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Acceptable Use Policy

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Glossary of Terms

Smart Device/Smart devices/device	Included are any device, electronic or otherwise that can communicate, calculate or store information above and beyond those used as part of the school curriculum. This includes, but is not limited to, smart watches, mp3 players, mobile phones and tablets as well as more conventional computers, tablets and laptops.
Mobile phone/phone	Included are any device, electronic or otherwise that can be used to send or receive information to or from any other device while not being connected to it physically.
Security Credentials	Any secret or token used to authorise access to an electronic device. Examples include, but are not limited to, passwords, pins, patterns, finger-prints, retina scans and hard and soft security tokens.

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school in a safe and effective manner. Where this Acceptable Use Policy is not adhered to, appropriate sanctions as outlined below may be imposed.

General

- The use of technology in the school is only permitted under the supervision of a teacher.
- Pupils will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

Personal Devices

Pupils are not permitted to bring smart devices to school. This includes but is not limited to, mobile phones, electronic watches or any other device that can operate to some extent interactively and autonomously, and are generally connected to other devices or networks via different wireless protocols.

Pupils are also prohibited from bringing to school any form of electronic copying or recording equipment, or any form of photographic or video recording equipment.

Pupils are permitted to wear personal activity-tracking devices (such as a ‘fitbit’) provided that such device does not have sound recording or photographic imaging capability.

Should parents/guardians wish their child to carry a mobile phone they must submit a written request to the Principal, and a copy of any such letter to be maintained in the school secretary’s office. However, the school recommends that mobile phones are given to pupils only if needed as a means of communication.

Where such permission is granted by the Principal, the following conditions shall apply:

- All phones must be switched off at all times and must be kept in the pupil’s schoolbag while the pupil is on the school premises.
- No phones are allowed in the school yard under any circumstances.
- Pupils must not use their devices to photograph or video themselves or any member of the school community while on the school premises, including before the start and after the end of the school day, unless in a supervised environment where explicit permission has been given by a member of staff.

In the event a smart device is brought to school without advance permission of the Principal, the device will be confiscated from the pupil and held by the Principal, and can only be returned when the pupil’s parent/ guardian collects it.

If a teacher has a suspicion that a smart device has unsuitable material stored on it or accessible by its owner, pupils will be required to hand over the device to a teacher and parents will be asked to collect it from the school. Where there is a suspicion that the material on the device may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the device may be handed over to the appropriate authorities for further investigation. To the extent permitted by law, parents/guardians will be informed in such circumstances.

Notwithstanding any other provisions under this policy, the school shall not be held responsible for lost or stolen smart devices, nor for any use of such devices by the pupil. It is advised that pupils mark their smart device clearly with their name. Devices found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to a member of staff. It is also strongly advised that pupils use security credentials to secure their devices while they are on the school premises. Pupils must keep their device’s security credentials confidential. Devices and/or security credentials should not be shared with others.

School Devices

From time to time the school may provide pupils with temporary access to devices owned or operated by the school for educational purposes. Where such devices are provided to pupils, the following shall apply:

- Students will use the device for educational purposes only and will not access or download materials or images not relevant to the purpose for which the device was provided.
- Pupils must not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials, and parents/guardians must report any accidental accessing of inappropriate materials to the pupil’s teacher.

- Any usage of the device, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or otherwise, may be monitored by the school.

Online forums and platforms

- Pupils will not access online forums or social media platforms unless approved to do so by the teacher and provided they are at all times under the close supervision of a parent/guardian or their teacher.
- Prior to any such permitted use, pupils must be educated never to disclose or publicise personal information, including their personal image.
- Usernames must be used to avoid disclosure of identity of the pupil, while understanding that this does not guarantee complete anonymity.
- Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via such forums is strictly forbidden. Any attempt to establish a face-to-face meeting with the pupil by someone via such forums should be promptly reported to the pupil’s teacher.
- Parents/guardians are advised to keep themselves informed of online safety through reputable organizations such as:

Organization	Online Safety Site
Government of Ireland	https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/be-safe-online/#
WebWise.ie	https://www.webwise.ie/parents/advice-top-10-tips-for-parents/
SpunOut.ie	https://spunout.ie/onlinesafety

Sanctions

Breach of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion in accordance with the school’s Code of Behaviour. In the event of cyber-bullying the school will act in accordance with its Anti-Bullying Procedures and Code of Behaviour.

It should also be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

The contents of this policy apply in school, while using school-supplied devices outside the school premises and during all school related activities outside school.

Addendum

Acceptable Use Policy for Staff

The Teaching Council of Ireland in their Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers 2012¹ (section 3 Professional Conduct) recommends that teachers:

3.7 Ensure that any communication with pupils/students, colleagues, parents, school management and others is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as e-mail, texting and social networking sites

3.8 Ensure that they do not knowingly access, download or otherwise have in their possession while engaged in school activities, inappropriate materials/images in electronic or other format

3.9 Ensure that they do not knowingly access, download or otherwise have in their possession, illicit materials/images in electronic or other format

¹ <https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/Publications/Fitness-to-Teach/Code-of-Professional-Conduct-for-Teachers1.pdf>