

# Corpus Christi National School Internet Acceptable Use Policy



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## Introduction

In Corpus Christi NS, the provision of a safe internet environment will be achieved using a three-pronged approach; filtering/monitoring; education; and through the development and implementation of an Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

Our AUP policy is made up of three documents; AUP, Social Media, and Remote Teaching and Continuity of Learning Plan. This document outlines the agreed AUP formulated by the staff, principal, parents and Board of Management of Corpus Christi NS.

## General Approach

The aim of this AUP is to ensure that pupils will benefit from the 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. If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

When using the internet pupils, 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.

### **Users to whom AUP applies**

This AUP applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in Corpus Christi NS. It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in Corpus Christi NS.

### **Serious online safety incidents**

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the Principal or in her absence the Deputy Principal will be informed.

### **Promoting safer use of the internet**

Corpus Christi NS implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet;

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety and cyberbullying as part of our implementation of the SPHE and RSE curricula.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in Corpus Christi NS through our pastoral care and through the SPHE and RSE programmes.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety/cyber-bullying
- Corpus Christi NS participates in Safer Internet Day, Anti-bullying Week and Internet Safety Week activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.

### **Content Filtering**

- Corpus Christi NS has chosen to implement level 4 on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network.
- This level allows access to millions of websites including games and YouTube but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal website category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the Social Networking category. Applications such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok are also blocked by the Schools Broadband Network.
- Pupils 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, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion
- When using Seesaw, the agreed digital platform for remote learning at home, pupils will be outside of the Corpus Christi National School network. Thus, it will be incumbent upon their parents and guardians to ensure adequate internet safety precautions are taken.

### **Internet Use**

The following statements apply to Internet Usage in Corpus Christi National School:

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

- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom to their teacher.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school outside the classroom to the class teacher in the first incidence and then to the Principal or Deputy Principal
- Pupils and staff will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content.
- Pupils will not copy and paste information into assignments. They will be taught to acknowledge the source wherever possible.
- Pupils 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.
- Pupils will use the school's internet connection only for educational activities.
- Pupils 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.
- Pupils will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information or passwords
- 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.
- Downloading by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is a direct breach of Corpus Christi's Acceptable Usage Policy.
- The Use of file sharing and torrent sites is not allowed.

### **Email and Messaging**

The following statements apply to the usage email and messaging services in Corpus Christi National School:

- The use of personal email accounts by pupils is not allowed at Corpus Christi NS.
- Pupils may sometimes use approved class email accounts (such as Chromebook email addresses) but only under the supervision of their class teacher.
- Pupils should be aware that email communications are monitored.
- Pupils do not have access to email services on any school devices.
- Pupils will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not make use of shared school email accounts outside of the school building for any reason.
- Pupils should immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication.

- Pupils should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, pupils should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.

### **Social Media and messaging services**

(for further information, please refer to the Social Media Policy section of the school website)

### **The following statements apply to the usage of Social Media and messaging services in Corpus Christi National School.**

- Members of the school community (pupils, parents and school staff) must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff or other members of the Corpus Christi NS community.
  - Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Corpus Christi NS community on social media.
  - Many classes have WhatsApp groups to keep parents informed of events in the school or Parents Association activities. This is a positive medium for passing on information, setting reminders and for enlisting helpers. Parent volunteers are the administrators and organises of this social media platform to assist activities in the school. All parents should monitor the way in which they use WhatsApp. Parents should not post or comment on any member of the school community – pupil, parent or staff member. It is important to respect the privacy and dignity of all in the school community.
  - WhatsApp groups must not be used to raise a concern/ complaint about a pupil, a teacher, a parent, or the school. Any concerns should be addressed directly with the class teacher or the school Principal, in line with the Parent–School Partnership Policy.
  - Please see the Addendum to the AUP, the Social Media Policy for more guidelines.
  - Staff and pupils must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
  - Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Corpus Christi NS into disrepute.
  - Staff and pupils must not represent their personal views as those of Corpus Christi NS on any social medium.
  - Staff and pupils must not share any photos or videos of pupils or staff members without their knowledge and consent.
  - Pupils will be provided with etiquette regarding social media.
  - Teachers can read further information about the use of Social Media and Electronic Communication here: <https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latestnews/2021/guidance-for-registered-teachers-about-the-use-of-social-mediaand-electroniccommunication.html>
  - Teachers must also adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Appendix re teachers and social media usage.

### **Blogging and video streaming services in Corpus Christi NS:**

The following statements apply to the usage of blogging and video streaming services in Corpus Christi National School:

- The use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, G Chat etc. is not allowed by pupils in Corpus Christi NS.
- The use of blogs such as Word Press, Tumblr etc. is allowed at certain times in Corpus Christi NS with express permission from school management.
- The use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is allowed at certain times in Corpus Christi NS, under the supervision of class teachers. Content from video streaming sites must be educational and related to learning tasks.
- Content from video streaming sites must be viewed by teachers prior to showing to pupils.

### **Personal Devices**

#### **In Corpus Christ National School:**

Pupils are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, smartphones, smartwatches and digital music players in Corpus Christi NS.

- Corpus Christi is a smartphone free environment since September 2025. Smartphones are not permitted under any circumstance.
- Smartwatches that can access the internet, take photographs and record media are not permitted to be worn in the school, even when in 'school mode'.
- Mobile (brick) phones are not permitted under any circumstances on the school grounds unless express permission has been sought from the principal. Parents are requested to complete a Mobile Device form with their child and submit it to the Principal for registration.
- Mobile devices must be registered with the Principal and should remain switched off and in the pupil's school bag for the duration of the school day.
- The school is not responsible for the loss or damage to any personal electronic device on the school premises.
- Please refer to the Mobile Device Policy for further information.

## **Images and Video**

At Corpus Christi National School, the safety and wellbeing of our children, families and staff is always our top priority. As a school we have ongoing responsibilities under the GDPR Act 2018 to ensure that all data, including photographs and images is processed lawfully, fairly and securely. As the online environment continues to evolve, we are increasingly aware that images shared on websites and social media can be copied, stored or repurposed beyond their original intention and outside of the school's control. At Corpus Christi we will continue to ensure that images shared of pupils, parents and staff of Corpus Christi will not be identifiable. We have for many years, endeavoured to take photographs that do not show our pupils faces. This practice is in keeping with our AUP and in the best interests of the pupils in Corpus Christi National School. Our online content will continue to acknowledge and affirm the learning in Corpus Christi while being cognisant of the privacy of pupils.

- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- At Corpus Christi, we ask our parents to play their role in keeping our children safe and when they are accompanying classes on school trips to support us in our efforts by refraining from taking any photographs of children. By working together, we can protect the rights and dignity of all members of our community.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities are only allowed with expressed permission from school management.
- Written permission from parents/guardians or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website.
- Pupils must not share or manipulate images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.
- Sharing explicit images and in particular explicit images of pupils and/or minors is illegal, unacceptable and will have serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other pupils automatically incurs the sanction of suspension.
- If a teacher or other staff member has a suspicion that there may be unsuitable material stored on a phone, it will be confiscated and parents will be informed. If there is a suspicion that material on a phone may provide evidence in relation to a crime, it will be handed over to the Gardaí for further investigation. Parents will be informed in such circumstances

## **Digital Learning Platforms (including video conferencing) In**

### **Corpus Christi National School:**

- In relation to Digital Learning Platforms, it is envisaged that pupils from Junior Infants to 6th Class will use SeeSaw.
- Staff will use Google Workspace and Aladdin.
- Students must only use the QR Code/Home Learning Code when using the Seesaw Platform.
- The use of digital platforms should be used in line with considerations set out in the school's data protection policy.

- Each staff user will be provided with their own unique login credentials for Google Workspace and Aladdin
- Senior classes (3rd to 6th) are provided with a class account for Google Workspace. Pupils may only use this address in the classroom under the supervision of the teacher.
- Passwords for digital platforms and accounts should not be shared or saved on teacher laptops.
- Personal email addresses should not be used when creating accounts on school digital platforms.

### **Direct Communication using Internet.**

#### **In Corpus Christi National School:**

- Teachers in the school may use any of a range of digital tools in the classroom. Examples may include Seesaw, Padlet, Kahoot, and Class Dojo, Google Docs/ Slides.
- Pupils are required to conduct their interactions and messages in the online space in the same way as they would be expected to in class or in relation to Seesaw, the agreed digital platform for online learning.
- Digital facilities may be utilised to provide synchronous video opportunities whereby a staff member directly speaks to the children live, e.g. through a webinar or online meeting. The staff member shares any such invite with a pupil's parent or guardian, who is responsible for logging in to the meeting via their own account using a code. (Please refer to our remote learning plan for further details.)

### **Inappropriate Activities in breach of the Acceptable Usage Policy in Corpus Christi N.S.**

- Promotion or conduct of illegal acts, e.g. under the child protection, obscenity, computer misuse and fraud legislation
- Misuse and fraud legislation
- Racist material
- Pornography
- 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

### **Cyberbullying (Please refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy and Social Media policy on the school website)**

As Per the Bí Cineálta Procedures, 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.’ (Chapter 2, Bí Cineálta Procedures)**

### **In Corpus Christi, in line with the Bí Cineálta procedures:**

- Online bullying behaviour (cyberbullying) is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.
- This form of bullying behaviour can include:
  - sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
  - posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent
  - making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students
  - excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game
- Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.
- As online bullying uses technology to carry out bullying behaviour and does not require face-to-face contact it can occur at any time. Many types of bullying behaviour can be facilitated through online bullying. In many cases online bullying can relate to an “offline” experience with someone known to the student. This type of bullying may involve forms of sexual exploitation including but not limited to, sextortion and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence.

**The following expectations apply to all members of the Corpus Christi School community in relation to the use of social media:**

- When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times.
- Engaging in online activities to harm, harass, or embarrass another pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable and prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.
- The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of the Anti-Bullying policy of our school.

**School Website/ Social Media -Instagram**

**In Corpus Christi National School:**

- Pupils will be allowed to publish projects, artwork or school work on the SeeSaw platform in accordance with clear policies and approval processes.
- The website and school social media pages will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.
- Webpages allowing comments or user-generated content will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain any inappropriate or offensive content.
- The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.
- Written permission is sought from parents for images of their child to appear on Instagram or the School website. Identifiable photo's will not be shared on the school's Instagram account, children's faces will not feature in content shared. Corpus Christi NS will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will not be published on the school website or the school's social media pages.
- Children's work and school events will be recognised, celebrated and shared without sharing identifiable images.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Corpus Christi NS web pages.
- Corpus Christi NS will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

**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 should be referred to in the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying 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.

Corpus Christi NS will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact the wellbeing of pupils or staff under this policy and associated Code of Behaviour and Antibullying policy. In such cases, Corpus Christi NS will, where known, inform parents/guardians of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place outside of school and impose the appropriate sanctions. When necessary, parents and guardians will be directed to the Webwise.ie and the wealth of information and support available there.

## **Monitoring the implementation of the policy**

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the Principal, staff and the Board of Management

## **Reviewing and evaluating the policy.**

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated after one year. On-going review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines (e.g. from the Data Protection Commissioner, Department of Education and Skills or TUSLA), legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, students, school staff and others.

The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

## **Timeframe for Review**

This policy will be reviewed in the next school year.

## **Responsibility for Review**

- Digital Co-ordinator
- School Principal

## **Ratification**

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management of Corpus Christi National School at a meeting held on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026.

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*Níamh Greene*

Principal

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*Felix McKenna*

Chairperson of the Board of Manage

**Corpus Christi NS**  
**Internet Acceptable Use Policy Permission form**



The Internet Acceptable Use Policy has three sections:

- The Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- The Social Media Policy
- The Remote Teaching and Continuity of Learning Plan

Please read the Internet Acceptable Use Policy, the Social Media Policy and Remote Teaching and Continuity of Learning Plan which are on the school website.

Please sign and return this permission form to the Principal.

Name of pupil:	Class:
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.	
Signature of pupil: _____ Date: _____	
<p>As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Acceptable Use Policy</li> <li>○ The Social Media Policy</li> <li>○ The Remote Teaching and Continuity of Learning Plan</li> </ul> <p>I grant permission for my daughter 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.</p> <p>In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing students' work on the school website.</p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p>	

**Corpus Christi National School**  
**Social Media Policy**  
**Addendum to Acceptable Use Policy**



## **Addendum - Social Media**

### **Introduction**

Corpus Christi National School recognises and appreciates the important contribution that social media has made to enhance communication and interaction in the digital age in which we live. As a school community we believe that this resource if harnessed constructively, can be used to change and enhance the way we teach, learn and interact with one another. We acknowledge the influence social media has on communication and interaction allowing us to share information and opinions with a broad audience. We are committed to developing the technological and communication skills of our pupils by encouraging responsible and safe use of the internet. We believe this to be the shared responsibility of the parents, teachers, pupils and the wider school community.

### **Content**

1. Definition
  2. Rationale
  3. Scope
  4. Aims of the policy
  5. Roles and Responsibilities
  6. General Principles of Safe and Responsible use of Social Media
  7. Terms of Use
  8. Cyberbullying definition
  9. Unacceptable uses of Social Media
  10. Sanctions for Policy Infringements
  11. Monitor and Review
- Appendix 1: Internet Safety Contract (Third class- Sixth class)
- Appendix 2: Internet Safety Advice for Parents

### **1. Definition**

Social media is an umbrella term used to describe websites or internet applications that allow people to interact with each other, by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. Websites and platforms such as Facebook, BeReal, Snapchat, Instagram, Whatsapp, Tiktok, Vimeo and Skype are a few examples of what media our children are accessing. Social media also include services such as blogs, video and audio podcasts, wikis, message boards, photo documents and video sharing websites such as YouTube and micro blogging services such as Twitter. This definition is not exhaustive as technology is constantly developing new ways of communicating.

### **2. Rationale**

The mission statement of Corpus Christi National School states that our school is a Catholic Primary school in which we strive to learn together in a happy and safe environment, where everyone is valued, respected and encouraged to do their best. Corpus Christi National School acknowledges the positive role the internet plays in the education of our pupils, however, as a school we wish to alert pupils to the scope for irresponsible and inappropriate use of social media sites which can lead to bullying, harassment and access to inappropriate or illegal material while online or where victims can be subjected to inappropriate and unsolicited comments. The staff of Corpus Christi National School acknowledge that this negative commentary on social media is not confined to the classroom but can extend into the wider community often having damaging consequences for victims. We recognise that this new virtual playground is

often unsupervised and unregulated. The devising of this policy is a response to this new reality, calling all of us as a school community to come together and teach responsible internet use.

### **3. Scope**

This policy covers the use of social networking by all pupils, parents/guardians and school staff. Due to the diverse nature of access to social media, this policy relates to all such interactions both during and outside of normal school hours and includes the use of social media applications on school and personal devices. Social media applications include, **but are not limited to:**

- X (formerly Twitter), Blogs
- Photo and media sharing services e.g. Instagram, YouTube, Tiktok
- Online discussion forums e.g. Reddit, Rollercoaster.ie
- Collaborative spaces e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Canva, Google Docs.
- Messenger apps e.g. WhatsApp, Snapchat, Facebook messenger
- Games/apps- Roblox, Minecraft, Fortnite, Clash of clans, Fifa
- Video Conferencing apps like Facetime, Zoom, Vimeo etc.

### **4. Aims of this policy are:**

- to identify strategies for students that will enable them to use social media safely and responsibly
- to safeguard pupils, staff and members of the school community from the negative effects of social networking sites; safeguard the reputation of the school from unwarranted abuse on social networking sites; to protect the integrity and good names of all members of the school community from online abuse
- to clarify what the school considers to be appropriate or inappropriate use of social networking sites
- to outline behaviours which are unacceptable and the consequences for engaging in these
- to outline procedures for school community members who find themselves the victims of inappropriate social media behaviour
- to establish the role of teachers and parents in encouraging safer internet use and reporting of incidents.

### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Board of Management will approve the policy and ensure its implementation, development and evaluation.
- The Principal, Deputy Principal and Relevant Post-holder will be responsible for the dissemination of the policy; the application of sanctions; and together with the Parents' Association will schedule workshops and guest speakers on this topic.
- Class teachers and parents will advise children on safe internet use. Teachers will teach the children from Third to Sixth class the internet safety lessons from Webwise.ie. Pupils from first class and second class will work on the HTML Heroes programme (webwise). Junior and Senior Infants will use the age appropriate 'Digiducks' programme to explore safe internet use.
- The staff and parents of Corpus Christi will outline unacceptable uses of Social Media to pupils.

- Children and parents will be expected to read, understand and sign Our School Internet Safety Contract annually in the school journal.
- Teachers will report incidents of online bullying to the Principal and be mindful of the obligations under Child Protection Procedures.
- The school community will provide support for those who have been victims of online bullying.

## **6. General Principles of Safe and Responsible use of Social Media**

- Under GDPR – The digital age of consent is 16 years in Ireland and is designed to protect the personal information of children. The digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media and internet company can collect, process and store their data. In May 2018, the EU adopted a new set of Data Protection Regulations. These requirements also state the processing of data of children under the age of 16, in respect of online services, shall not be lawful without parental consent.
- Giving permission to your child to set up a social media account while they are underage can engage your child in a world they are unprepared for.
- Users of social media should be selective about what they share. Everything happens in front of a vast, invisible and often anonymous audience. Once you post something, it doesn't disappear as it can be copied and forwarded easily and quickly. Everything leaves a digital footprint. Users should never post personal details such as your phone number, email address or home address.
- Users should be selective with friends. Be careful when making friends online. In general, it is better to restrict friends to people you know and trust. Talk to parents before adding new friends or people unknown to you. For parents, the key to keeping your child safe online is to ensure that the people they are interacting with online are also known to them in real life (friends and family).
- Users should never post their location. Facebook lets users post their location on every post. Children should not do this for safety and privacy reasons.
- Users should use strict privacy settings. Review all of the options on the privacy settings page. Many sites default settings tend to keep information public until a user makes it private.
- If your profile is linked to your mobile phone, you should use the websites privacy settings to ensure your phone number is not visible.
- Chat/VoIP services (These allow for communication that may be typed or spoken with or without webcam access). You should only communicate with people you trust and remember that others may be able to view all aspects of communication.

## **7. Terms of Use**

Members of the school community must adhere to the following Terms of Use. This includes, but is not limited to, public facing applications such as open discussion forums and internally facing uses such as blogs regardless of whether they are hosted on a school network or not. Where applications allow the posting of messages online, users must be mindful that the right of freedom of expression attaches only to lawful conduct. At Corpus Christi National School, we expect that users of social networking applications will always exercise the right of freedom of expression with due consideration of the rights of others and strictly in accordance with these Terms of Use:

### **Communication between Pupils/Parents/School Staff**

- Communication between pupils and staff, by whatever method, should take place within clear explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs.
- Communication between all members of the school community (pupils, parents, staff) must be respectful at all times. Social media applications must not be used to communicate in an abusive or hateful manner and must not breach the schools Anti-bullying Policy.
- Teachers can be contacted via the school phone number. Staff should not give their personal mobile numbers or personal email addresses to pupils or parents. Pupils or parents should not contact staff members via their email address or phone number.
- Staff should not request, nor respond to, any personal contact made by a pupil or parent to them on a social media site and should inform school management immediately of same.
- Members of the school community need to ensure that when they are communicating about others, even outside school, that they give due regard to the potential consequences of such comments. Making comments or allegations on social networking sites about others connected with the school could result in formal action being taken against them. This includes the uploading of photographs or messages, that may bring a person, persons or the school into disrepute.

#### **Guidelines for Class WhatsApp groups:**

Many classes have WhatsApp groups to keep parents informed of events in the school or Parents Association activities. This is a positive medium for passing on information, setting reminders and for enlisting helpers. Parent volunteers are the administrators and organises of this social media platform to assist activities in the school. All parents should monitor the way in which they use WhatsApp. Parents should not post or comment on any member of the school community – pupil, parent or staff member. It is important to respect the privacy and dignity of all in the school community.

- The Parent's Association may communicate upcoming PA events, fundraising activities, third-party courses and other activities which may be of interest to parents via the WhatsApp contact groups.
- Messages posted on the school WhatsApp contact groups should always be respectful in language and tone.
- School WhatsApp groups may not be used to share inappropriate posts. Such posts include posting personal, business and or political posts/promotions, using inappropriate language or voicing grievances about individual members of the group.
- These groups are not appropriate for airing concerns around teaching methods, school staff or school policy. Please deal with the school or the teacher directly if you have an issue.
- Communications in a WhatsApp group are considered private and should not be disseminated outside the group by individual members of the group without permission.
- The school has a strict child protection policy on photographs and videos, please do not circulate any images or videos in which a pupil appears unless that image has already appeared on the school website or social media page.
- Parent volunteers on school trips and tours are not permitted to take or share photos or videos of outings on Class WhatsApp groups.

- Please be mindful of the times at which you are posting in the Class WhatsApp group, please ensure conversations in the group are not of a private nature and relate solely to school information dissemination for the class group.
- The group administrator will have the right to remove participants from the Class WhatsApp Group who do not abide by these guidelines. By requesting to join a Class WhatsApp group, participants agree to these rules. By joining a group you are sharing your phone number with other parents within your child's class. Once you join, you will always have the option to leave the group.

### **Guidelines for staff on the use of Social Media Sites**

All proposals for using social networking applications as part of a school service (whether hosted by the school or by a third party) must be approved by the Principal. Please refer to Appendix three for further information.

We acknowledge that there are many platforms which can be of great use to children's educational and social development and sites such as Seesaw, Zoom etc are currently in use in our school. Staff are expected to exercise sound judgement and maintain the highest professional standards while using social media in the school.

### **Personal use of Social Media**

The use of Social Media sites by staff is governed by the Code of Professional Conduct from the Teaching Council. Registered teachers should:

- Communicate effectively with pupils, colleagues, parents, school management and others in a manner that is professional, collaborative and supportive, and based on trust and respect
- Ensure that any communication with pupils/ students, colleagues, parents and school management is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as email, texting and social networking sites
- Ensure that they do not knowingly access, download or otherwise have in their possession while engaged in school activities, inappropriate or illegal materials/images in electronic or any other format
- Staff are encouraged to use the privacy settings on social media sites/apps and to keep updated on developments on privacy restrictions.

### **Unacceptable uses of Social Media sites and their consequences**

Users are responsible for their own behaviour when communicating on social media and will be held accountable for the content of their communications that they post on social media locations.

### **8. Cyber-bullying (refer to Corpus Christi National School Anti-bullying Policy also)**

The core definition of Bullying Behaviour Bullying is 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. (Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, p.17)

#### **Online Bullying/ Cyber Bullying:**

- Online bullying behaviour (cyberbullying) is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.
- This form of bullying behaviour can include:

- sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
- posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent
- making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students
- excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game
- Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.
- As online bullying uses technology to carry out bullying behaviour and does not require face-to-face contact it can occur at any time. Many types of bullying behaviour can be facilitated through online bullying. In many cases online bullying can relate to an “offline” experience with someone known to the student. This type of bullying may involve forms of sexual exploitation including but not limited to, sextortion and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence

### **9. Unacceptable use of Social Media**

- Pupils are not permitted to access to social networking sites during the school day.
- Pupils are not permitted to have smartwatches in school
- Pupils are not allowed to have mobile phones in school, unless parents/guardians have written a letter to the Principal requesting permission for their child to have a mobile phone for an essential reason and outlining the reason, otherwise phones will be confiscated if they are visible in school. (See Mobile Device Policy).
- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, negative comments, threatening messages or images that may cause harm to any member of the school community.
- Forwarding, ‘Liking’ or commenting on material that is likely to cause offence or hurt to a third party.
- Posting photos of others without their consent or tagging members of the school community in photos without their consent
- Participating in videos or photographs in class or on the school premises without the consent of the class teacher
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage the school’s image or a person’s reputation.
- Creating a fake profile that impersonates any other member of the school community.
- Sending or posting material that is confidential to the school.
- Participating in the viewing or exchanging of inappropriate images or obscene material.

While all cases involving the inappropriate use of social media will be dealt with on an individual basis, the school and the Board of Management considers the above to be serious breaches of our Code of Behaviour. Disciplinary action will be taken in the case of inappropriate use of social media tools.

### **10. Sanctions for Policy Infringements**

Infringements of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including (but not exclusively):

- Blocking/removal from school platform/Instagram etc.
- Suspension of digital privileges in school
- Confiscation of devices if found on school grounds or on school related activities
- Notification to parents and/or sanction
- Suspension from school and/or school- related activities
- Exclusion
- Legal action and/or prosecution

### **11. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored by the staff of Corpus Christi National School in conjunction with the Principal and the Board of Management. Reviews will be undertaken as deemed necessary. A major review will be undertaken three years subsequent to the date of implementation.

Reviewed by the Board of Management on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026 and reviewed annually.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Niamh Greene  
Principal

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Felix Mc Kenna  
Chairperson

## **Appendix 1**

### **Internet Safety Contract- Rules for Responsible Internet Use**

#### **Third – Sixth class**

These rules will help to keep us safe and help us to be fair to others. Please read through these rules carefully with your child.

#### Internet Safety Contract- Rules for Responsible Internet Use

These rules will help to keep us safe on the internet and help us to be fair to others. Please read through these rules carefully with your child.

- I will follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behaviour online that I am expected to follow offline. I will not use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- I will use ICT e.g. iPads, Chromebooks laptops, internet etc. in school for school purposes only.
- I will immediately report any damage or faults involving equipment or software, however this may have happened.
- I understand that Corpus Christi is a Smartphone Free School. Smartphones are not allowed.
- If I am bringing a mobile device (brick phone or smartwatch) to school, I will ensure that I have a 'Mobile Device Form' signed by the principal and my parents. I am aware of the sanctions for using my device in school.
- I will not use mobile devices such as phones, cameras, memory sticks, software from outside school in school or take them on school trips.
- I will not wear a smartwatch in school, even on school mode.
- I will not take or post photographs/videos of pupils/teachers or any member of the school community in school or outside school without their knowledge and permission.
- I will not participate in photographs/videos on my own or any other pupil's personal mobile devices in school.
- I will ask the permission of the teacher before using the internet at school.
- I will only open/delete my own files. I will not access other people's files.
- I will only send email messages, using a class or school email address with my teacher's approval. The messages I send will be polite and responsible.
- I will not share my own, nor will I use any other person's username or password.
- I will not make negative comments, post, forward or 'like' negative comments/ images of others in the school community.
- I will not engage in cyber-bullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct towards others in school or out of school.
- I will tell a teacher/parent if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate or harmful content (images, messages or posts) online.
- I will not deliberately look for, save or send anything that could be inappropriate or offensive.
- If I accidentally find anything like this, I will close the screen and tell a teacher/parent immediately as this will protect me and other children.
- I will STOP, BLOCK and TELL if I experience cyber-bullying
- I will not give my full name, my home address or telephone number or those of any others online.
- I will not agree to meet someone I met online in real life.
- I will STOP, BLOCK, TELL if a stranger on the internet tries to contact me
- I understand the school can check my mobile device and/or the internet sites I visit, and that my parent/guardian will be contacted if a member of staff is concerned about my safety.

- I understand that the school also has the right to take action against me if I am involved in incidents of inappropriate behaviour when I am out of school and where they involve my membership of the school community e.g. Cyberbullying, use of images or personal information.
- I understand that if I fail to obey the Rules for Responsible Internet Use Agreement, I will be subject to disciplinary action.

Child: As a school user of the internet, I have read the Rules for Responsible Internet Use with my parents/guardians, and I agree to comply with them and behave in a responsible way when online at home and at school.

Child's name (print): .....

Child's signature: .....

Parent: I have read the Rules for Responsible Internet Use with my child. I understand that some material found on the internet may be objectionable and I accept responsibility for setting standards for my child when selecting, posting/sharing and exploring information on the internet. I will monitor my child's internet usage.

Parent's name (print): .....

Parent's signature.....

## Appendix 2

### Internet Safety Advice for Parents



- The digital age of consent is 16 years in Ireland and is designed to protect the personal information of children. The digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media and internet company can collect, process and store their data. In Corpus Christi we strongly advise against parents setting up social media profiles for children.
- Corpus Christi is a Smartphone Free School.
- Delaying smartphone ownership can foster better social and emotional development in children. They can learn essential face-to-face communication skills and build stronger interpersonal relationships without digital distractions. Exposure to unwanted, negative behaviours by others is also reduced. Online content and social media use may affect the mental health of young people.
- Be informed about your child's internet use so that going online is a positive experience for you and your child.
- Discover the internet together. Parental guidance on internet use places your child at an advantage and develops a positive attitude to internet exploration making it easier to share positive and negative experiences in the future.
- Teach your child how to evaluate and criticise the information they read online for truth and accuracy.
- In the ever evolving world of the internet and artificial intelligence (AI), equip your child with the critical thinking and digital literacy skills they need to evaluate content, recognise bias, protect their privacy, and make responsible decisions, and be Safe, Smart and in Control. Consider how AI technologies shape children's experiences online. While these technologies have benefits, they also raise important questions about safety, reliability, bias, privacy, overreliance, and ethical and responsible use.
- Agree with your child rules for internet use in your home.
  - Discuss an acceptable length of time for your child to use the internet. Experts say that time spent online should not affect sleep, exercise or time with family. Have screen free hours at home.
  - Do not let your child have their internet device in their bedroom. Internet use should be in a common space to encourage openness and to enable monitoring.
- Agree on how to treat personal information. Encourage your child never to give out personal name, address, username, password or location. Check your child's privacy settings and location settings.
- Teach your child to protect their phone with a password and encourage them to share the password with you. Starting this practice at a young age can help you gain access to your child's virtual world. Keep track of your child's password. You should be able to check it whenever you feel you need to, and a condition of them being on any social networks should be that they inform you of any password changes.
- Set up a family email address that your child can use when signing in to new games and websites online. When gaming online, encourage your child to use a nickname for their password.
- Agree on what types of sites and activities are OK in your family. Be involved with the sites your child is engaged with and know how they work. Use filtering software designed to help parents limit the web-sites children can access.

- Make sure the games your child is playing are suitable and age appropriate. Call of Duty: Black Ops and Grand Theft Auto or other 15, 18 age-rated games are unsuitable for primary school children. Social media sites like TikTok, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter etc. have an age rating of 13. Primary school children should not be using them. The digital age of consent in Ireland is 16.
- Discuss how to behave towards others when gaming, chatting, emailing and messaging. Encourage your child be responsible for what they post online. Encourage them to own up if they are wrong. We are all learning about responsible internet use. Encourage your child to **THINK** before they post by asking the questions:  
Is it true?                      Is it helpful?                      Is it illegal?                      Is it necessary?                      Is it kind?
- Teach your child that all comments posted online can be traced to the IP address of their internet device. Nothing is anonymous.
- Be aware that some social media sites are set up by unknown groups with different agendas. Your child may be at risk.
- Regularly review the social media app your child is using and the social networking private settings. Many social networks are set to public by default meaning anyone can see your child's posts, pictures, videos etc. We recommend using the 'friends only' setting.
- Teach your child that posting a photograph online has ramifications. The image is there forever, and it can be passed on and exploited. Children should know that what they upload online can follow them around for years beyond the date it was uploaded.
- Teach your child that once you upload any content on the internet it is there permanently and you can never remove it. Anyone could have it saved, forwarded, shared or screenshotted, even if your child has deleted soon afterwards.
- Teach your child that Zoom, Skype, Facetime and other webcam sites are for family and closely selected friends.
- Be careful about allowing your child free access to YouTube as they can gain access to a lot of inappropriate material. Dangerous challenges that are posted on YouTube encourage children to copy them.
- Be aware if you child has posted images or videos of themselves on YouTube or elsewhere online. The Internet has a vast audience. Making a video and posting it on YouTube is dangerous.
- Talk about the risks associated with meeting online 'friends' in person. Teach your child not to meet anyone, stranger or otherwise, without your permission.
- Disable the In-App Purchase function in your phone or device settings. Many apps and games give their users the option of buying additional game functionality, additional points/bonuses etc. Children can easily make purchases without realising.
- Report online material you may consider illegal to the appropriate authorities.
- Encourage respect for others and help stamp out cyber-bullying. Encourage your children to **STOP, BLOCK** and **TELL** if they are being cyberbullied. Do not retaliate. Record everything- keep all text messages, keep a note of calls, screen shot images and messages.
- If you child is being cyberbullied:
  - Establish with your child that they can come to you about anything negative that happens to them online, no matter how shocking.
  - Praise your child for coming forward to tell you.
  - Stay calm and don't overreact.
  - Listen supportively, don't interrogate.
  - Establish what has taken place and in what context.
  - Save any evidence, take screenshots etc.

- Encourage your child not to reply to any messages. Block the user from your child's profile, revisit your child's privacy settings, and delete and block any other 'virtual friends'.
- Report incidences of cyber-bullying to the website apps or service providers using the reporting tools.
- Encourage your child to continue to **STOP, BLOCK, TELL**
- Talk to your child's teacher. If the cyberbullying is of a very serious nature, you may wish to speak to the Gardaí
- If your child has engaged in cyber-bullying:
  - Keep calm and listen to your child.
  - Establish the facts and find out what role your child played. Even if your child was part of a group with a minor role, it needs to be addressed.
  - Encourage your child to 'own up' to the part that she played. Do not cover up for her. She can learn from her mistakes.
  - Talk with your child and help her see where she was wrong. Ask her what better options were available to her.
  - Ask her to think about the victim. Ask her to establish how the victim might feel after the cyber-bullying experience. Encourage empathy.
  - Encourage your child to make a meaningful apology.
  - Do your best to restore the relationship.
  - Monitor your child's interactions online for the foreseeable future.
- For tips on how to use Seesaw and Zoom safely, please refer to the Remote Learning Section of our Acceptable Use Policy
- If you are unsure when it comes to the Internet, gaming, social media and general technology, be open and seek help from the school or friends. We are all learning!

Useful Internet safety sites and links:

[www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)

[www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)

[www.esafety.ie](http://www.esafety.ie)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

[www.netsmatz.org](http://www.netsmatz.org)

[www.zeeko.ie](http://www.zeeko.ie)

[www.common sense media.ie](http://www.common sense media.ie)

<http://www.saferinternet.org/>

[www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)

[www.saferinternetday.ie](http://www.saferinternetday.ie)

## Social Media Policy



### Appendix 3 - School Staff & Social Media Usage

The Board of Management of Corpus Christi National School has developed the following code of practice for staff regarding social media, commercial practice, and marketing within the school grounds or involving the school. These expectations are mandatory for all individuals working in the school, including staff, students on placement, volunteers, and outside providers. A copy of this document will be provided to all personnel. Any questions or feedback on the guidelines should be directed first to the Principal, as the day-to-day manager of the school, followed by the Board of Management.

The Board of Management adopts the Teaching Council's "Guidance for registered teachers about the use of social media and electronic communication" as guidance for school staff in this area. All staff should read the guidance document, available here: [Guidance for registered teachers about the use of social media and electronic communication](#). When drafting this code of practice, the Board of Management has considered relevant sections of the Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers, including standards 1.5, 2.2, 2.5, and 4.8.

#### Commercial Practice & Marketing in the Classroom or School

Any paid partnership between a member of school staff and a commercial business that requires any part of the agreement to be performed on school premises or with members of the school community requires written approval from the Board of Management. Payment includes financial payment or personal benefit in kind/gifted items.

#### Promotion of Commercial Materials

Initiatives promoting commercial activities to schools, pupils, and parents require written approval from the Principal. The Principal should consider the balance between the potential benefits of positive links with businesses and protecting children and their parents from inappropriate marketing when making decisions.

#### Use of Film/Photography in the Classroom or School

The use of photography or video taken on school premises on personal or public social media accounts requires written permission from the Board of Management.

Taking video or photographs of standardised or diagnostic tests and sharing them outside of the school in any manner is strictly prohibited.

Photographs or videos taken on the school premises must not include any pupils, in any context, even if they are not explicitly identifiable. Pupils should not feature in any aspect of a teacher's social media.

#### Use of Pupils' Work on Personal Social Media

The use of pupils' work or recordings of pupils' work on personal social media accounts requires the consent of the pupil and written consent from the parents and the Board of Management.

#### Use of School Identity on Personal Social Media

The use of the school name, or any identifying images, features or descriptions on personal social media accounts requires written permission from the Board of Management. This includes photographs or videos featuring children in the background.

When discussing social media in this document, examples include, but are not limited to, platforms such as Facebook, BeReal, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok.