



# Kilmacanogue National School

## ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

Including: Internet Usage/Web Browsing and Downloading/Email and Messaging/  
Social Media and WhatsApp Groups/Email Groups/  
Personal Devices and Mobile Phones/Images and Videos/Cyberbullying/  
School Website and Digital Communication Platforms

## **Introduction**

The aim of this AUP (Acceptable Use Policy) is to ensure that all the children in Kilmacanogue National School will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. This policy will endeavour to set out the various protocols and procedures leading to safe and best practice whenever and wherever children have access to any form of technology.

This policy has been redrafted as a result of the current set of circumstances involving COVID-19 which has necessitated the closure of schools over extended periods of time and the development of Remote Teaching and Learning and as a result should be read in conjunction with Kilmacanogue National School's Remote Teaching and Learning Policy which outlines much of the protocols highlighted in this policy.

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be with-drawn and appropriate sanctions outlined in the AUP will be imposed.

For the purposes of this policy, the protocols outlined will apply to using the internet on a variety of devices (laptop, iPad, mobile phone, personal computer etc).

The protocols outlined in this policy relate to any form of online learning or communication which takes place in school and/or at home based on any of the school's online learning or communication platforms such as SeeSaw, Class Dojo, Google Classroom, ZOOM, Twitter, School website, Aladdin etc

This Acceptable Use Policy was initially developed by a working group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians and members of the Board of Management.

## **Internet Safety**

This Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) also encompasses the protocols outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Child Safeguarding Polices as well as any policies or references regarding Data Protection and GDPR.

The Acceptable use Policy applies to all pupils and staff or indeed anyone who has access to and makes use of the internet in Kilmacanogue National School through any of the school's online learning platforms that are used in the school as well as at home including any blended learning.

Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully by parents or guardians to indicate that the content is accepted and understood.

*It must be noted that Kilmacanogue National School is not responsible in any manner for monitoring home devices that access any school assignments or school related work or a 'live' class/teaching session. This is the sole responsibility of the pupils' parents/guardians.*

When using the internet, pupils, parents and staff are expected to:

- Treat others with respect at all times
- Undertake no action whatsoever which would 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

Kilmacanogue National School will inform parents/guardians of any incident brought to its attention regarding inappropriate online behaviour that may take place outside of the school and will endeavour to deal with the scenario following the protocols outlined in this AUP as well as those found in the Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding and Anti-Bullying policies.

Ms Niamh Murray, Principal, is the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and, as such, should be informed of any serious online safety incidents.

### **School's Strategy**

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

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Teachers will be provided with ongoing continuous professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Students will be provided with information and advice in the area of Internet safety as part of the SPHE Curriculum
- Kilmacanogue National School will participate in Safer Internet Day activities well as promote Webwise and such courses as WhizzKids
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- The use of personal memory sticks, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.

## **Content Filtering**

Kilmacanogue National School internet content filtering system is at level 4 and is included as part of the security suite on the Cisco router supplied by the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) manages this facility and is responsible for reporting any inappropriate access to the school. In this regard, the PDST strives to ensure that there is no internet access to any categories such as Adult, Gambling, Shopping, Chatrooms, Social Media etc. All school devices are routed through the DES internet connection.

Any pupil taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

## **Web Browsing and Downloading**

The following protocols apply to web browsing and downloading are relevant to the entire school community using or having access to the school's internet:

- Absolutely no one should knowingly attempt to visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- In the event of accidentally accessing any of the above sites, the student or staff member should immediately turn off the monitor and report the incident to a teacher or supervisor and inform Ms Murray, the Principal (DLP)
- Students should not spend time on non-educational matters and should use the Internet for educational purposes only
- No one should upload, download or otherwise transmit material that is copyrighted unless the copyright is acknowledged.
- Students should not disclose or publicize personal or confidential information for example classmates' home addresses, telephone numbers, name and location of their school.
- Students should not examine, change or use another person's files, user name or passwords.
- All those having access to the school internet should be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving of any information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security, and/or network management reasons.

- Pupils are responsible for their own good behaviour on the internet. Access to the internet may be withdrawn from pupils who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use. Internet access in the school includes a filtering service to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. However, no filtering service is completely fool proof and therefore pupils will be supervised during the use of the internet.
- YouTube: YouTube will be used as a teacher resource. It **will not** to be used as a research tool by children.
- In relation to Interactive Whiteboards, The guidelines already outlined apply in particular to the use of the Interactive Whiteboard. In addition, it should be noted that all sites accessed by pupils and/or staff should be for educational purposes only.
- If inappropriate material is displayed, either advertently or inadvertently, the “No Show” button should be used to block any image on the whiteboard.
- Any breach of this protocol, whether accidental or deliberate, by student or teacher, should be reported to the school principal.

### **Email and Messaging**

- Many teachers use an individual school email address to communicate with parents. If the teachers have decided to use email as one of the modes of communication, they will send out guidelines for parents in relation to this at the start of the school year.
- The school management system Aladdin is also utilised by teachers by way of making contact with parents/guardians. This is a one-way system from teacher to parent.
- The school has its own unique email address [kilmacanoguens@gmail.com](mailto:kilmacanoguens@gmail.com) to which correspondence can be received and from which replies may be sent.
- Students/Staff will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students/Staff should report immediately the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and above all they must not respond to any such communication.
- Students/Staff will not reveal their own or other people’s personal details, such as addresses, telephone numbers and 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.
- Students should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, ask the teacher.
- Students/Staff should not, under any circumstances, share their own or anyone else’s email/SeeSaw/Class Dojo/Reading Eggs/Mathletics etc account login details

## **Social Media and WhatsApp/Email Groups**

Given that no child in Ireland under the age of 16 years of age should have access to a social media account, (GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018), the following statements apply to the use of social media services in Kilmacanogue National School including messaging, blogging and video streaming:

- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo and Sparks Video etc for educational purposes is allowed with express permission from and supervision by the teaching staff
- Staff/Parents/Pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the school community on social media
- Staff/Parents/Pupils must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media
- Staff/Parents/Pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Kilmacanogue National School into disrepute
- Staff/Parents/Pupils must not express their personal views as those representing Kilmacanogue National School's on social media
- ***Staff/Parents/Pupils must not use social media and the internet, including class-based WhatsApp Groups and FaceBook etc and/or emails, to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff or other members of the Kilmacanogue National School Community. Such infringements may result in prosecution.***

## **Personal Devices and Mobile Phones**

Pupils may not use personally owned devices in Kilmacanogue National School such as laptops, tablets, digital cameras and smart phones etc unless explicitly sought by the teacher who may be encouraging the children to get involved in some educational activity which might be enhanced through the use of their personal devices. In such instances, permission will be sought in writing from the children's parents/guardians.

With regard to mobile phones, they can be an unwelcome distraction to learning in the context of a Primary School and can cause discipline problems as well as potentially lead to bullying, harassment or offensive behaviour towards other children or staff. There are also matters of privacy which relate to the ability of most phones now being able to take photos or make video recordings or voice/sound recordings. The safety and protection of everyone in Kilmacanogue National School is paramount and most especially that of the children in our care.

Pupils are not allowed to have mobile phones with them in school. If parents need to contact their children during the day, this may be done through the school office. Only in very extreme cases will children be allowed bring a mobile phone to school. A letter requesting this must be written to Ms Murray, Principal. The mobile will be switched off and kept at the teacher's desk until the end of the school day unless permission has been granted by the Principal not to do so.

Any breach of the above may result in the device being confiscated and, depending on the level of severity, may also require consulting with outside agencies where, for instance, there has been inappropriate recordings or videos recorded or photos taken.

Pupils using their own technology in the school should follow the rules as already set out in this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) in the same way as if they were using school equipment or accessing the internet. The school does not take any responsibility for any damage to personal devices while on school property.

If a child has been approved for Assistive Technology by the Department of Education and Skills (DES), and they take their device home and it gets damaged etc. it is the responsibility of the parents to get the device repaired/fixed at their own cost. They also understand that the device is the property of the school as per circular.

The guidelines already outlined apply in particular to the use of the Interactive Whiteboard. In addition, it should be noted that all sites accessed by pupils and/or staff should be for educational purposes only.

If inappropriate material is displayed, either advertently or inadvertently, the “No Show” button should be used to block any image on the whiteboard.

Any breach of this protocol, whether accidental or deliberate, by student or teacher, should be reported to the school principal.

### **Images and Video**

- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that staff, parents and pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- At Kilmacanogue National School, staff, parents and pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.
- 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/guardians will have been obtained as per the initial application form which was signed when their child first started school, before photographs of pupils are published on the school website or any other social media outlet relating to the school.
- Staff, parents and pupils must not share images, videos or other content online of any other member of the school community, without prior permission, regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.

- *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 of other pupils automatically incurs suspension as a sanction.*

### **Cyberbullying**

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, in line with the school Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies.

Measures are in place and are taken by Kilmacanogue National School 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 even when it happens outside the school or at night.

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

The prevention of cyber bullying is an integral part of the Anti-Bullying Policy of our school.

### **School Website and Digital Communication Platforms**

- The school website [www.kilmacschool.ie](http://www.kilmacschool.ie) will be overseen by the Principal, Ms Niamh Murray. All information/work must be first approved by Ms Murray before being uploaded onto the website.
- The Wednesday Newsletter containing updated school information will be regularly written and uploaded by Ms Murray onto the website
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages
- 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 without the parental permission.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.

- The school website will avoid publishing the full name of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use pupils' full names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the internet, or school digital platforms, such as Class Dojo, SeeSaw, Twitter etc in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website. The publication of pupil work will be coordinated by a teacher.
- The platforms 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.

### **Misuse and Sanctions**

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. If the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

Misuse of the internet and lack of adherence to the Acceptable Use Policy will result in disciplinary action, including:

- Oral and written warnings which may include meeting with Principal/Teacher/Parents
- Written apology where and when appropriate
- Confiscation of devices
- Withdrawal of access privileges
- Suspension or expulsion (in extreme cases)

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities or matters relating to Child Protection to the appropriate authorities such as:

- TUSLA
- Gardaí
- HSE
- DES
- EWO
- etc

Kilmacanogue National School will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of pupils or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases Kilmacanogue National School will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions, and where necessary the relevant authorities.

## **Legislation**

The following legislation relates 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

## **Implementation and Review**

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the In-School Management Team and overseen by Ms Niamh Murray (Principal)

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Relevant school policies such as the: Code of Behaviour Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy; Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies; Data and GDPR Policies etc
- Logs of reported incidents.
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils, parents, and teaching staff.

This policy and its implementation along with all school policies will be reviewed annually, or as often as required, by the Board of Management, In-School Management Team, teaching staff, support staff, pupils, and parents.

## **Parental Agreement**

Upon entry to the school, parents will be asked to sign the admissions form in relation to agreeing to abide by all school policies including this Acceptable Use Policy. This will be a once off agreement signature and by signing it parents agree to abide by this policy as well as all other policies relating to Kilmacanogue National School.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

Signed by: Judy O'Toole (Chairperson)

Niamh Murray (Principal)

Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021