographs, audio and video clips that focus on group activities wherever possible.
- The school website will avoid publishing the surname of individuals in a photograph.



- Personal information about children, including home address and contact details, will never appear on the school website.
- Children will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Cyberbullying

Bullying is 'unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) which is repeated over time'. (Anti-Bullying Procedures, Department of Education, 2013).

This definition also includes:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs
- cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to bully a person with the intent to hurt, humiliate or intimidate them. Cyberbullying can take many forms including exclusion online, hurtful messages/images, abusive messages/emails, imitating someone online, etc. This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving.

Department of Education Anti-Bullying Procedure, 2013 defines cyberbullying as "placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or another public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour".

As cyberbullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. 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.

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 to ensure that staff and students are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. This definition includes cyberbullying even when it happens outside the school or at night.

Assistive Technology:

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) deems assistive technology as being essential for pupils who have been diagnosed as:

- having a serious physical disability
- and/or sensory or communicative disability to the extent that their ability to communicate through the medium of speech or writing is materially curtailed
- -where it is clear that existing equipment in the school is insufficient to meet the child's needs without unduly depriving other children of access to the equipment
- -where without such equipment it will not be possible for such children to access the school curriculum

The school seeks quotations for assistive technology, when advised in a professional assessment by a psychologist, for children with extra needs. If the department grants permission, the school orders the equipment and advises parents/child on the set up of the device. Equipment purchased should normally be kept in the school. However, the pupil in question may, with the consent of the management authority, use the equipment at home. The child and their parents must read the terms and conditions (see Appendix 3) and sign the Home Use of Sanctioned Assistive Technology (see Appendix 4) if they intend to use the equipment at home.

If a child is recommended for assistive technology in an assessment but the department does not grant permission for its purchase, we do not recommend the parents/guardians of that child to buy their own equipment. That child can avail of some classroom equipment when and where necessary, at the discretion of the class teacher.

Should the child in respect of whom the technology is sanctioned change school, including proceeding to post primary school, the new school, or the school that was sanctioned the technology should consult with the SENO/Visiting Teacher



with regard to its transfer with the pupil where it is still appropriate for the pupil's assessed needs. This will ensure that there is no gap in support for the pupil and to enable the pupil to continue to use suitable and familiar resources in their new setting. Retention of technology may be considered where the technology is out of date, it is no longer suitable to the needs of the transferring pupil or there is another child enrolled/enrolling and in respect of whom the school would be applying to the SENO for the same technology. Where the school or the pupil has no further requirement for the equipment, the SENO, or visiting teacher in conjunction with the SENO, may allocate it to another school in the interests of meeting needs to the greatest extent possible. (Circular No 0010/2013)

Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers 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
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988.

Support Structures

The school will inform children and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet. Each year, pupils receive class-based lessons on Internet Safety. At times, the school brings in external speakers to give lessons to children and parents about Internet safety.

The school recommends the following websites which inform children and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

- NCTE - <http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety>



- Webwise - <http://www.webwise.ie>
- Make IT Secure - <http://makeitsecure.ie>
- Safe Internet - <http://www.saferinternet.org/ww/en/pub/insafe/>
- National Parents Council Primary - www.npc.ie
- Reporting illegal content in the internet - www.hotline.ie www.garda.ie
- NCSE - <http://www.ncse.ie>

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet or any electronic device and its related content, 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 any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

As a school we advocate that parents exercise good practice with regard to their child's use of the Internet.



Appendix1: Letter to Parents / Guardians

Dear Parent / Guardian

Re: Internet Permission Form

As part of the school's education programme we will offer pupils supervised access to the Internet. This allows pupils access to a large array of online educational resources that we believe can greatly enhance students' learning experiences. The school installed broadband with the financial support of the Department of Education and Science and in compliance with guidelines from NCTE, the ICT body overseeing the use of IT in Irish schools. The school requested internet access using the Options A package which allows use of educational sites and blocks objectionable sites.

Access to and use of the Internet requires responsibility on the part of the user and the school. These responsibilities are outlined in the school's Acceptable Use Policy (enclosed). **It is important that this enclosed document is read carefully, signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the school.**

Although the school takes active steps to promote safe use of the Internet, it recognises the possibility that pupils may accidentally or deliberately access inappropriate or objectionable material.

The school accepts each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their children access to the Internet as defined in the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

Having read the terms of our school's Acceptable Use Policy, we are sure you agree that it is very important to make IT use at school and at home as safe as possible for children.



Appendix 2: Internet Use Permission Form

Please review the School Internet Acceptable Use Policy, (received in your welcome pack when your child first started school) sign and return this permission form to the Principal

Name of Pupil: _____

Class: _____

Pupil

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school.

Pupil's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent / Guardian

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for the child named above 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 pupils access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph _____. I do not accept the above paragraph _____.

(Please tick as appropriate)

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's work may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing children's work and photographs on the school website .

I accept the above paragraph _____. I do not accept the above paragraph _____ .

(Please tick as appropriate)

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Appendix 3: Assistive Technology Terms and Conditions:

1. The laptop, or any other approved assistive technology/equipment, remains the property of Rush & Lusk ETNS.
2. Should the designated pupil change school, including to post primary, the school will consult with the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO)/Visiting Teacher with regard to the transfer of the assistive technology with the pupil or, alternatively, in relation to its retention in the school. Retention of technology may be considered where there is another child enrolled/enrolling and in respect of whom the school would have to apply to the SENO for the same technology. The final decision regarding transfer will rest with the SENO.
3. The laptop, or any other approved assistive technology/equipment, will be used solely by the designated pupil and will not be used by, transferred to, interfered with or altered by, a third party.
4. The parents/guardian will remind their child to take due care of the laptop, or any other approved assistive technology/equipment at all times.
5. The laptop, or any other approved assistive technology/equipment and all accessories should be stored safely and securely in its designated storage place in the classroom when not in use.
6. The laptop, or any other approved technology/equipment is not to be left in plain view in an unattended or unsecured vehicle but kept out of sight in the locked boot.
7. The laptop, or any other approved assistive technology/equipment will be used solely to assist with typing skills, completion of homework assignments and other school related activities. Only school approved software packages/applications may be used.
8. If the laptop or device is required for work at home, it may be taken home, with prior permission from the class teacher. Parents and their child must sign the agreement attached to this policy. The laptop or device must be returned to the school for the duration of all school holidays.



9. The laptop, or any other approved technology/equipment must be returned to the school in good working order during the last week of June, or earlier if requested by the school.
10. The laptop, or any other approved assistive technology/equipment is covered under school insurance, however, the parent must take reasonable care to avoid damage or loss.
11. The pupil will only use the laptop or device when supervised during school hours. At home, use of the laptop, or device must be supervised by a parent to ensure the pupil does not access inappropriate material online.
12. The laptop or device will be used in accordance with the school's Internet Acceptable Use Policy regarding the ethical use of technology, use of legal software, use of the Internet and the protection of personal data. The parent shall agree to review and adhere to the school's Acceptable Usage Policy, specifically where this policy relates to the safe and appropriate use of approved equipment such as laptops or devices.
13. The laptop or device will be kept in good working order. All laptop faults, defects or malfunctions while in the care of the pupil are to be reported to the Principal or class teacher.
14. Any laptop or device markings, tags or plates or engravings will not be removed, concealed or altered. The laptop or device must not be marked in any way that might reduce the value of the laptop.
15. If the laptop or device is lost or stolen the parent will advise the Principal and the Gardaí as soon as possible orally and in writing including all relevant details, record of events etc.
16. The laptop or device cannot be used for any commercial purpose.
17. If any of these terms or conditions are breached, the Board of Management of Rush & Lusk ETNS may at any time revoke this



arrangement.

Please note: The School's Internet Acceptable Use (IUA) Policy can be viewed on www.ralet.ie



Appendix 4: Agreement for Signing by Pupil and Parent
Re: Home Use of Sanctioned Assistive Technology

Device	Serial Number	Value

I confirm that I accept responsibility for taking into my possession a laptop or device which is the property of Rush & Lusk ETNS, Roll Number: 20176C outside of school hours.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept the Terms and Conditions attached to this agreement and other relevant policies as are determined by Rush & Lusk ETNS.

Name of Pupil: _____

Signature of Pupil: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Date: _____

