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Internet Acceptable Use Policy

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School Name:	Scoil Mhuire
Date of Commencement:	22/02/2023

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General Approach

The aim of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from the 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. If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.
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
- Respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in Scoil Mhuire.
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 will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on school life under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases Scoil Mhuire will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school.

Scoil Mhuire 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 curriculum
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety
- Scoil Mhuire participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer and more effective use of the internet
- Scoil Mhuire encourages parents to become familiar with and make use of resources on www.webwise.ie (The Irish Internet Awareness Centre) to best support their child's safe use of the internet

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed every 2 years, lead by the ICT coordinator with input from the stakeholders.
This policy has been developed collaboratively with input from a working group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, pupils, parents/carers, and representatives of the Board of Management.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils, parents, and teaching staff

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the school principal should be informed.
The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the school ICT coordinator, teachers and the school Principal.

Content Filtering

Scoil Mhuire 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

Pupils 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, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

Web Browsing and Downloading

Students are allowed to access the internet on school owned devices for educational purposes and as appropriate to their age group. School owned i-pads and laptops are available to various classes and each classroom has a projector or interactive whiteboard that can be used to access to the internet. Laptops, PCs or iPads may also be used with a learning support teacher or by students needing to use assistive technology. The following rules apply to web browsing on school devices:

- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials
- Pupils will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom and elsewhere in the school to their teacher
- Pupils and staff will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content
- Pupils 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
- Pupils will use the school's internet connection only for educational activities
- Pupils 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
- Pupil use of file sharing (e.g. drop box, google drive) and torrent sites is not allowed
- Downloading by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed
- Internet browsing is only allowed in the presence of a teacher or member of staff
- E-Portfolio platforms such as SeeSaw and websites needing a 'log in' are in use in the school: permission is sought from parents as appropriate via Aladdin

Email and Messaging

- The use of a pupil's personal email accounts is not allowed at Scoil Mhuire
- Pupils will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person
- 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

Artificial Intelligence (A.I.)

Artificial intelligence is the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems. The use of A.I. in primary schools has the potential to significantly enhance learning experiences and outcomes for students. However, it is important to ensure that the use of A.I. is ethical, responsible, and safe. A.I. should only be used to enhance and support student learning, and not replace or undermine the role of teachers.

- The use of A.I. must be in accordance with the school's educational goals, objectives and policies and must be aligned with the curriculum.
- The use of A.I. programmes and/or applications (e.g. ChatGPT etc.) are only permitted in school under the supervision of the class teacher.
- Pupils are only permitted to use A.I in homework and/or project tasks when given explicit permission from the class teacher and when used safely and responsibly under the supervision of their parent/guardian at home.

Social Media

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

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, Whatsapp, G Chat, etc. by pupils is not allowed in Scoil Mhuire.
- Use of blogs such as Word Press, Tumblr etc. are allowed in Scoil Mhuire with express permission from teaching staff.
- Use of video/photo sharing apps such as TikTok, Instagram etc. by pupils are not allowed in Scoil Mhuire
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is allowed at certain times in Scoil Mhuire.

Twitter

Scoil Mhuire has set up school Twitter account. The purpose of having a Scoil Mhuire school Twitter account is to provide:

- Communication with parents regarding specific events & activities
- Communication with new or prospective parents
- Communication with wider audience regarding positive advertisement of school & enrolment dates
- Communication with wider audience of school life via photos of pupil's projects, notice boards, etc.
- Communication with other schools and accounts with similar educational interests

In line with our School Website Policy (see below):

● Scoil Mhuire will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips of pupils on Twitter focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on Twitter with parental permission

● Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be

published

● Scoil Mhuire will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online (unless explicit permission of parents is received).

● Pupils may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on Twitter with teacher approval regarding the content. The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher

The Twitter account will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff

School Twitter: @scoilmhuireball

Facebook & Other Online Profiles

Scoil Mhuire's Parents and Friends Association (PFA) has a private Facebook group for Scoil Mhuire parents, this has been approved by the Board of Management. Please see the PFA policy on Social Media for further details on the group.

The following rules apply to the use of personal profiles on social media outside of school:

- 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 Scoil Mhuire community
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Scoil Mhuire community on social media
- Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Scoil Mhuire into disrepute
- Staff and pupils must not represent their personal views as being those of Scoil Mhuire on any social medium

Personal Devices

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, smart watches, gaming devices, digital music players and any other personal device with access to the internet or a recording function in Scoil Mhuire:

Mobile Phones

- Pupils from Junior Infants to 3rd class are not allowed to bring a mobile phone to school (Except in exceptional circumstances with permission from the school Principal)
- Pupils in 4th, 5th and 6th class are allowed to bring a phone into Scoil Mhuire to facilitate after school family communications. Such devices must be switched off and given to the class teacher at the start of the school day. The teacher will return the devices to the pupils at the end of the school day. Mobile phones are not to be used during lessons or break times and must be powered off while on the school grounds (while inside the school gates).

Images & Video

- At Scoil Mhuire pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images, video or audio recordings of others without their permission. Unauthorized taking of images (still or moving) or audio recordings on any personal electronic device is not allowed
- Pupils must not share images, videos, audio or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside
- Taking photos, videos or recording audio on school grounds or when participating in school activities (including virtual activities, such as learning via zoom at school) is only allowed with expressed permission from staff
- 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
- Pictures taken of children (other than a parent's own child) at school events should not be shared on social media or on the internet
- Please see the Parent and Friends Association's (PFA) Social Media Policy for details on sharing images and video from events organised by the PFA

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.

Measures are taken by Scoil Mhuire 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.) The prevention of cyber bullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

> *"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.*
> *However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour."*

Scoil Mhuire Anti-Bullying Policy is available on the school website.

Netiquette

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

● Pupils should always use the internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.

● Pupils should be polite, use correct language and not harass others or provoke fights online.

● Pupils should also recognize that among the valuable content online, there is unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content.

● Pupils should use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet

School Websites

- Scoil Mhuire will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Scoil Mhuire web pages
- Scoil Mhuire will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online (unless explicit permission of parents is received)
- Pupils may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet with teacher approval regarding the content. The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff

School website: www.scoilmhuireballincollig.ie

Distance Learning

Scoil Mhuire has a distance learning policy which specifies the acceptable use of technology during times of distance learning. This policy is available on the school website.

Video calls (such as zoom) may be used from time to time in school to access learning opportunities outside of the school (eg. Lifetime Lab).

Staff AUP

Staff members will adhere to the conditions outlined in this document while working with children. The acceptable use of ICT by the staff in Scoil Mhuire outside of this is outlined in a separate document.

Ratification of AUP

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire at its meeting of February 22nd 2023.

Gerard O'Sullivan,

Chairperson, Board of Management **Date: February 22nd 2023.**

(Note: The original signed policy is in the school)

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Permission Form relating to the Scoil Mhuire Internet Acceptable Use Policy updated February 2023

Please review the school's Internet Acceptable Use Policy (sent to you by email and also on our website), and sign and return this permission form to the Principal.

Name of Student:_____

Class:_____

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school.

(Student's Signature & Parental witness for 3rd to 6th Class Pupils only)

Student's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian (as a witness): _____

Date: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet. 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.

I will support my child in adhering to this Acceptable Use Policy.

Parent Signature **(Parents of all pupils)**: _____

Date: _____