

# **Acceptable Use** **Policy**



**St. Mochulla's National School.**

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## ***Acceptable Use Policy***

**School Name:**

St. Mochulla's National School

**Address:**

Ennis Road, Tulla, Co. Clare

### ***Aim of the AUP***

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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

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

- This policy was presented to the Board of Management on the \_\_\_\_\_
- This policy was presented to the Parents on the \_\_\_\_\_

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Chairperson of Board of Management

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Brian Culloo, Principal

# ***School's Strategy***

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:

## ***General***

- **Students are expected to follow the same rules for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline – See Code of Behaviour Policy**
- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Level 4 “**Fortiguard Filtering Software**” provided by the Nation Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) is used through the school in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. This level is currently used by the majority of schools in Ireland. It allows access to millions of websites including interactive educational games and 'YouTube', while also blocking access to websites belonging to the 'Personal Websites' category and the 'Social Networking' category. Therefore Websites, Blogs and Apps such as MySpace, Snapchat and Facebook are not accessible within the school. The school and teachers will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal external and or portable memory **devices**<sup>1</sup> in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will treat others with respect at all times, observe good “netiquette” (i.e., etiquette on the internet) and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

## ***Education***

- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.
- Students will be educated on the benefits and risks associated with using the internet.
- The children at St. Mochulla's N.S. will be made aware of the importance of keeping their personal information private.
- The students will learn about the importance of informing and telling someone they trust if they feel unsafe or discover something unpleasant.
- The children will learn about the importance of treating ICT equipment with care, consideration and respect.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this policy, the word “device” shall be taken to mean any personal electronic item, such as (but not restricted to) an Apple iPad, iPhone, iPod, Android device or tablet, laptops, netbooks, cameras, mobile phones, iPods, eReaders, gaming devices such as Nintendo DS, PS Vita, floppy disks, memory sticks, memory cards, CD-ROMs, DVD discs, and any other digital media devices capable of transmitting data via wireless media transfer such as the Air Drop function, found on Apple Devices) etc..

## ***World Wide Web***

- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- **Students will report accidental accessing of unpleasant material to help protect other pupils.**
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will learn **not** to copy information into assignments without acknowledging the source or author of the original work (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- **Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.**
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- Students 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.

## ***Email***

- This will be relevant to staff only, nevertheless, students may be taught how to use email.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- **Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.**
- **Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.**
- **Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.**

## ***Internet Chat***

- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication that have been approved by the school and sanctioned by the class teacher, for example ([www.edmodo.com](http://www.edmodo.com), Accelerated Reader, [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org) ).
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised, for example ([www.edmodo.com](http://www.edmodo.com), Accelerated Reader, [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org)).
- Usernames and passwords will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- **Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat will be forbidden.**

## ***Netiquette***

**Netiquette** may be defined as appropriate social behaviour over computer networks and in particular in the online environment.

- Students should always use the internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Students should be polite, use correct language and not harass others or provoke fights online.
- Students should also recognize that among the valuable content online, there is unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content.
- Students should use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet.
- Students should not post anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it is out there – and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

## ***School Website – [www.stmochullas.com](http://www.stmochullas.com)***

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website.
- **The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.**
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages.
- Digital photographs, audio or video clips will feature groups of children only.
- **The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will not be published on the school website.**
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website will avoid publishing the names of individuals in photographs.
- 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 web.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

## ***Mobile Phones***

Children are not allowed to use mobile phones in the school. If a child is required to bring a mobile phone to school to make contact with their parents after school, the mobile phone should be left in the office for the duration of the school day. The school will not accept responsibility for mobile phones not handed into the office.

## ***Personal Devices***

**Pupils using their own technology in school**, such as (but not restricted to) a mobile phone, smartphone, iPad, iPod, iPhone, gaming device, laptop, or tablet device **is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy**, if any of these devices are turned on and used in class or during school hours. Pupils are prohibited from sending nuisance text or electronic messages, or from taking unauthorized voice recordings or images either still or moving.

Children are not allowed bring personal devices on school tours or to other out of school events.

## ***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
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988
- Children First Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018

## ***Cyberbullying***

**Bullying** is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conduct by an individual or group against others. Bullying is always wrong and is unacceptable behaviour which should never be overlooked or ignored.

**Cyberbullying** refers to bullying which is carried out using the internet, mobile phone or other technological devices. Cyberbullying generally takes a psychological rather than physical form but is often part of a wider pattern of 'traditional' bullying. It can take the form of sending nasty, mean or threatening messages, emails, photos or video clips, silent phone calls, putting up nasty posts or pictures on a message board, website or chat room, saying hurtful things in a chat room, pretending to be someone else in a chat room or message board or text message and saying hurtful things, or accessing someone's accounts to make trouble for them

- Any form of harassment using electronic devices, commonly known as cyberbullying is prohibited and will not be tolerated.
- Students are encouraged to report an incident or any communication that constitutes cyberbullying to the school or any member of staff.

- The school will take any report of cyberbullying seriously and will investigate credible reports immediately.
- Students who make a report are requested to preserve evidence of cyberbullying, e.g. a screenshot or a copy of an email, text message, picture or any other electronic form.
- Staff will take appropriate action and will bring it to the attention of the principal when students report an incident of cyberbullying.
- Staff will attempt to preserve evidence of the cyberbullying and will submit any evidence to the principal.
- Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

## ***Sanctions***

Misuse of the Internet, including bullying or discrediting others, may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of internet access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion (as outlined in the Code of Conduct booklet). The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.



## **Stop Cyber bullying**

### **Tips for Parents**

It is very important that you listen to your child when they come to you with an issue relating to bullying.

#### **Encourage your child to be careful about disclosing personal information.**

Being conscious of when and where it is all right to reveal personal information is vital. A simple rule could be that the child should not give out name number or picture without your approval. Never give out personal information (PIN) etc. online everyone is a stranger. Don't talk to or accept anything from strangers.

#### **Remember that the positive aspects of the Internet and Mobile Phones outweigh the negatives.**

The Internet is an excellent educational and recreational resource for children. Mobile phones can be a source of comfort and support for children and parents.

#### **Know your child's net use.**

To be able to guide your child with regard to Internet use, it is important to understand how children use the Internet and know what they like to do online. Let your child show you which websites they like visiting and what they do there.

#### **Encourage good Netiquette**

Netiquette is the informal code of conduct for the Internet. These are informal ethical rules for how to behave when relating to other people on the Internet and include: being polite, using correct language, not yelling (writing in capital letters) not harassing others or provoking fights online. You should not read other's email or copy protected material.

### **Some Tips for Young People.**

**Do** trust your instincts. If it doesn't look or feel right it probably isn't. If you find something online that you don't like or makes you feel uncomfortable, turn off the computer and tell an adult.

**Do** not keep this to yourself! You are NOT alone! Tell an adult you know and trust!

**Do** not delete messages from cyber bullies. You don't have to read it, but keep it, it is your evidence.

**Don't** send a message when you are angry. Wait until you have time to calm down and think. You will usually regret sending a "Flame" (angry) to someone else. Once you've sent a message, it is very hard to undo the damage.

**Don't** open messages from people you don't know.

**Don't** reply to messages from cyber bullies! Even though you may really want to, this is exactly what the cyber bullies want. They want to know that they've got you worried and

upset. They are trying to mess with your mind and control you, to put fear into you. Don't give them that pleasure.

**What to do if you are cyber bullied.**

- Tell your parents or a trusted adult.
- Do not retaliate – this will only feed into the cyber bully and could make other people think you are part of the problem.
- Try to ignore the cyber bully.
- Block the bully from your site.
- Save the evidence. Keep a record of the bullying messages but do not reply to any bullying messages.
- Show or give the record of bullying messages to your parents.

**If the cyber bullying persists or gets worse, your parent or trusted adult can:**

- File a complaint with the website, ISP, or Mobile Phone Company. There is usually a link on the website's home page for reporting concerns.
- Contact the Gardaí if the cyber bullying contains any threats.

# St. Mochulla's N.S. Rules for Responsible Internet Use

The school has installed computers with Internet access to help our learning. These rules will help keep us safe and help us be fair to others.

## Using the computers:

1. I will not access other people's files;
2. I will not use floppy disks, CD-ROMs, memory sticks, cameras, iPads, iPods, airdrop, watches, laptops, mobile phones or MP3 players without the permission of the teacher;
3. I will treat all of the computer equipment with respect.

## Using the Internet:

1. The use of the Internet is for educational purposes only;
2. I will not use the Internet, unless given permission by a teacher;
3. I will report any unpleasant material to my teacher immediately because this will help protect other pupils and myself;
4. I understand that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the Internet sites I visit;
5. I will not complete and send online forms without permission from my teacher;
6. I will not give my full name, my home address or telephone number when completing forms or while visiting websites;
7. I will not upload or download non-approved material.

## Using e-mail:

1. I will ask permission from a teacher before checking the e-mail;
2. I will immediately report any unpleasant messages sent to me because this would help protect other pupils and myself;
3. I understand that e-mail messages I receive or send may be read by others;
4. The messages I send will be polite and responsible;
5. I will only e-mail people I know, or my teacher has approved;
6. I will only send an e-mail when it has been checked by a teacher;
7. I will not give my full name, my home address or telephone number or that of anyone else;
8. I will not send or open attachments without the permission of the teacher.

**I understand that failure to comply with the rules will mean withdrawal of Internet privileges.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# St. Mochulla's N.S. Internet Access Permission Form

Dear Parents/Guardians,

## Re: Internet Permission Form

As part of the school's ICT programme we offer all pupils supervised access to the Internet. This allows students' access to a large array of online educational resources that we believe can greatly enhance the learning experience. For children in the senior classes this means researching information, locating material and communicating with children in other schools, both at home and abroad. For children in the junior end of the school they will use the internet to access educational websites that reinforce the work being done in the classroom.

In order to protect your child, the school has installed "**Level 4 Fortiguard Filtering Software**", provided by the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) which restricts access to inappropriate material and blocks websites belonging to the 'Personal Websites' category and the 'Social Networking' category. Therefore Websites, Blogs and Apps such as MySpace, Snapchat and Facebook are not accessible within the school. Children will be supervised at all times while using computers and while accessing the Internet. Children are not allowed access to the Internet without supervision. All staff involved in supervising children, while accessing the Internet, will be familiar with the School Acceptable Use Policy and will be aware of its importance.

While St. Mochulla's N.S. takes active steps to promote safe use of the Internet, and has taken measures to ensure that suitable restrictions are in place on the ability of children to access inappropriate materials, the school cannot be held responsible for the nature or content of materials accessed through the Internet.

Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, art work or school work on the school website, [www.stmochullas.com](http://www.stmochullas.com). Occasionally photographs of children will be used on the website or school twitter account @TullaNS. Only Christian names will be used to identify children, and all efforts will be made to ensure that there is no content published that compromises the safety of pupils and staff.

Parental permission must be given before your child is allowed access to the Internet and to have their work or photograph published on the website school twitter account.

Please sign the form and return it to the school.

Yours sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Culloo,  
Principal.

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I/We, the parents/guardians of \_\_\_\_\_, **give/do not give** permission for my/our child/children to have access to the Internet in St. Mochulla's N.S. (Delete as appropriate)

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

I/We, the parents/guardians of \_\_\_\_\_, **give/do not give** permission for my/our child/children to have their work/photograph published on the school website/twitter account @TullaNS

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