



Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

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Index

Cover Page	1
General Approach	3
Content Filtering	5
Internet Use	6
Email and Messaging	7
Social Media and messaging services for Staff and Students	8
Personal Devices	9
Digital Learning Platforms (including video conferencing)	10
Audio, images and video	11
Inappropriate Activities	12
School Websites	13
Cyberbullying	14
Artificial Intelligence	15
Permission Form	17

General Approach

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's digital resources in a safe and effective manner. The responsible use of internet and digital technologies, both online and offline and access is considered an integral part of teaching and learning. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to agreed sanctions will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP at least annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

When using the internet students, parents and staff are expected:

- To treat others with respect at all times.
- Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Respect the right to privacy of all other members of the school community.
- Respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources.

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

- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Internet use within school will always be supervised by a teacher.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to students who have access to and are users of the internet in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal .

- It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal .

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

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal implements the following strategies on 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 other curriculum areas.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal 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, and support staff.

This policy has been developed by a working group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, students, parents/carers, and representatives of the Board of Management.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).

Should serious online safety incidents take place, Principal, Deputy Principal and ICT Co-Ordinator should be informed.

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the In School Management Team.



Content Filtering

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

Level 5 This level allows access to millions of websites including games and YouTube and allows access to personal websites category, and other similar types of websites, such as blogs but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the Social Networking category.



Internet Use

Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

Students will be encouraged to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.

Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school but outside the classroom to their class teacher.

Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).

Students 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.

Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.

Students 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.

Students will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

Students will never disclose or publicise personal information or passwords.

Students will be aware that any usage of the internet and school's digital platform, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, will be monitored.



Email and Messaging

The use of personal email accounts is allowed at Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal .



Social Media and messaging services for Staff and Students

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow us to interact and keep in touch. While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that members of your school community are expected to follow when using social media.

The principles set out in this policy are designed to help ensure that social media is used responsibly so that the confidentiality of pupils and other staff and the reputation of the school is protected.

This policy applies to personal websites such as social networking sites (for example Instagram and TikTok), blogs, mircoblogs such as X, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us and content sharing sites such as flickr and YouTube. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media.

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

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc. is not allowed in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal .
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is allowed in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal .

All members of the school community must not use social media, messaging services and the internet in any way to harass, impersonate, insult, abuse or defame others.

Students will be provided with guidance on etiquette regarding social media.

Teachers can read further information about the use of Social Media and Electronic Communication here:

<https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/2021/guidance-for-registered-teachers-about-the-use-of-social-media-and-electronic-communication.html>



Personal Devices

Students using their own technology in school should follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if they were using school equipment.

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, smartwatches, in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal :

- Students are not allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal .



Digital Learning Platforms (including video conferencing)

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal digital learning platform is owned and managed by the school. This platform should enable two-way communication.

The use of digital platforms should be used in line with considerations set out in the school's data protection plan (GDPR).

Each user of the platform will be provided with their own unique login credentials.

Passwords for digital platforms and accounts should not be shared.

Prior acceptance from parents should be sought for student usage of the schools' digital learning platform.

Remote Learning Policy: See the school's remote learning policy.



Audio, images and video

Care should be taken when capturing audio, photographic or video images that learners are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.

At Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal **students must not record audio, take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.**

Taking audio, photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is not allowed under any circumstances.

Recording audio, taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.

Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before video, audio or photographs of students are published on the school website.

Students must not share audio, 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.



Inappropriate Activities



School Websites

Students 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.

Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

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.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal 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.

The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.

Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal web pages.

The Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal 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 students' names in image file names or ALT tags if published online.



Cyberbullying

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal considers that posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

When using the internet students, 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 student 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 Gan Smal** to ensure that staff and students are aware that bullying is defined as targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

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

In accordance with the Department of Education Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools; Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal considers that a school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.



Artificial Intelligence

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal recognises the potential benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and is committed to its responsible and ethical use within our learning environment.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal provides training and professional development opportunities for teachers to effectively utilise AI tools in their teaching practices, ensuring they stay up to date with technological advancements.

The selection of AI tools and technologies in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal aligns with educational goals, including supporting learner agency and promoting critical thinking.

AI technologies are integrated into the curriculum to enhance learner outcomes and experiences.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal integrates AI into its educational processes to enhance learning, foster innovation, and promote the development of critical skills.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal will make necessary adjustments to our school's adoption and integration of AI based on review and feedback.

A regular review of the impact of AI on learning outcomes is to be conducted to ensure continuous improvement.

School staff and learners receive training on the ethical use of AI technologies, including understanding data privacy, identifying biases, and verifying AI-generated information.

All AI tools authorised for use in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal **comply with data protection regulations (GDPR).**

Entering personal, sensitive, or confidential data into any AI system without proper authorisation is strictly prohibited.

Learners will not create, share or send any AI generated material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Staff and learners must not use AI in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame learners, their family members, staff, other members of the Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal community

Staff and learners must not engage in activities involving AI generated material which might bring Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal into disrepute.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal promotes digital literacy and critical thinking skills to help learners understand AI, its implications, and responsible usage. This includes data literacy, verification of AI-generated information, and recognising potential biases in AI tools.

AI systems used in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability in decision-making processes.

Learners must attribute AI text and images properly when used in assignments/homework.

Teachers will attribute AI text and images when used.

AI Generated material is allowed for the purpose of research, brainstorming, revising text.

AI Generated material is allowed for certain activities with prior school permission.



If used for research learners must factcheck, check other sources and reference sources.

Choose one of the following



Permission Form

Legislation

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

Support Structures

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet and digital technologies should be referred to in the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy and related sanctions regarding misuse as appropriate should be outlined therein. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities, including An Garda Síochána.

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the internet and digital technologies. I will use the internet and digital technologies in a responsible way and obey all the procedures outlined in the policy.

Student's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian : _____

Date: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but the school cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites.

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing students' work on the school website.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____



Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, and sign and return this permission form to the Principal.

School Name: Name of Student: _____

Class/Year: _____

Student: _____