

Claddaghduff N.S Acceptable Usage Policy

Aims

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. This Acceptable Use Policy applies to:

1. Pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in Claddaghduff N.S.
2. Members of staff, volunteers, parents and others who access the internet in Claddaghduff N.S.
3. To all school personnel who use digital tools in remote teaching and learning.

If the school's AUP is not adhered to, access will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions, as outlined in the AUP and the school's Code of Behaviour, will be imposed.

School's Strategy

Digital literacy skills are key life skills for children and young people today and the internet is a valuable teaching and learning tool. It can be used to develop children's independent research skills and promote lifelong learning. They need to be media savvy and know how to effectively search for and evaluate online content; know how to protect personal information and reputation and know where to get help if problems arise. The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the internet.

Security Measures

- Internet use by pupils in school will be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software such as the Schools' Broadband Programme and our internal firewall will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The Irish Schools' Broadband Programme provides an integrated set of services to schools which includes broadband connectivity and services including content filtering, webhosting, and security services. These services are managed by the NCTE working closely with the Department of Education and Skills and are coordinated and supported by the NCTE Service Desk which is the single point of contact for schools for all broadband related issues, providing information, advice and support to schools.
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage in school.
- Pupils and teachers will be provided with training and information in the area of internet safety. (e.g. www.webwise.ie)
- Downloading of non-approved software or other material will not be permitted. Apps that are deemed of educational value will be downloaded by teachers only.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of memory sticks or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.

- Pupils will observe good “netiquette” (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

Use of the Internet

- All staff members will have access to the internet for professional use during school hours.
- Pupils will use the internet in school for educational purposes only. There may be occasions when a teacher may allow pupils to watch an age-appropriate film or short video clip.
- In the event of a pupil accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the pupil will be taught to immediately minimize the page and report the incident to the class teacher without attracting the attention of other students. The teacher should report the incident to the Principal.
- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information, either their own, or that of others.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school’s acceptable use policy.

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.

When using the internet pupils, 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.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access, and in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Claddaghduff N.S implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils are taught internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in Claddaghduff N.S through specific Webwise lessons. www.webwise.ie

- Teachers are provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety and digital technology.
- Claddaghduff N.S regularly participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer and more effective use of the internet.

Direct Communication using Internet.

Teachers in the school may use any of a range of tools for classroom communication using the internet. Examples may include Padlet, Kahoot, and Class Dojo. Pupils are required to conduct their interactions and messages in the online space in the same way as they would be expected to in class or in relation to Seesaw, the agreed digital platform for online learning.

Digital facilities may be utilised to provide synchronous video opportunities whereby a staff member directly speaks to the children live, e.g. through a webinar or online meeting. This can be done via platforms such as Zoom. The staff member shares any such invite with a pupil's parent or guardian, who is responsible for logging in to the meeting via their own account using a code. The following are ground rules for synchronous lessons online.

- All meetings will be password protected. As it is the responsibility of parents to receive the password/link, so too is it their responsibility not to share the password in order to protect the integrity of the meeting.
- All people involved in the meeting will conduct themselves in the same manner as would be expected in a regular class.
- The teacher, as the host of the meeting, has the right to eject any person from a synchronous engagement should they behave inappropriately.
- A parent is expected to be in the same room when a pupil is engaging in a meeting. They should ensure that all online interactions are appropriate.
- Staff members 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, a parent must be present.

Cyber-bullying

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.

The prevention of cyber bullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school and discussed as part of the Stay Safe programme in addition to other key areas of the curriculum (*See Social Personal and Health Education Policy*).

Measures are taken by Claddaghduff N.S 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.

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

School Website

Various activities and projects may be displayed on the school website. This is only carried out in accordance with clear approval processes regarding content that can be loaded to the school's website. Any publication of student work will be coordinated by teachers.

The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff. Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Claddaghduff N.S web page (www.claddaghduffns.ie). Thus, Claddaghduff N.S will avoid publishing the surname of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

Images & 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 Claddaghduff N.S, pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.

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.

Under no circumstances is a child allowed to use the camera, audio or video recording function of the device on the school premises or on a school outing of any description.

Written permission from parents or carers is obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website. A consent form is part of the enrolment application form for the school.

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 will be deemed a grave offence and will be dealt with in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Content Filtering

Claddaghduff N.S implements level 4 on content filtering on the Schools' Broadband Network as defined below:

- Level 4 enables access to millions of websites including games and YouTube but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the Social Networking category.

Pupils taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.

If using Seesaw, the agreed digital platform for remote learning at home, the children will be outside of the Claddaghduff N.S network. Thus, it will be incumbent upon their parents and guardians to ensure adequate internet safety precautions are taken. In particular, we ask that parents exercise caution in allowing pupils to use social media accounts with minimum age requirements. We would advise parents not to allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Twitter, etc. until they are the appropriate age.

Web Browsing and Downloading

Claddaghduff N.S cannot take responsibility for web activities undertaken by pupils outside of school hours. While we will guide and educate pupils about appropriate internet safety, it is the responsibility of pupils' parents and guardians to ensure their children's browsing and downloading practices are age appropriate.

Staff at Claddaghduff N.S may discuss and share information with parents about appropriate internet behaviour for children at parent-teacher meetings annually.

Pupils will be encouraged and directed not to visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful, or otherwise objectionable materials.

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

Pupils will be advised and reminded that downloading of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.

Pupils will be advised and reminded to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom to their teacher and to their parents.

E-mail, Messaging and Posting

iPads/ laptops/ Chrome books

- Pupils should follow teacher's instructions accessing only the applications to which the teacher has agreed.
- The camera and audio recording functions may only be used under the teachers' direction.
- Identity theft (pretending to be someone else) is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- In the event of a pupil accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the pupil will immediately press the home button and report the incident to the class teacher without attracting the attention of other students.
- iPads/ laptops/ chrome books must be always handled with care.
- Any damage to, or fault with the device must be reported immediately to the teacher.

Email

- Pupils may use approved school email accounts under supervision of or with the permission of the class teacher. Permission must be sought to set this up.
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that which 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 note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

Teaching & Learning Platforms (e.g. Seesaw)

- Pupils should not under any circumstances share their login details with other pupils.
- 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 will be enabled to post work to the class page if Seesaw platform in use.

Social Media

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Claddaghduff N.S:

- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is permitted with the expressed permission from teaching staff only.
- 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 Claddaghduff N.S School community.
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Claddaghduff N.S School community on social media. Similarly, it is

asked that parents avoid negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts. With this in mind, we ask that parents ensure that online messages and comments to teachers in the school are respectful and treated in the same way as written messages to the school.

- Pupils will be taught about the age requirements for certain social media sites such as: TikTok and Snapchat.

School Website

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to have work published on the school website.
- Photographs may be uploaded of classroom activities.
- Personal pupil information (full name, address etc) will be omitted from the school web pages.

Personal Devices

Pupils are not permitted to bring or use their own personal mobile phone at school. In general pupils will not be required to bring in their own device, unless requested by the teacher.

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.
- This will be done by means of the Webwise programme and the Stay Safe programme.

From time-to-time parents will receive information and advice regarding internet safety in the home. The school will facilitate information meetings for parents regarding internet safety from time to time.

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 (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Children First 2018
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Ratification & Communication

The BOM officially ratified this policy in 15th December 2025

All parents will be able to access this policy through the office following ratification and thereafter prior to enrolment.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in three years.

Signed: *Leixin Halkerrin* Date: 15th December 2025

Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: *Laura Griffin* Date: 15th December 2025

Principal

Appendix 1:

Insert Date

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As part of the school's education programme we offer pupils supervised access to the Internet. This will allow pupils vast educational opportunities by helping them for example, locate material for projects, communicate with students from different cultures, become independent in controlling their own research and become independent learners.

While we as educationalists recognise the value of the Internet as a resource, we must also acknowledge the potential risks to students. We feel that the answer is not to ban the use of the Internet in school but to teach pupils to recognise the risks and to become **Internet Wise**. We also allow limited access to 'YouTube' on a strictly supervised basis. This is to allow access to a huge range of educational material. The filter to prevent access to unsuitable material on YouTube is also in operation.

This process is the responsibility of the school and the parent/guardian.

For this reason, we have compiled a school policy on Internet safety. Parents must also set and convey standards of usage to their children.

It is important that you read the school's Internet Policy and sign the attached document.

There is also a document for pupils to sign. Parents should discuss this document with their children to ensure that they clearly understand the school rules with regard to Internet usage.

Kind Regards,

Ms. Griffin

Principal

Responsible Internet Use- Pupil Undertaking

We use the School computers and Internet connection for learning. These rules will help us to be fair to others and keep everyone safe.

- I will ask permission before entering any website, unless my teacher has already approved that site
- I will not bring external storage devices such as pen drives (or memory sticks/USB keys etc.) into school without permission
- I will not use email for personal reasons
- I will only use email for school projects and with my teacher's permission
- The messages I send will be polite and sensible
- When sending e-mail, I will not give my home address or phone number or arrange to meet anyone
- I will ask for permission before opening an e-mail or an e-mail attachment
- I will not use internet chat rooms
- If I see anything I am unhappy with or if I receive a message I do not like, I will tell a teacher immediately
- I know that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the sites I visit
- I understand that if I deliberately break these rules, I could be stopped from using the Internet and computers and my parents will be informed.

Signed: _____ Pupil(s)

Signed: _____ Parent/Guardian

Date: _____

Internet Permission Form

Name of Pupil(s): _____

Class(es): _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above child, I have read the Internet Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for _____

(name(s): son/daughter) to access the Internet. I understand that school internet usage is for educational purposes only and that every reasonable precaution will be taken by the school to provide for online safety.

I accept my own responsibility for the education of my child(ren) on issues of Internet Responsibility and Safety.

I understand that having adhered to all the enclosed precautions the school cannot be held responsible if my child tries to access unsuitable material.

Signature: _____

Parents/Legal Guardians

Date: _____

School Website

I understand that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the school's website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Usage Policy in relation to publishing pupils' work and photographs of school activities on the website.

Signature: _____

Parents/Legal Guardians

Date: _____

