

Kilmurry McMahon N.S.



Acceptable Use Policy

1. Introduction

Kilmurry McMahon NS acknowledges that access to the Internet and ICT provides valuable opportunities for our pupils and staff to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will benefit them in many areas of their lives. However, like the real world, the internet can expose children to unsuitable people and information, potentially impacting their attitudes, behaviour and well-being. Therefore, it is crucial to equip our pupils with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the internet safely.

This policy applies to staff, pupils and the whole school community. This policy is to be read in conjunction with our Bí Cinealta policy which also deals with the issue of cyberbullying. This policy applies to all "internet-enabled devices" including - but not limited to - computers, Chromebooks, iPads, laptops, smartphones, smartwatches, and other IT resources connected to the internet while on school premises and the use of any school resources that can be accessed outside of school. This policy also provides guidelines to parents on the safe use of technology in the home.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the A.U.P. regularly. The A.U.P. should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood. It is assumed that the parent accepts the terms of the A.U.P. unless the school is specifically notified. This version of the A.U.P. was created in September 2025. It will be reviewed every three years or as required.

2. Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and direction on the acceptable use of Internet & ICT for teaching, learning, and communication for all members of the school community in a safe and effective manner. Internet access is viewed as a valuable resource and privilege provided by the school. Failure to comply with the school's AUP will result in the withdrawal of this privilege and/or the implementation of other appropriate sanctions.

3. Aim

The Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) is designed to:

- Protect pupils and staff online by promoting safe and appropriate use of digital technologies.
- Encourage responsible and respectful behaviour when using devices, the internet and online communication tools.
- Safeguard school equipment, networks and data against misuse, damage or security risks.
- Provide clear guidance and expectations so that technology supports learning and teaching in a positive and secure environment.

4. School's Strategy

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies include but are not limited to:

- Central Filtering System: All school devices use a central filtering system via the School Broadband Programme to minimise exposure to inappropriate material and block unsuitable sites.
- School devices also have regularly updated antivirus software where applicable.
- Internet Safety Information: Staff, pupils, and parents/guardians will be notified about relevant webinars and resources on internet safety.
- Routine Online Safety Promotion: Online safety will be routinely promoted through Webwise, parent-teacher meetings, staff meetings/conferences, in-class lessons (in line with SPHE Curriculum, e.g. Stay Safe), Internet Safety Week, or guest speaker workshops in the area.
- Non-Approved Software: Uploading or downloading unapproved software on school devices is prohibited.
- Supervised Internet Use: A staff member will supervise pupil internet use on school devices as appropriate.
- Bí Cinealta Policy: This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Bí Cinealta Policy. Posting a single offensive or hurtful message, image, or statement on social media or other public forums that can be viewed and/or shared by others will be considered as bullying. This may include liking or sharing posts or videos that negatively portray others.
- Pupils will observe good 'netiquette' (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Support our School Self-Evaluation in the area of wellbeing by regularly reviewing the AUP and actively promoting online safety as part of whole school wellbeing.

World Wide Web

- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only during class time. During Golden Time, they may be allowed to use the Internet for entertainment purposes. However, all web sites will be vetted by the class
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable usage
- Students 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 are not permitted to use internet chat functions.

School Staff

- School staff may not use the internet for personal use during school hours, with the exception of break times.
- School staff is strictly forbidden to access inappropriate material on the internet at any time.

Internet Platforms

- The Internet has become a two -communication system for the school and the wider community. Services such as email, Google Classroom, SeeSaw and Facebook are being used by the school to communicate with parents and also for parents to communicate with the school. These services, although not owned by Kilmurry McMahon N.S., form part of our web services and all content that is placed on these services falls under this policy. Please refer to the school's Data Protection Policy for further information on how the school utilises 3rd party services.

Email/ Internet Chat

- Classes may use approved class e-mail accounts under the supervision and with the permission of the teacher.
- Pupils will not send or receive material that is illegal, obscene and defamatory or that is intended to hurt or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or another pupil's personal data such as addresses, telephone numbers, pictures or information relating to the school.

- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they have met on the internet.
- Pupils will not send or receive e-mail attachments without the permission of the teacher.
- Parents and staff should only communicate through the official school email addresses rather than teachers personal email addresses.
- Students will not have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication forums.

Use of Google Drive

Our school uses Google Workspace for Education, including Google Drive, to support teaching, learning, and collaboration.

For Pupils

- Pupils may use Google Drive, Docs, Slides, and other approved apps on Chromebooks for classwork and projects.
- Files should only be created, stored, and shared for school related work.
- Pupils must not share documents, images, or links with anyone outside the school community unless a teacher has given permission.
- Respectful and appropriate language must be used in all shared documents and comments.
- Pupils must not delete, edit, or interfere with other pupils' work unless invited to collaborate by the teacher.

For Teachers

- Teachers may use the school's shared Google Drive to store planning, resources, and pupil work.
- Shared drives are for professional and educational purposes only.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that any personal or sensitive data stored on Google Drive is kept secure and in line with data protection policies.
- Access rights (view, edit, share) should be set carefully to protect files and ensure they are only available to the appropriate audience.
- Teachers should monitor pupil use of Google Drive during lessons and follow up on any misuse.

General Guidance

- Google Drive is a school provided tool and should not be used for personal files.
- All activity on school accounts may be monitored in line with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

School Website/Social Media

- The schools website is www.kilmurrymcmahonns.ie
- The schools Facebook page is Kilmurry McMahon National School
- Pupil Work Publication: Pupils can have photos, projects, artwork, and other work related to curricular and extracurricular activities published on the school website or social media channels according to parental consent form. Class teachers will manage the publication of this material.
- Personal Information Exclusion: Personal information about pupils, such as their full name, home address, and contact details, will not be included on school social media or the school's website.
- Digital Media of pupils: Individual pupils' digital photographs and audio or video clips will not be posted on the school website or affiliated pages without prior parental/guardian permission.
- Event Media: Photos/videos may be used for specific school events (e.g., Confirmation, school tours, Sports Day). These photos/videos, including those on the school website/app, should not be copied or posted to social media or other websites.
- Social Media Tagging: Parents/guardians are requested not to tag photos or any content on social media that identifies children or staff from the school.
- Respectful Online Interaction: Parents/guardians are asked to ensure that online messages and comments on the school's social media sites remain respectful, as they are treated like written messages sent directly to the school.
- Reporting Concerns: If any parent or guardian has concerns about the website or social media content, the Board requests that they notify the school immediately.
- Policy Reference: This policy should be read in conjunction with the Data Protection Policy
- The website and school social media will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

The purpose having of a school Facebook page and website is to provide communication flow between teachers, parents, students, Board of Management and other interested bodies as appropriate.

- Communication with parents regarding specific events & activities
- Communication with new or prospective parents
- Communication with wider audience regarding positive advertisement of school, promotion of school & enrolment dates
- Continued advancement of our school communication system with information shared via paper notes, email, website & Facebook

Those using our social networking site must abide by the following;

- Users cannot advertise products or services on our school Facebook page
- Users should not post anything on the page that could be deemed as offensive – inappropriate or harmful comments/content will be removed immediately
- Users cannot tag or post photographs of children on the page

- Users should not add comments that can identify children
- To use Facebook, one must be 13 years of age or older. Therefore, current pupils cannot be accepted as users.

Personal Devices

- Pupils are not allowed to bring personal devices to school. Personal internet-enabled (or other electronic) devices found on a pupil during school hours will be confiscated and kept by the teacher in question, in the principal's office, or other secure location until a parent/guardian is contacted and collection is arranged.
- The unauthorized taking of images still or moving and recording of audio is prohibited on all school devices and is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- Use of assistive technology must be approved by the school and used for educational purposes only.

Google Forms

- Google Forms are designed for simple surveys. The school may use Google Forms to carry out simple surveys via email or by using the school website.

Aladdin

- The school uses the education administration software package 'Aladdin' for all school administration

Filtering

'Filtering' is a term used to describe a way of limiting the content of web pages, emails, chat rooms and other electronic data to which users may be exposed. No filter is 100% accurate. The most effective filtering tool is adult vigilance.

Many browsers have their own built in filtering tool e.g. Google. Google's search engine has a built-in "Safe Search". This filter eliminates sites that contain pornography and explicit sexual content from search results.

Kilmurry McMahon National School has filtering software. The access to websites from all school computers is monitored and regularly reviewed by the School Broadband Service/PDST. Websites are only allowed through following a verification of their suitability.

Distance Learning

Online Teaching Guidelines:

- Platforms: When teaching cannot occur on-site, teachers may use Google Classroom, Class Dojo, and other approved platforms such as Padlet, Google Meet, Zoom, and SeeSaw (the "Online Platforms") for essential remote instruction as deemed appropriate.

- Terms of Service: The school has agreed to the terms of service for the Online Platforms used.
- Security & Privacy: The school has activated the latest security and privacy features provided by these platforms.
- Parental Monitoring: Parents/Guardians will receive the password and are expected to monitor their child's use of these Online Platforms.
- Consent for Virtual Lessons: For Google Meet, Zoom or other approved platform classes, parents/guardians must provide consent for their child's participation.
- Parental Supervision: Parents/Guardians should supervise their child's participation on these platforms

Use of Educational Apps and Websites

Our school uses a variety of educational apps and websites to support learning across the curriculum. These tools are chosen to enhance teaching, engage pupils, and provide safe and meaningful digital learning experiences.

- Pupils may only use educational apps and websites that have been approved by their teacher.
- The school's Accelerated Reader (AR) system and other approved learning platforms should be used responsibly and only for their intended purpose.
- All websites and apps must be vetted by staff before being introduced to pupils to ensure they are age appropriate, educational, and safe.
- Only teachers can install or approve apps on school tablets, using the secure JAMF management system.
- Teachers must monitor and guide pupil use of apps and websites during lessons.
- Where logins are required, staff should ensure that pupil accounts are kept secure and in line with data protection guidelines.
- Misuse of apps or websites may result in restricted access and further consequences if necessary.

Wellbeing and Online Safety

The school is committed to promoting the wellbeing of all pupils, staff, and the wider school community. Safe and responsible use of technology is an important part of supporting wellbeing.

- Online safety and our schools AUP is embedded in the school's approach to wellbeing and is regularly reviewed as part of our School Self-Evaluation (SSE).
- At the start of each school year, pupils create an Online Safety Contract, agreeing to use technology safely, respectfully, and responsibly.
- Pupils are encouraged to use digital technologies in ways that support their learning, creativity, and personal development, while understanding how to stay safe and respectful online.
- Staff monitor pupil engagement with technology to identify and address any issues that may affect wellbeing, including cyberbullying or inappropriate content.

- Parents and carers are supported to reinforce safe and healthy digital habits at home.

By integrating online safety into our wellbeing practices, and involving pupils in creating their own online safety agreements, the school ensures that technology contributes positively to the physical, emotional, and social development of all pupils.

Legislation

The school can provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet if students and parents wish to familiarise themselves with it.

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

Sanctions

- Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.
- The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Support Structures

Kilmurry McMahon NS endeavours to have support structures in place to ensure the appropriate use of electronic devices in school and to ensure staff, parents and pupils feel supported in same.

- The school will provide Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying talks bi-annually for pupils from 2nd – 6 th class.
- The school will provide Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying talks for parents and guardians biannually to all parents in the school.
- Community Gardaí link in with classes re Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying annually.
- Staff will regularly partake in Continuous Professional Development in relation to AUP, internet safety and Cyber Bullying.
- The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

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

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 9/10/2025

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated in line with our 3 year framework of school planning or sooner if required.

Signed: Chairperson

Gerard Cotter

Date: 9/10/2025

Signed: Principal

Niamh Kelly

Date: 9/10/2025