

Internet Acceptable Usage Policy

Feevagh N.S.

Amended in accordance with Covid19 Response Plan, February 2021

Rationale

Internet use and access is a valuable school resource. 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 Feevagh N.S.
2. Members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers, and others who access the internet in Feevagh N.S.
3. To all school personnel who use digital tools in remote teaching and learning.

Feevagh N.S. will employ a number of strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet.

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 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.

Sanctions

If a pupil deliberately misuses the internet or email, this will result in disciplinary action, including the withdrawal of access privileges. Parents/guardians will receive written notification of misuse by a pupil.

Internet

- Internet will be used for educational purposes only
- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher
- Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher
- Filtering software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage
- Pupils will be taught to evaluate the content of internet sites
- Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved material is banned
- The use of external storage devices in school requires a teacher's permission
- Pupils will observe good "netiquette" (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring a school into disrepute

- 'YouTube' (and similar sites) can be accessed only under the supervision and direction of the teacher.

Feevagh 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 through specific Webwise lessons. www.webwise.ie
- Teachers are provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety and digital technology.
- Feevagh N.S. regularly participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer and more effective use of the internet.

Email

If pupils are allowed to use email, the following rules will apply:

1. Email will be used for educational purposes only
2. Students will only use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher
3. Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person
4. Pupils will not send text messages to or from school email
5. Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details e.g. addresses, telephone numbers, or pictures via school email
6. Pupils will never arrange to meet someone via school email

7. Sending or receiving email attachments is subject to teacher permission.

*At present, Children in 3rd to 6th class have school email addresses but do not have access to Gmail

Tablets:

- Students should never leave their tablet unattended when in use.
- Students should follow teacher's instructions accessing only the applications to which the teacher has agreed.
- Student's require permission before sending any form of electronic message.
- Audio or vision taken at school cannot be transmitted, broadcast or transferred without the teacher's permission
- 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.

Teaching & Learning Platforms (eg 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 in Seesaw or the T&L platform in use.

Internet Chat

- Students are not permitted to use internet chat rooms.

School Website

- Designated teachers will manage the publication of material on the school website.
- Personal pupil information, home addresses and contact details will not be published on the school website
- Class lists will not be published
- Pupils' full names will not be published beside their photograph
- Digital photographs will focus on groups and group activities rather than on individual pupils
- Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such
- Permission to publish a student's work will be sought from pupils/ parents/ guardians. This permission may be withdrawn at any time.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Social Media

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Feevagh 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 or other members of the Feevagh N.S. community.
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff, and other members of the Feevagh N.S. 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.

Personal Devices

Pupils using their own technology in school or for school activities as part of remote learning should follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if they were using school equipment.

The following statement applies to the use of mobile phones in Feevagh N.S.:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones on or to use them in any way while on the school premises, during the school day. Phones or digital devices brought onto the school premises must be kept at the owner's risk in school bags *out of sight and switched off unless they are to be used in a BYOD class.*
- Pupils are only allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into Feevagh N.S. with expressed permission from staff and when their parents have signed the requisite 'Bring Your Own Device' BYOD documentation.
- Liability for any loss, damage or theft of any device is NOT, under any circumstances the responsibility of the staff or the school Board of Management.
- Pupils are only allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during class with expressed permission from teaching staff.
- Pupils are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices unsupervised outside of class time.

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 Kahoot, Seesaw and Google Workspace. 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.

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. 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.

Measures are taken by Feevagh 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.

Content Filtering

Feevagh 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.

When using Seesaw, the agreed digital platform for remote learning at home, the children will be outside of the Feevagh 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

Feevagh N.S. cannot take responsibility for web activities undertaken by pupils outside of our network. 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.

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.

Legislation and Sanctions

Teachers, students, and parents should familiarise themselves with the following legislation relating to use of the internet:

- 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

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management and comes into effect from

June 9th 2022.

Signed: *Fr. Francis Beirne*
Chairperson BoM

Date: 9th June 2022

Letter to Parents

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 (2nd class-6th Class). Parents should discuss this document with their children to ensure that they clearly understand the school rules with regard to Internet usage.

Mise le meas,

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 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

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 precautions the school cannot be held responsible if my child tries to access unsuitable material.

Signature: 1. _____ 2. _____

Parents/Legal Guardians

Date: _____