

Castlerea Community School Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)



(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 Castlerea Community School.
2. Members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers, and others who access the internet in Castlerea Community School.
3. To all school personnel who use digital tools in remote teaching and learning.

If the school's AUP is not adhered to, access will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions, as outlined in the AUP and the school's Code of Behaviour, will be imposed.

Our School's Strategy

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 employ 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 and our internal firewall will be used 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 internet safety. (e.g. www.webwise.ie)
- Downloading of non-approved software or other material will not be permitted. Apps or programmes 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 pose a significant risk to security and virus and are not permitted for use in school.
- 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.

Use of the Internet

- All staff members will have access to the internet for professional use during school hours.
- Pupils will use the internet in school for educational purposes only. There may be occasions when a teacher may allow pupils to watch an age-appropriate film or short video clip.
- In the event of a pupil accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the pupil will be taught to immediately minimize the page and report the incident to the class teacher without attracting the attention of other students. The teacher should report the incident to the ICT Coordinator.
- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful, or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information, either their own, or that of others.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

Pupils 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.

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

- To always treat others with respect.

- Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
- Respect the right to privacy of all other members of the school community.

Misuse of the internet may result in appropriate disciplinary action, with the possible application of a range of measures up to and including suspension / expulsion.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Castlerea Community School *may* occasionally deal with digital activity that takes place outside the school that impacts on the wellbeing of pupils or staff. Such incidents may be dealt with under this policy, the anti-bullying policy, and the school Code of Behaviour, where required. In such cases parents/guardians will be informed of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour and the school may impose appropriate sanctions in line with the Code of Behaviour.

Castlerea Community School 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 in Castlerea Community School through specific Webwise lessons www.webwise.ie or through visiting speakers such as An Garda Síochána.
- Teachers are provided with continuing professional development opportunities in internet safety and digital technology.
- Castlerea Community School regularly participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer and more effective use of the internet.

Direct (online) Communication using Internet.

Teachers in the school may use any of a range of tools for classroom communication using the internet. Examples may include Padlet, Kahoot, and Class Dojo. 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 or in relation to Microsoft Office, the agreed digital platform for online learning.

Direct Communication between students or parents or guardians and teachers will take place via the MS Teams platform or school email account only. Communication via personal phone or media such as Whats App is not appropriate.

One-to-one communication between a teacher and student may take place via the MS Teams video, as required from time to time in instances such as learning support or career guidance counselling,

Communication received by teachers outside of normal school hours will be retrieved and answered during the next working day. There is no obligation on teachers or students to respond to messages after normal school hours.

Direct communication via email or MS Teams must at all times be appropriate, professional and respectful.

Digital facilities may be utilised to provide synchronous video opportunities whereby a staff member directly speaks to the students live, e.g. through a webinar or online meeting. The staff member shares any such invite with a pupil, who is responsible for logging in to the meeting via their own MS Office account. The following are ground rules for synchronous lessons online.

- 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 Up2Us programme in addition to other key areas of the curriculum (*See Social Personal and Health Education Policy*).

Measures are taken by Castlerea Community 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.

“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”. CCS Anti-Bullying Policy

School Website / Social media platforms

On occasion, pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet. This is only carried out in accordance with clear approval processes

regarding content that can be loaded to the school's website or social media platforms (twitter, facebook, Instagram). Any publication of student work will be coordinated by teachers.

The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff. Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Castlerea Community School web pages or social media platforms.

Images & Video

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.

At Castlerea Community School pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.

Pupils must not share 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.

Under no circumstances is a child allowed to use the camera, audio or video recording function of the device on the school premises or on a school outing of any description.

Written permission from parents or guardians is obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website. Consent is sought as part of our enrolment application process.

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 will be deemed a grave offence and will be dealt with in line with the school's Code of Behaviour and may be referred to the relevant authorities.

Content Filtering

Castlerea Community School 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 MS teams, the agreed digital platform for remote learning at home, the students will be outside of the Castlerea Community School 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

Castlerea Community School 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.

E-mail, Messaging and Posting

School PC's, iPads, Laptops or MS Surface tablet devices (PE only)

- Pupils should follow teacher's instructions accessing only the applications to which the teacher has agreed.
- 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.
- In the event of a pupil accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the pupil will immediately press the home button and report the incident to the class teacher without attracting the attention of other students.
- Laptops and tablet devices must be always handled with care.
- Any damage to, or fault with the device must be reported immediately to the teacher.

Email

- Pupils must use approved email accounts only, under supervision of or with the permission of the class teacher. Each student is issued with an Office 365 email account upon enrolment which contains the domain name @castlereacs.com
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that which is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Pupils will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

Teaching & Learning Platforms (MS Teams)

- 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 MS Teams

Social Media

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Castlerea Community School:

- 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, other members of the Castlerea Community School community.
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Castlerea Community School 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.
- Members of staff should not engage with or be friends with students on social media.

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 Castlerea Community School:

“Students are encouraged to leave mobile phones and other electronic devices at home. Parents who need to contact students should do so using official channels through the main office. If students choose to have them in their possession, they must be powered off during school hours”.

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.

Sanction

Where a student is found to be in breach of policy and using a phone or electronic device for any mischief, playing games, taking photos or recording any person or event without permission, the phone will be confiscated immediately, the matter reported to management and the phone will be retained in the principal's office for collection. Parents will be notified of the confiscation and can retrieve the device by calling to the school.

All personal devices capable of connection to the internet are to be turned off and kept in school bags during school hours and only used after school hours when students are outside the school grounds.

Support Structures

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

This will be done by means of the Webwise programme or similar and the SPHE programme.

From time-to-time parents will receive information and advice regarding internet safety in the home. The school will facilitate information meetings for parents regarding internet safety from time to time.

Online communication with parents to support the school's remote learning eg. Links to webinars, how-to videos, will be sent via email or the school's VShare notifications system.

Legislation

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

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action in line with the school Code of Behaviour. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

This policy has been developed to include the previous policy on device usage in the school in addition to internet and distance learning protocols. It has been developed following feedback from parents, teachers and pupils in relation to online teaching and learning

throughout the school closure period from March – June 2020 and January – April 2021. We recognise that online safety is imperative and hope this document will offer a means of protection for all in our school community, whilst online.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

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

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by those responsible for digital learning in the school.

The Acceptable Use Policy for Castlerea Community School was reviewed by the Board of Management on 11th May 2022

This policy will be reviewed as necessary.

Chairperson: _____ **Date:** _____

Principal: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix A

AUP Pupil's Pledge

Internet use in school:

- I will only go on websites that have been approved by my teacher. I will not visit an inappropriate site on purpose.
- If I accidentally access an inappropriate site or image, I will minimise the page and tell the teacher immediately, without attracting the attention of those around me.
- I will use the internet and digital media for educational purposes only.
- I will always use a safe search engine such as image bank on www.scoilnet.ie to look up images.
- I am fully aware that everything I do on a school computer/laptop is monitored by the school.
- I will never access my personal email account in school.
- I will never access chat rooms, social media platforms, or gaming sites in school.

Laptop / Microsoft Surface Go Use in school (where appropriate):

- I will take good care of my device.
- I will keep food and drinks away from my device since they may cause damage to the device.
- I will not disassemble any part of my device or attempt any repairs.
- I will use my device in ways that are appropriate.
- I understand that my device is subject to inspection at any time without notice.
- I will only photograph people with their permission and with my teacher's permission.
- I will only use the camera or the microphone when my teacher tells me to.
- I will only use the device as instructed by the teacher and use the right app at the right time.
- I will never use the device or another person's device to cause offence or damage or upset.
- I will never share any images or movies of people in a public space on the internet unless I am asked to do so by my teacher.

Mobile Phone/ and all other devices with Internet Access Use in school:

- If I bring a mobile phone or any other device that allows access to the internet in school, it will be switched off and in my bag until I leave the school premises, unless I have specific instructions and permission from my teacher.
- I will never send text messages, emails and comments on any social media that are harmful and hurtful to another person.
- I will never give out my name, address, phone number to anyone online.

- I will not share personal information about another person online.
- I will always use my Username and not my real name on websites so that I can protect my identity.
- I will never arrange to meet in person anyone I meet online.
- I will not use my phone or any personal device, to take photographs or videos or audio recordings of any person without their permission.
- I will not upload any photos or videos to any site or social media forum without getting permission.
- My password is my own and I will not share it – even with my best friend.

Signature: _____. **Date** _____