



SCOIL CARMEL JNS

Acceptable Usage Policy

www.scoilcarmeljns.com

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Aim

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions, as outlined in the AUP, will be imposed.

Rationale

- It is envisaged that this policy will be reviewed annually
- Before enrolling your child, the AUP along with the mandated school policies should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood
- Once your child is enrolled, it is assumed that parents accept the terms of the AUP
- At all times, the school principal and teachers will educate the pupils on the importance of acceptable usage and of digital citizenship in an age-appropriate manner
- The Digital Learning Strategy for School 2027 envisions a future where every learner will have ample opportunity to benefit from technology in their learning and will develop key skills for the digital world

Scoil Carmel's Strategy

- The internet is a valuable teaching and learning tool
- It can develop children's independent research skills and promote lifelong learning
- The internet and digital media can support our pupils to learn, create, communicate and assess their learning
- The online world is very much part of their lives, they are "growing up digitally" with technology embedded in every aspect of their lives
- Digital literacy skills are key life skills for children and young people today
- They need to learn how to effectively search for and evaluate online content; know how to protect personal information and reputation; know to respect copyright and intellectual property and know where to get help if problems arise

Scoil Carmel employs several strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the internet in line Digital Strategy for Schools to 2027.

These strategies are as follows:

1. General Use of IT Equipment

- Each device will have enhanced protection enabled in the settings
- These safety features will be configured and updated on a regular basis to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material



- Pupils will have supervised access to interactive whiteboards, laptops and iPads to engage with educational websites and apps pre downloaded by the teacher for use in the classroom
- The aim of use of these apps is to enhance the teaching, learning and assessment process for pupils
- This access will take place during class time only and access to devices will be supervised by a member of staff

2. Internet Use

- Scoil Carmel uses the National Schools Broadband Service which is an integrated set of services to schools that includes broadband connectivity and hosted services including content filtering, and security services including anti-virus control and a centralised firewall
- Filtering software and virus protection software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material and updated on a regular basis
- Pupils will use the internet for educational purposes only
- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials
- Pupils will be encouraged to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures
- Pupils will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement)
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted
- Downloading of materials or images by pupils, not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's AUP
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage and they will be made 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

3. Digital Literacy and Internet Safety

- Pupils and teachers will be provided with training relating to Digital Literacy and internet safety
- Pupils will be educated about internet safety as part of the SPHE curriculum
- This includes, but not limited to Stay Safe lessons, HTML Heroes Programme, DigiDuck stories and use of the 'Kids' section on the www.webwise.ie website
- Safer Internet Day is acknowledged every February and throughout the school year
- Pupils will be expected to always treat others with respect and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute

4. Email

- If pupils need to create and access a personal email account for educational purposes, it will be under supervision from a teacher with the permission of parents



- Pupils will not intentionally send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures
- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet
- Pupils will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher

5. Social Media & Messaging Services For Our School Community

- All members of the school community are expected to refrain from using social media, messaging services (including but not limited to individual or collective WhatsApp group and text chats) and the internet in any way to harass, impersonate, insult, abuse or defame pupils, parents or members of staff
- Staff must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the school community on social media platforms including messaging apps on mobile devices
- Staff are permitted to use school email addresses for the purpose of school related communication only
- Parents must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the school community on social media platforms including messaging apps on mobile devices
- Pupils will be taught about the importance of not discussing personal information about other pupils, staff and other members of the school community on social media social media platforms including messaging apps on mobile devices
- Pupils will be provided with age-appropriate guidance on etiquette regarding social media
- Pupils will be taught that they must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media
- Pupils will be taught that they should not represent their personal views as those of the school on any social media service or message services

6. School Website/ ClassDojo

- Parental consent via Aladdin must be given prior to the posting of any digital photographs, audio or video clips that has their child in it on the school website/ ClassDojo
- Pupils will have the opportunity to have their projects, artwork or schoolwork published on the school website/ ClassDojo
- The publication of pupil work will be coordinated by a teacher and appear in an educational context on the school website/ ClassDojo
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities on the school website
- Content focusing on individual pupils will not be published on the school website without parental consent
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from the school website/ ClassDojo



- The school website/ ClassDojo will not publish the first name and last name together of individuals in a photograph, unless parental permission is given to do so
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use pupils' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the school website
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published on the school website/ ClassDojo

7. Personal Devices

- The school will provide sufficient resources for pupils to engage with digital learning and to access the internet for educational purposes and as such, pupils are not permitted to bring personal devices to school such as tablets or iPads
- Pupils are not permitted to bring smart phones to school or wear smart watches that include a camera function, video/ voice recording function or voice call function
- If a pupil has an identified need, where the use of assistive technology has been recommended in school, they will be supported to use their personal device for educational purposes during school hours
- Pupils who are using assistive technology will do so under the direction and/ or supervision of a teacher and/ or SNA and should follow the agreed procedures in using the device
- The use of personal external digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission

8. Cyberbullying

Bullying is *“unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) which is repeated over time”*. (Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post-Primary School, Department of Education, 2013)

This definition also includes:

- Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying
- Identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs
- Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to bully a person with the intent to hurt, humiliate or intimidate them. Cyberbullying can take many forms including exclusion online, hurtful messages/images, abusive messages/ emails, imitating someone online, etc. This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving.

Department of Education Anti-Bullying Procedures (2013) defines cyberbullying as: *“placing a once off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or another public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/ or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying”*



behaviour".

As cyberbullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.

Access to technology means that cyberbullying can happen around the clock and the pupils' home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Pupils are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. The nature of these technologies means digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and is almost impossible to delete permanently. While cyberbullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can also be felt in school.

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools (2013), a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/ or repeated by other people **will be regarded as bullying behaviour**.

When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected to always treat others with respect. 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 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. Parents are requested to monitor their child's use of the internet and devices on a regular basis and play an active role in developing and supporting their child's understanding and awareness of internet safety.

9. Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, pupils 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

10. Support Structures

- The school will inform pupils and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the internet



- Teachers are required to preview any material online that they intend to show their class
- It is agreed school procedure that teachers position their laptop stands so that their laptop is not in view of pupils when they are doing internet searches
- Interactive whiteboards screens must be turned off or put on freeze mode if teachers are doing an internet search
- It is agreed school procedure that videos on the interactive whiteboard will not be shown during eating time, so far as reasonably practicable
- Videos with educational content from sources such as RTE Kids Player and KidsTube and age-appropriate movies from the kids section on Netflix may be played during lesson time to support teaching and learning or during an indoor yard day when it is raining outside
- Teachers will immediately report any inappropriate material that may show up online to the principal
- Teachers will engage in teacher professional learning centered on internet safety and awareness and the Digital Strategy for Schools to 2027
- Teachers are encouraged to engage with internet safety and awareness and digital learning tools available on the Oide website

11. Roles and Responsibilities

- **School:** It is the overall responsibility of the entire school staff to ensure that these guidelines are implemented within the school environment
- **Parents:** Having read the AUP, parents are requested to give permission through Aladdin on behalf of their child to engage with digital devices and the internet for educational purposes while in school
- **Pupils:** The same standards regarding internet use are expected when the pupils are accessing the internet at home if remote teaching and learning takes place and should be implemented with the support of parents and guardians

12. Sanctions

- Internet access in school includes a strict filtering service yet no filtering service is completely foolproof
- Therefore, it is imperative that the guidelines in this policy are always followed to prevent pupils unknowingly and/ or deliberately accessing unsuitable materials
- Access to the internet will be withdrawn from pupils who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use
- Support and guidance will be given to a pupil should they access inappropriate material accidentally or deliberately
- Deliberate misuse of the internet will result in disciplinary action including discussion with the pupil and parents, 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.
- All these sanctions are in line with our school's discipline policy



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- Misuse of the internet and digital technologies will 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, including An Garda Síochána

Ratified by Board of Management on: 23.4.24

The policy will be reviewed in April 2025

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed:

Principal