



Scoil Mochua  
Celbridge  
Co. Kildare

## **ICT and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy 2018**

### **Aims**

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions, as outlined in the AUP and in the school's Code of Behaviour and Discipline, will be imposed.

To that end, we provide access to ICT for student use. This may include Internet access, desktop computers, digital imaging equipment, laptop or tablet devices, virtual learning environments, online collaboration capabilities, blogs and more. The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all online technologies used in the school, not just those specifically mentioned.

We maintain [www.scoilmochnua.com](http://www.scoilmochnua.com) as our school website and we tweet @scoilmochnua.

It is envisaged that the AUP will be revised/amended annually.

# School's Strategy

The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

## General

- Internet sessions will be supervised by a teacher at all times and pupils' Internet usage will be closely monitored.
- Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to eliminate, as far as possible, the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety.
- Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Pupils will observe good "netiquette" (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) at all times, treat others with respect and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Any interactions with the school on social media or through sites such as *Class Dojo*, will be monitored during school hours only. Messages sent outside of this time may not be read or responded to until the next working day.
- School personnel and parents will observe good "netiquette" as described above in any interactions with the school on social media or through relevant sites.

## Education

Scoil Mochua will undertake to educate children on the safe, responsible use of the Internet (incorporated as part of the SPHE programme).

21<sup>st</sup> century life presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation from which children and young people need to be protected. At the same time they need to learn to recognise and avoid these risks – to become internet wise. Teachers will use Department of Education approved resources such as [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) to facilitate this.

## World Wide Web

- Pupils will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials to a teacher without delay.
- Pupils will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise their own personal information or that of others.

- Pupils 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.
- It is forbidden for pupils to arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through email or the Internet.

## **Email**

- Email will be used for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will use approved class email accounts only under the supervision of or by permission of a teacher.
- Sending and receiving email attachments is subject to the permission of a teacher.
- Pupils are not permitted to send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- If a child receives any inappropriate emails, he/she should inform class teacher and a parent/guardian.
- Pupils will not send text messages to or from school email.
- Pupils may not reveal their own or other people's personal details eg. address, phone number or photograph.
- It is forbidden for pupils to arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through email or the Internet.

## **School Website**

- A Website Committee operates in Scoil Mochua to coordinate and oversee all activity related to the school website.
- The website will be checked regularly to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- Teachers have full editorial rights over the school website and students will not have access to passwords.
- Pupils may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website. Class teachers will be responsible for ensuring that the content of the pupils' work is appropriate and accurate and that quality of presentation is maintained.
- Class lists will not be published.
- The publication of students' work will be sanctioned and overseen by a teacher and/or the IT co-ordinator.
- Pupils' work may appear in an educational context on the school website. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
- Group photographs of pupils will be published on the school website. At no time will any personal information or individual photographs of children appear on the school website without the explicit permission of parents/guardians.
- The photographs and work displayed on the school website and are not intended for use on any other website or form of social media, other than those maintained by the school.

Therefore, pupils, parents and the wider community are requested not to copy any material from the school website.

- Failure to comply with any of the regulations as set out above will be viewed as a serious misdemeanour and will result in sanctions being imposed.

## **Social Media – Twitter**

- The school teachers choose and modify all twitter followers/followees and all are for educational purpose.
- Retweets are not necessarily the views of Scoil Mochua, but are for educational and conversational purposes.
- There are no full name references on twitter and a conversational but formal tone is followed.
- There is an interaction reply policy for parents and the community on Twitter. We will follow parents back, once they have followed the school, but we do not seek them out. We will reply to tweets directed at the school once it is deemed appropriate by teachers to do so. The tone of all interactions is conversational and could be described as ‘classroom style’ language.
- We do not follow students on Twitter.
- The staff and teachers of Scoil Mochua commit to not using the online platforms or school accounts for the expression of personal views and we request that the children and parents adopt a similar policy when commenting online through directed tweets to the school account.
- Group photographs of pupils will be published on Twitter. At no time will any personal information or individual photographs of children appear on Twitter without the explicit permission of parents/guardians.
- The photographs and work displayed on Twitter are not intended for use on any other website or form of social media, other than those maintained by the school. Therefore, pupils, parents and the wider community are requested not to copy any material from Twitter.
- Students are expected to alert his/her teacher immediately of any concerns for safety or security.
- Any interactions with the school on social media should be respectful.
- Any inappropriate comments or replies directed at the school, or at individual staff or pupils, will result in an immediate and permanent ban from any interaction with the school on social media. Serious incidents will be dealt with in a manner deemed appropriate by the school and in accordance with our Code of Behaviour and Discipline.
- Tweeting or Direct Messaging the school is not viewed as a formal means of correspondence. All important information should still be phoned in to the office or sent in a note to the appropriate class teacher.

## **Internet Chat**

- Pupils will only have access to social media communication forums that have been approved by the school.
- These forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.

- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat is forbidden.

## **Netiquette**

Netiquette may be defined as appropriate social behaviour over computer networks and in particular in the online environment. To this end:

- Students should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Students should also recognise that among the valuable content online is unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content.
- Students should not post anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see.

More detailed examples of expected use and unacceptable use are given in Appendix 1 and 2.

## **Plagiarism**

- Students should not plagiarise content (copy or use as your own without citing the original creator), including words or images, from the Internet for inclusion on our school blog or Twitter
- Students should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online.
- The school will encourage students who create original content to claim ownership of it.

## **Mobile Phones / Electronic Devices**

- The school acknowledges the usefulness and practicality of mobile phones / electronic devices and recognises their potential as an educational resource.
- Many features on mobile phones / electronic devices are very useful and may be used under the direction of the class teacher.
- If and when any such activities take place parents will be notified in advance.
- Pupils using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class is in direct breach of the school's acceptable usage policy.
- Pupils sending nuisance text messages is a direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- The unauthorized taking of images with a mobile phone camera or any other electronic device, still or moving, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable usage policy.
- Appropriate online behaviour and adherence to the acceptable use policy is expected at all times.

## **Personal Safety**

If students see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes them concerned for their personal safety, they must bring it to the immediate attention of

- a teacher if they are at school
- a parent / guardian if they are at home
- Students should never share personal information about themselves or others, including phone numbers, addresses, PPS numbers and birth-dates over the Internet without adult permission.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through the internet.
- Individual images of students will not be shared online (on the Scoil Mochua website or twitter) without explicit expressed permission from their parents.
- Consequently, other students must not take, use or share images of or from other students in school on school online platforms.

## **Cyber-bullying**

Harassing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyber-stalking are all examples of cyber-bullying. Such bullying will not be tolerated in Scoil Mochua.

We advise the following:

- Our students must not send messages or post comments or photos with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in disciplinary action and loss of privileges
- In some cases, cyber-bullying is a crime
- Remember that online activities are monitored and retained
- The school will support students, teachers and parents in dealing with cyberbullying.

Scoil Mochua is committed to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Circular 0081/2017) and will act as required by the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the Department of Justice and Equality and the Health Service Executive.

## **Filtering/Firewall**

Filtering is a way of limiting the content of web pages and /or blocking suspicious websites. Websites are only allowed through following a verification of their suitability. No filter is 100% accurate. The most effective filtering tool is adult vigilance. Scoil Mochua has filtering software. The access to websites from all school computers is monitored and regularly reviewed by the NCTE.

## **Legislation**

The staff at Scoil Mochua, Celbridge suggest that parents/guardians should familiarise themselves with the following pieces of legislation:

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- Data Protection Act 1988
- Anti-Bullying Guidelines for Primary Schools (2013)

## **Sanctions**

Misuse of the Internet, the school website and/or school Twitter account may result in disciplinary action, as set out in the school's Code of Behaviour and Discipline, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school is obliged to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

**This Acceptable Use Policy was ratified by the Board of Management in \_\_\_\_\_ and shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Management and changed where deemed necessary and appropriate.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson, Board of Management**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Principal**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Examples of Expected Use**

I will:

- ✓ Use school equipment for school-related activities only
- ✓ Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behaviour online that I am expected to follow offline
- ✓ Treat school resources carefully, and alert teachers if there is any problem with their use
- ✓ Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use blog or represent the school online
- ✓ Alert a teacher if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, postings) online
- ✓ Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, to enhance learning
- ✓ Recognise that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such
- ✓ Be careful to protect the safety of myself and others
- ✓ Help to protect the security of school resources

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Students should use their own good judgement when using school technologies.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Examples of Unacceptable Use**

I will not:

- ✓ Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful to myself or others
- ✓ Search inappropriate images or content
- ✓ Engage in cyber-bullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others
- ✓ Try to find ways to change the school's safety measures and filtering tools
- ✓ Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail
- ✓ Plagiarise content (copy, use as their own, without citing the original creator) I find online
- ✓ Post personally identifying information, about myself or others or agree to meet someone face-to-face that I only know through the internet
- ✓ Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom
- ✓ Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities
- ✓ Attempt to access sites, servers, accounts, or content that isn't intended for my use

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Students should use their own good judgement when using school technologies.