

Ballybay Central National School

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Internet Acceptable Use Policy

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General Approach

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's digital resources in a safe and effective manner. The responsible use of internet and digital technologies, both online and offline and access is considered an integral part of teaching and learning. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to agreed sanctions will be imposed.

The aim is that school will revise the AUP at least annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

When using the internet students, 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.

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:

- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- The use of personal external digital storage media in school, requires school permission.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Internet use within school will always be supervised by a teacher.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to students who have access to and are users of the internet in Ballybay Central National School.

- It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, outside coaches, carers and others who access the internet in Ballybay Central National School.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

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

Ballybay Central National School 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 and other curriculum areas.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in Ballybay Central National School.
- Teachers and SNAs will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Ballybay Central National School participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the following stakeholders:

- **Board of Management, staff, pupils and the Parents' Association**

This policy has been developed by Principal and Deputy Principal, in collaboration with staff, pupils, the Parents' Association and representatives of the Board of Management.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using logs of reported incidents.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the Principal should be informed.

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by all staff members.

Content Filtering

Ballybay Central National School has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

Level 4: This level allows 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.

Students 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.

Internet Use

Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

Students will be encouraged to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.

Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school but outside the classroom to either their class teacher or the Principal.

Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).

Students 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.

Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.

Students 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.

Students will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene or defamatory, or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

Students will never disclose or publicise personal information or passwords.

Students will be aware that any usage of the internet and school's digital platform, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, will be monitored.

Use of file sharing and torrent sites is allowed with staff permission.

Email and Messaging

Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.

The use of personal email accounts is only allowed at Ballybay Central National School with expressed, written, permission from members of the teaching staff.

Students must not send any material that is illegal, obscene or defamatory, or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Students 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.

Students should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, pupils should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.

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.

Students will not forward email messages or screenshots of emails or "reply all without the permission of the originator.

Students may only use school email for school related activities and for registering on school-based activities only, and with the permission of their teacher. The use of personal email addresses is not allowed for school-based work.

Students must not use school email accounts to register for online services, social networking, apps or games.

Students should 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 should report any such communications to a teacher.

All emails and opinions expressed in email are the responsibility of the author and do not reflect the opinion of the school.

Social Media and messaging services for Staff and Students

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow us to interact and keep in touch. While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that members of our school community are expected to follow when using social media. The principles set out in this policy are designed to help ensure that social media is used responsibly so that the confidentiality of pupils and staff and the reputation of the school are protected.

This policy applies to personal websites such as social networking sites (for example Instagram and TikTok), blogs, microblogs such as X, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us and content sharing sites such as Flickr and YouTube. The internet is a fast-moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media.

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Ballybay Central National School:

- Use of instant messaging service WhatsApp by staff members is allowed in Ballybay Central National School. Its use must never impede the teaching and learning in the school.
- Use of any instant messaging service or app - including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc. - by students is prohibited in Ballybay Central National School.
- Use of blogs such as WordPress, Tumblr etc. is allowed in Ballybay Central National School with express permission from teaching staff.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube is with express permission from teaching staff.

All members of the school community must not use social media, messaging services and the internet in any way to harass, impersonate, insult, abuse or defame others.

Staff and students must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Ballybay Central National School community on social media.

Staff and students must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff and students must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Ballybay Central National School into disrepute.

Staff and Students must not represent their personal views as those of bring Ballybay Central National School on any social medium.

Students will be provided with guidance on etiquette regarding social media.

Teachers and SNAs can read further information about the use of Social Media and Electronic Communication here: <https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/2021/guidance-for-registered-teachers-about-the-use-of-social-media-and-electronic-communication.html>

Personal Devices

On rare occasions where students are allowed to use their own technology in school with the expressed permission of their teacher, should follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if they were using school equipment.

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, smartwatches, in Ballybay Central National School :

- Students are not allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into Ballybay Central National School .
- Students are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during lessons.
- Students are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during social time.

Digital Learning Platforms (including video conferencing)

Ballybay Central National School digital learning platform is owned and managed by the school. This platform may enable two-way communication.

Only school devices should be used for the purposes of capturing and storing media.

All school-related media and data should be stored on the school's platform.

The use of digital platforms should be used in line with considerations set out in the school's data protection plan (GDPR).

Each user of the platform will be provided with their own unique login credentials.

Passwords for digital platforms and accounts should not be shared.

Personal email addresses should not be used when creating accounts on school digital platforms.

Prior acceptance from parents should be sought for student usage of the schools' digital learning platform.

Remote Learning Policy: Where a need for remote learning arises staff and students comply with a separate, specific Remote Learning Policy.

Audio, images and video

Care should be taken when capturing audio, photographic or video images that learners are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.

At Ballybay Central National School students must not record audio, take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission and the expressed permission of the Principal.

Recording audio, photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is allowed once the person(s) recording has expressed permission from the Principal and care is taken that no harm is done to staff or pupils of Ballybay Central National School.

Recording audio, 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 or guardians will be obtained on enrolment before video, audio or photographs of students are published on the school website.

Students must not share audio, 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.

Sharing explicit images/video and in particular explicit images/video of students and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images/video of other students automatically incurs suspension as a sanction.

Inappropriate Activities

- Promotion or conduct of illegal acts, e.g. under the child protection, obscenity, computer misuse and fraud legislation
- Misuse and fraud legislation
- Racist material
- Pornography
- Promotion of any kind of discrimination
- Promotion of racial or religious hatred
- Harmful content or threatening behaviour, including promotion of physical violence or mental harm
- Any other information which may be offensive to colleagues or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the school or brings the school into disrepute
- Using school systems to run a private business
- Use systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards employed by the school
- Uploading, downloading or transmitting commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, without the necessary licensing permissions
- Revealing or publicising confidential or proprietary information (e.g. financial / personal information, databases, computer / network access codes and passwords)
- Creating or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files
- Carrying out sustained or instantaneous high volume network traffic (downloading / uploading files) that causes network congestion and hinders others in their use of the internet
- Online gaming
- Online gambling
- Online shopping
- Use of social networking sites, instant messaging and online forums
- Child sexual abuse material
- Any other activity considered questionable

School Website

Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet by either their class teacher or the Principal, in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.

Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

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

Webpages on the school website will not allow comments or user-generated content.

Ballybay Central National School will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips of focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.

The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.

Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Ballybay Central National School web pages.

The Ballybay Central National School will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named and will not use students' names in image file names or ALT tags if published online.

Cyberbullying

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools and Bí Cineálta policy., Ballybay Central National School considers that posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social media, e-mail, messaging, apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyberbullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyberbullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyberbullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexual orientation, appearance etc.

Access to technology means that cyberbullying can happen around the clock and a student's home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Students are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. The nature of these technologies means digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and is almost impossible to delete permanently. While cyberbullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can also be felt in school.

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools and Bí Cineálta policy., Ballybay Central National School considers that 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.

When using the internet students, 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 student or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

Measures are taken by Ballybay Central National School to ensure that staff and students are aware that bullying is defined as targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of Bí Cineálta and the anti-bullying policy of our school. In accordance with the Department of Education Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools; Ballybay Central National School considers that a school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

Artificial Intelligence

Ballybay Central National School recognises the potential benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and is committed to its responsible and ethical use within our learning environment.

- Ballybay Central National School provides training and professional development opportunities for teachers and SNAs to effectively utilise AI tools in their practices, ensuring they stay up to date with technological advancements.
- The selection of AI tools and technologies in Ballybay Central National School aligns with educational goals, including supporting learner agency and promoting critical thinking.
- Ballybay Central National School integrates AI into its educational processes to enhance teaching, foster innovation, and promote the development of critical skills among staff.
- Ballybay Central National School is adopting AI gradually, and will make necessary adjustments to its integration based on review and feedback.
- Reviews of the impact of AI on teaching and learning outcomes will be conducted occasionally to ensure continuous improvement.
- School staff and learners receive training on the ethical use of AI technologies, including understanding data privacy, identifying biases, and verifying AI-generated information.
- All AI tools authorised for use in Ballybay Central National School comply with data protection regulations (GDPR).
- Entering personal, sensitive, or confidential data into any AI system without proper authorisation is strictly prohibited.
- Staff or students will not create, share or send any AI generated material that is illegal, obscene or defamatory, or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Staff and learners must not use AI in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame learners, their family members, staff or other members of the Ballybay Central National School community.
- Staff and learners must not engage in activities involving AI generated material which might bring Ballybay Central National School into disrepute.
- AI systems used in Ballybay Central National School ensure fairness, transparency and accountability in decision-making processes.
- AI Generated material is allowed for the purpose of research, brainstorming, revising text.
- AI and other sources and references used for research and teaching must be factchecked.

Ratification

This policy was formally ratified by the Board of Management, superseding all previous versions with immediate effect. The Board maintains its commitment to a safe digital learning environment and mandates an annual review to ensure continued alignment with legislative updates and technological advancements.

Signed: 
Chairperson

Date: 15/4/20

Permission Form – Acceptable Use Policy

Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, SNAs, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 and Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
- Children First Act 2015
- Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 (Coco's Law)
- Criminal Damage Act 1991

Support Structures

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet and digital technologies should be referred to in the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy and related sanctions regarding misuse as appropriate should be outlined therein. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities, including An Garda Síochána.

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the internet and digital technologies. I will use the internet and digital technologies in a responsible way and obey all the procedures outlined in the policy.

Student's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and 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.

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing students' work on the school website.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, and sign and return this permission form to the Principal.

Name of Student: _____ Class: _____ Date _____