

Scoil Mhuire na nGael



Internet Acceptable Usage Policy

Roll No: 19598V

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General Approach

The aim of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy (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 If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.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 to undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- To respect the right to privacy of all other members of the school community.
- To respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in Scoil Mhuire na nGael. It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, guardians and others who access the internet in Scoil Mhuire na nGael.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Scoil Mhuire na nGael will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact the wellbeing of pupils or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases, Scoil Mhuire na nGael will, where known, inform parents/guardians of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place outside of school and impose the appropriate sanctions.

Scoil Mhuire na nGael implements the following strategies for promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curriculum.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in Scoil Mhuire na nGael through our teaching staff and in school management team.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Scoil Mhuire na nGael participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually by the following stakeholders:

- Board of Management, teaching staff, support staff, pupils, and parents

This policy has been developed by a working group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, Designated Post Holder, teachers and the Board of Management.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.
- Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).
- Internal monitoring data for network activity.
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils.
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils, parents, and teaching staff.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the principal, deputy principal or designated ICT post holder should be informed.

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by all staff members.

Content Filtering

Scoil Mhuire na nGael has chosen to implement the following level of content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

- Level 4: This level allows access to the same websites as Level 3, but allows access to YouTube, which has become widely used in schools for teaching and learning for the last few years.

Pupils taking steps to bypass 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.

Web Browsing and Downloading

- 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 the accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school but outside the classroom to their class teacher, deputy principal or principal.
- Pupils and staff will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content.
- 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.
- Use of file sharing and torrent sites is not allowed among pupils
- Staff are permitted to share files for educational purposes only. Staff members are not allowed to share torrent files.
- Downloading by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.

Email and Messaging

- The use of personal email accounts is not allowed at Scoil Mhuire na nGael.
- Pupils will be provided with Google credentials for accessing common tools such as Google Classroom
- Pupils should not under any circumstances share their account login details with other pupils.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Pupils will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- 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.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Parents and staff should only communicate through the official school email address smgdundalk@gmail.com or the teacher's designated school email address

Internet Chat

- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication that have been approved by the school.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised by the class teacher. An example of this could be STEM or participation in the Amber project.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat will be forbidden.

Internet

The Internet has become a two-way communication system for the school and the wider community. Services such as Aladdin Connect, Google Classroom, SeeSaw, Class Dojo, YouTube and other social media 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 Scoil Mhuire na nGael, 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.

The safety of our children on the web is of utmost importance so the following rules apply to the school and parents. The Internet is open to potential dangers when used inappropriately. Furthermore, it is imperative that all members of the school community, staff, pupils and parents alike are aware of their obligation in relation to data protection, especially when using the internet. They must also, at all times, adhere to and comply with their legal requirement in relation to data protection as legislated for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and operate within the General Data Protection Regulation Framework.

The school asks the following;

- Many social media sites have minimum age requirements. While the school will not monitor this, we would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Twitter, etc. until they are the appropriate age. Children will not be allowed to use their own personal accounts for social media.
- Please do not “tag” photographs or any other content that would identify any children or staff in the school.
- Avoid any negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts. If you have an issue with something in the school, social media is not the place to raise it.
- Please do not request to “friend” a member of staff in the school. Most staff would like to keep their personal lives personal. It may be awkward for a staff member to be asked to ignore a Facebook or other social network request.

Social Media

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Scoil Mhuire na nGael:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, What’s Apps, G Chat etc. is not allowed for pupils in Scoil Mhuire na nGael. Staff members must use them for professional purposes only and only in the course of their respective roles on staff.
- Use of blogs such as Word Press, Tumblr etc. is not allowed in Scoil Mhuire na nGael unless explicit permission is given by the class teacher or school management.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is not allowed in Scoil Mhuire na nGael unless explicit permission is given by a staff member once the site content has already been viewed and deemed appropriate by that said staff member.
- Pupils are not permitted to access YouTube or similar websites unsupervised or in an ad hoc capacity.
- Staff and pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, other members of the Scoil Mhuire na nGael community
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Scoil Mhuire na nGael community on social media.
- 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 Scoil Mhuire na nGael into disrepute.
- Staff and pupils must not represent their personal views as those of Scoil Mhuire na nGael on any social medium.
- Staff and pupils must not post any aspect of their remote teaching and learning on social media.
- Staff and pupils are not permitted to take any footage of the school or the teaching and learning within it and upload to personal social media accounts. Any use of school footage on social media platforms is only permitted for professional use once prior approval and authorisation has been sought and given by either the Board of Management and/or parents.

Direct Communication using Internet

Teachers in the school may choose to use a number of tools for classroom communication. Examples include Google Classroom, Google Meets, SeeSaw, Aladdin, Zoom, and Class Dojo. Some of these tools 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 invites pupils and their families to these meetings using a code. The following are ground rules for synchronous lessons online.

- All meetings will be password protected
- All people involved in the meeting will conduct themselves in a similar manner that would be expected in a regular class.
- The staff member has the right to remove any person being disruptive from a synchronous lesson.
- A family member is expected to be close by when a pupil is engaging in a meeting. They should monitor all online interactions from the pupil.
- Staff will not meet any child alone using an online meeting. If there is a need for a meeting between a child and a staff member, another adult must be present at the meeting and/or the meeting must be recorded.
- While chat may be available in an online meeting, it is the responsibility of the child's family to ensure that any interaction is appropriate. Any interaction from a pupil that could be deemed as inappropriate may result in the child's removal from the lesson or activate a school response in accordance with the Children's First Act/ Department of Education Child Protection guidelines.

Personal Devices

Under our Mobile Phone and Electronic Games Policy, personal devices such as mobile phones, smart watches (i.e. watches linked to external devices with the ability to record and receive notifications) and tablets are not allowed in school without the expressed permission of the Board of Management. Written permission must be sought from and provided by the Board of Management.

Images and Video

- 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 Scoil Mhuire na nGael pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff and parents.
- Written permission from parents or guardians will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website.
- Pupils must not share 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 an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other pupils will automatically

be considered as a very serious episode of gross misconduct and will result in appropriate sanctions being applied in accordance with the Code of Behaviour of Scoil Mhuire na nGael .

Cyberbullying

When using the internet pupils, 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 pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

Measures are taken by Scoil Mhuire na nGael to ensure that staff and pupils 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 cyber-bullying even when it happens outside the school or at night.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

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

School Website

The school's website is www.bayestatens.com .

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.
- The website 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 pre-moderated and 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.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
- Scoil Mhuire na nGael will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips of focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Scoil Mhuire na nGael web pages.
- The Scoil Mhuire na nGael will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named and will not use pupils' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Learning Platforms

Two learning platforms will be utilised within the school, See Saw and Google Classroom. See Saw is used for pupils from Junior Infants to Second Class while Google Classroom is used from Third to Sixth Class. Parental consent for use of these platforms is sought for all pupils prior to the use of the use of these platforms. The purpose of these platforms is to facilitate remote learning in the event of additional school closures along with developing the digital literacy skills of all pupils. Details of each platform's privacy features, for anyone who wishes to view them, can be accessed at the following links:

- Seesaw: <https://web.seesaw.me/privacy>
- Google: https://edu.google.com/intl/en_uk/why-google/privacy-security/?modal_active=none

Pupils and staff are not permitted to post any aspect of remote learning activities on social media platforms. Both classroom and school rules which underpin our school's Code of Behaviour are applicable and transfer to classroom online learning platforms context.

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet 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.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on the 15th of October 2024. The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner should the need arise within the school.

Signed: _____

Proinsias Ó Cunaigh, Chairperson

Date: 15.10.2024