



## Acceptable Use Policy

### Introduction

This policy was formulated in January 2024, and following consultation with staff and parents/guardians was ratified by the Board of Management on 10th February, 2026. Leixlip Together National School [Leixlip ETNS] recognises that access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gives our pupils enhanced opportunities to learn, engage, communicate and develop skills. To that end, we provide access to ICT for pupil use. The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's ICT resources in a safe and effective manner.

### Rationale and Aims

This Bí Cineálta Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviours that our pupils are expected to follow when using current and future school technologies. Pupils are expected to follow the same guidelines for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline. These guidelines are found in the Leixlip ETNS Code of Positive Behaviour.

This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the Leixlip ETNS' Code of Positive Behaviour, and our Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying Policy.

This policy has been drawn up to protect our pupils from the risks associated with accessing the internet while they are at school. Parents and Guardians are advised however that while the children may be given internet-based homework assignments from time to time, the school takes no responsibility for the internet and/or social media use of the pupils while they are outside school. It is important that all parents and guardians monitor their own child's internet and/or social media use at home and ensure that their children are aware and respectful of the risks involved.

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

### General

Children will be taught about safe internet usage each academic year before accessing the internet in school.

Pupils, Parents/Guardians and staff are advised to visit websites such as [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) and [staysafe.ie](http://staysafe.ie) for information on the safe usage of the internet.

Staff will keep themselves updated on Internet Safety matters.

The Department of Education's filtering system will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material in school.

ICT sessions will always be supervised by a teacher and children's use of the Internet will be monitored.

Teachers using interactive whiteboards and projectors will be particularly vigilant and will preview the material being presented in order to ensure that it is age appropriate and adheres to the conditions of this AUP.

Pupils should not upload or download software, music or videos or any other files.

The use of any form of removable storage (such as memory sticks, CD-ROMs etc.) should not be used

without the permission of the classteacher or principal.

Pupils will observe good 'netiquette' (i.e. etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute. Good netiquette will be demonstrated to the children through activities on sites such as [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)

Parents/guardians and pupils should not request to "friend", "follow", "add" or "tag" a member of staff in the school on social networks and nor should members of staff request to "friend", "follow", "add" or "tag" a pupil or parent.

### **Use of the World Wide Web in School**

Pupils will use the internet for educational purposes only.

Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable or inappropriate content.

Pupils will be taught about safe internet access and different ways in which they may recognise if a website does not look safe to access. They must not click on anything they feel is not safe. Pupils are expected to alert their teacher immediately of any concerns for safety or security. While the school's broadband is filtered by the Department of Education, the school cannot bear responsibility for pupils inadvertently or intentionally accessing inappropriate websites.

If pupils see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes them concerned for their personal safety, they should bring it to the immediate attention of a teacher if they are at school, or a parent guardian if they are at home

Stay Safe tells children to Stop Block and Tell:

**STOP** – don't reply to the message but do take a screenshot **BLOCK** – block the sender **TELL** – a trusted adult

Pupils should never share personal information about themselves or others, including phone numbers, addresses, PPS numbers and birthdates over the Internet.

Pupils should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life.

Pupils will be taught about copyright issues relating to online learning. Pupils who copy information or images from websites into their projects or assignments will acknowledge the source.

Pupils will be aware that any internet usage, including sites accessed, the distribution or receiving of information or files, and the uploading or downloading of data or files will be monitored.

### **Netiquette**

Netiquette may be defined as appropriate social behaviour over computer networks and in particular in the online environment. Pupils will be taught Netiquette through Webwise and other teacher-designed lessons.

### **Pupil Code for Online Interactions**

#### **Behaviour**

Be respectful of other people's views and their work

Do not engage with online trolls or cyberbullies and report online trolls and cyberbullies to an adult. If the website you are using has a 'Report' function, use it.

#### **Language**

Always use positive language online and be careful using capital letters, exclamation marks and emojis as these can change the meaning of what you're writing.

Remember that comments will stay on the internet forever.

## **Plagiarism and Copying**

Pupils will be taught in a class-appropriate way, what plagiarism is and will be reminded of this before undertaken research for any projects or assignments

Pupils should not plagiarise content (copy or use as their own without citing the original creator). This includes words or images from the internet or books, for inclusion in projects, whether in paper format or online assignments.

Pupils should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online.

Pupil Guidelines - 'Don't take credit for other people's work and make sure to say from where you got your information'.

## **Judgement**

Pupils will be taught not to believe everything they read on the internet, to use their judgement and try to become aware of fake or untrue content and also to try to find more than one source for your research.

## **Privacy & Safety**

Never give out personal information of your own or the information of other people. This includes full name, address, school, phone number etc. Be sensible and safe. If you ever come across something that upsets you, tell an adult.

## **Email**

The use of or access to email by pupils is prohibited in Leixlip ETNS. Parents should be aware that it is not advisable for children under the age of thirteen to have their own email account.

## **Internet chat and forums**

Pupils will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school – Seesaw, Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Workspace - [this list will be updated on an ongoing basis].

Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.

Face-to-face meetings with persons on the internet are forbidden, unless it is as part of a school project and with the teacher's supervision.

## **School Website and Social Media Sites**

Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork and other school work on the School Website and on the school's social media pages. The publication of pupils' work will be coordinated by a teacher in line with parent/guardian consent.

Photographs, video and audio clips of children are often published on the website/social media page. These will not be published without parental permission, which will be given using the school's standard permission form which is completed at the start of the school year. Pupil names will not be published alongside an image of the child.

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

Pupils who copy content from the internet onto the school website or blog must ensure they are permitted to use this content and should acknowledge the source.

## **Online Collaboration through Blogging and Other Platforms**

Leixlip ETNS recognises that online collaboration supports education and we may provide pupils with access to a variety of online tools that allow communication, sharing, and messaging among pupils.

Pupils are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful and courteous conduct online as offline. This is of particular relevance to school blogs. When blogging, recording audio or sending any sort of online communication from a school device, pupils must not slander, defame or misrepresent the school or the views or activities of another individual.

## **Images and Recordings:**

Teachers will educate pupils about the risks associated with the taking, using, sharing, publication and distribution of images and recordings. In particular, teachers will recognise the risks attached to publishing their own images on the internet.

Staff may take digital/video images or audio recordings to support educational aims but must follow school policies concerning the distribution of those images.

Pictures to be published on the school's website, or elsewhere, which include pupils will be selected carefully by the class teacher and/or principal and will comply with good practice guidance on image use.

Pupils' full names will not be used anywhere on a website or blog, particularly in association with photographs

When taking digital/video images or audio recordings, staff should ensure that all such images or recordings of pupils are appropriate and relevant to the purpose for which they are taken.

Pupils must not take, use, share, or publish images of others without the consent of their teacher or the subject of the photograph.

Parental consent will be obtained through Aladdin before photographs of pupils are published or on school social media sites. Likewise, pupil work can only be published with the permission of the pupil and parents/guardians.

## **Mobile Devices**

Leixlip ETNS may provide pupils with tablets, digital cameras, digital recorders or other devices to promote learning both inside and outside of the school. Pupils should abide by the Acceptable Use Policy, when using school devices off the school network, as on the school network.

Pupils are expected to treat these devices with care and respect. They should report any loss, damage, or malfunction to their teacher immediately.

Where possible, each pupil / pair of pupils will use the same tablet number throughout the school year to facilitate monitoring of tablets.

Use of school issued tablets will be monitored using a teacher iPad that can view each individual screen.

Teachers will decide what apps are appropriate for their class. Teachers must use their professional judgement when deciding which apps to use with their class.

Pupils must not move away from the app their teacher has opened for them to work on unless they have been instructed by their teacher.

Pupils may not access the Play Store or download apps to the tablets or computers. Pupils may not delete or move apps or folders.

## **Personal Mobile Devices**

Pupils may not use personally owned digital devices in school without the explicit permission of the teacher and their parent/guardian

Appropriate online behaviour and adherence to the Acceptable Use Policy should always be maintained.

The school will take no responsibility for loss or damage to personally owned digital devices when in the child's possession.

## **Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Watches**

### **Pupils**

The use of mobile phones and smart watches by pupils is prohibited in school, except under the following exceptional circumstances -

No child may bring a mobile phone or smart watch to school unless the principal has given permission in writing.

Pupils are not permitted to use phones or smart watches as cameras under any circumstances in school, on school trips or during extra-curricular activities.

Where permission is given, the device must be switched off during the school day and kept in the school bag, on days of outings or school trips, the devices should be left in the school office, unless needed for medical purposes.

In exceptional circumstances where personal phones or smart watches are used for medical or emergency purposes e.g. to assist with diabetes monitoring, the devices will be left with the Additional Needs Assistant.

If a pupil is found to have a mobile phone or smart watch in school, it will be confiscated by the teacher and returned at the end of the school day. The school will not bear any responsibility for loss or damage to the device.

### **Staff**

All staff members keep their phones on silent during school times.

Except in exceptional circumstances, staff should not take calls or texts or access the internet on their phones for personal use during teaching time.

Staff should not use school devices for personal use.

Staff should not use schools broadband for downloading or accessing personal content or material to their own devices.

Staff should not store their login details or have their school emails open on their phone email app, if they need to access school emails outside of school hours they should use an internet browser and be certain to log out at the end of the session.

Staff should not access or store their login details to the school's database [Aladdin] on their personal devices, if in exceptional circumstances they need to access the database, they should be certain to log out when the session has ended.

All classroom devices - teacher laptops, teacher ipads, pupil ipads and tablets should be left in school at all times, except with the explicit permission of the principal. Classroom laptops are assigned to the relevant class level and will not move with the teacher at the end of the year. For this reason, teachers should be cognisant of what they download to the devices.

Unless absolutely necessary staff should avoid downloading content and material to their classroom devices, including files attached to emails. At the end of the school year, teachers should delete any content or material

that they have downloaded to their classroom device for their class use. Staff should use cloud based services to create and store material and content for school. Devices should not be reset to factory settings without the prior approval of the principal.

Staff should avoid using memory sticks or other external storage devices with the classroom laptop and instead should use cloud-based storage to create and store material content for school.

Staff may not take photographs or recordings of pupils using their personal devices, they should only use staff ipads/tablets or a school camera, and only for recording or supporting educational activities.

Staff should be familiar with the school's Data Protection Policy and should not store any information or data pertaining to the school or pupils on their personal devices.

When it is necessary to refer to pupils or other members of the school community in work-related communications on personal devices, initials should be used.

If staff need to contact parents/guardians using their own devices, unless in the case of an emergency, they should only call by appointment, and should have their phone switched to private-caller mode.

Teachers and Additional Needs Assistants should switch on phones when out of the school on trip for the purpose of contacting each other, being contactable by the school, or in the case of emergencies.

### **Cyber-Bullying**

Our pupils must not send messages or post comments or photos with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Should pupils engage in online activities intended to emotionally harm another person on a site not controlled by the school, the school will ask parents / guardians to refer this to the site provider.

Harassing, flaming [ posting personal insults and vulgar and angry words], denigrating, impersonating, outing [sharing of others' private information], tricking [sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information, and / or tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information about themselves], excluding and cyber stalking are all examples of cyber-bullying. Such bullying will be investigated and dealt with in line with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

In some cases, cyber-bullying may be a crime, Leixlip ETNS is committed to the Tusla's Children First and the Department of Education's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post- Primary Schools (revised 2023) and will act as required.

### **Distance, Blended and Hybrid Learning**

In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers, and ANAs, acting under the direction of teachers, may use a range of online platforms including Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom, Seesaw, Padlet, Skype, Microsoft Teams, Class Dojo, and other platforms approved by the principal, to assist with distance teaching and learning.

The school will sign up to the terms of service of the online platforms in use by the school. The school will enable the most up to date security and privacy features which these online platforms provide.

Staff members will adhere to the following school guidelines on the use of platforms for live engagement, as devised by the principal, staff and Board of Management during the Covid 19 pandemic..

### **Guidelines for good online communication in Leixlip ETNS:**

- Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls or video conferencing sessions.
- Staff, families and pupils are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online.
- It is the duty of parents/guardians to supervise children while they are engaging online and to ensure any content which they are submitting to their teacher is appropriate.
- Staff members may communicate with pupils and their families via Aladdin, email or phone-call and and

other platforms approved by the principal.

- Communication using a mobile phone, other than the office mobile, will not be frequent, but in the rare exception where it is necessary, staff members will ensure that their caller ID is private.
- Where phone calls to parents/guardians take place, staff may engage with pupils one-to-one on the phone in the presence of their parent/guardian, these communications will be brief and generally social in nature (greeting, sharing of some news etc.). However, in most cases voice recordings or audio clips are preferable to one-to-one conversation.
- Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
- Pupils and staff will communicate using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified i.e. Zoom, phone calls, email and seesaw.
- For video-conferencing/Zoom calls, parental permission is implied, as the link to a video call will be communicated via the parent/guardian's email address. Essentially, by virtue of the parent logging their child into the session, permission is assumed.
- Leixlip ETNS cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are hacked.
- One-to-one (staff-to-pupil) video conferencing should not take place, in the context of SET or EAL, the ANA (Additional Needs Assistant) will be present with the teacher.

#### **Guidelines for staff members using online communication methods:**

- Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls or video conferencing sessions.
- Staff members will only use Aladdin and/or their approved staff email account to email or to share documents with parents/guardians.
- Staff will not engage with parents over social media messaging apps (including WhatsApp and Facebook messenger).
- Staff members will communicate with pupils and families during the hours of 8.40am - 2:20 pm, where possible, unless otherwise agreed in advance.
- Staff members will have high expectations regarding pupil behaviour, with any communication which takes place online.
- Staff members will become familiar with apps before using them with pupils.
- Staff members will report any concerns regarding online behaviour or interactions to school management.
- Staff are encouraged to generate a new meeting ID and password for each Zoom meeting being held.
- Staff members will notify parents/guardians of the date, time and password for a video call via email.
- Staff members will only admit participants to video conferences, if they recognise the username as being connected to a pupil or parent/guardian. Invitations for Zoom sessions will be sent to one parental email address per child. If the parent/guardian will need the link sent to a different email address than that normally used, they should notify their child's teacher at least twenty-four hours in advance of session.

#### **Rules for pupils using online communication methods:**

For submitting learning:

- Parents/guardians should submit their children's work as requested by the teacher - using email with photo, video or audio attachments, Google Workspace or through Seesaw as outlined in the assignment brief.
- Only work and pictures that are appropriate and relevant should be submitted.

#### **General Guidelines for pupils during Zoom or conference calls:**

- Pictures or recordings of the video calls or video conferencing sessions are not allowed.
- Remember our Golden Rules - they are still in place, even online.

We are Gentle • We are kind and helpful • We listen • We are honest • We work hard • We look after property

- Set up your device in a quiet space, with no distractions in the background.
- Join the video with your microphone muted.
- Raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class.
- Be patient, sometimes it can be hard waiting your turn to speak
- When you have the chance to talk, don't be shy - we love to hear everyone.
- Listen to others while they are speaking.

- Be on time, or you may miss the start of the lesson, or you may be left in the waiting-room by mistake.

**Guidelines for parents and guardians for Distance / Remote / Blended or Hybrid:**

- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.
- Check over the work which your child[ren] send to their teacher.
- Follow the teachers' guidelines when submitting your child[ren]'s work.
- Continue to revise online safety measures with your child[ren]. See <https://www.webwise.ie/category/parents/advice/> for tips and advice.

**For video calls/Zoom**

- Ensure that the school has the correct email address for inviting you to join apps and meetings (invitation will only be sent to one email address per pupil).
- Video sessions will be used for both live academic lessons and, to maintain a social connection between the school staff and pupils at this difficult time. Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience.
- Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls or video conferencing sessions.
- To ensure compliance with child protection and GDPR protocols, only pupils of Leixlip ETNS should participate in our video sessions.
- Be aware that when participating in group video calls or video conferencing sessions, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
- Before admission to Zoom sessions, after you have entered the code/clicked on the link in the email invitation, you will enter a waiting room. Please note that school staff will only accept users into video sessions if they can be identified by the display name on your zoom account.
- Please try to ensure that your child[ren] is on time for a scheduled video call, if the session has already started and the host teacher is busy engaging with the session, latecomers may inadvertently be left in the waiting room.
- Please request to join the Zoom call approximately five minutes before the scheduled start time. This will give school staff time to verify your email address.
- Make sure to familiarise your child with the software in advance. For video in particular, show them how to mute/unmute and turn the camera on/off.
- Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
- An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call. Authentic backgrounds are preferable to virtual backgrounds which often result in distorted imaging and can be a distraction.
- Previously agreed upon usernames must be used to access the meeting.
- Parents/guardians must agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons and to be in the room with the child for any one-to-one meetings or classes.
- For detailed information on GDPR and Zoom, please visit <https://zoom.us/privacy> It is important to note that any breach of the above guidelines may result in a discontinuation of this method of communication. A breach may also result in a person being immediately removed from a meeting or a meeting being immediately terminated. In this case, the child's parent and school management will receive a report on the incident. Normal classroom and school rules also apply to the virtual classroom setting. Breaches of the above guidelines will be considered in accordance with our Code of Positive Behaviour. Please also see <https://www.webwise.ie/parents/> for further guidelines and advice on internet safety.

**Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy**

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

Notification to parents/guardians of the breach of policy

Suspension of ICT privileges.

Sanctions in accordance with the Leixlip ETNS Code of Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

The school is obliged to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

We make a reasonable effort to ensure pupils' safety and security online but are not responsible for any harm or damages that result from misuse of school technologies.

## **Support Structures**

The school will regularly update pupils and parents/guardians on key support structures and organisations that deal with internet safety and illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

### **Roles/responsibilities:**

The Board of Management is responsible for the formulation, adoption and ratification of this policy.

All staff are responsible for being familiar with, the reviewing of, and the implementation of this policy during the school day, and for recommending any changes to be made in light of the ever-changing use of ICT.

Teachers and parents/guardians are responsible for the education of the children in internet safety.

Parents and guardians are responsible for the internet usage of the pupils while they are outside school. It is important that all parents and guardians monitor their own child[ren]'s internet usage at home and ensure that their child[ren] are aware and respectful of the risks involved.

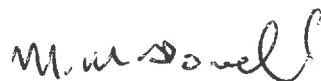
It is the pupils' responsibility to follow the guidance and rules of their teachers and parents/guardians in adhering to this policy.

The principal is responsible for communicating the school's Acceptable Use Policy, Code of Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Safe-guarding Statement to staff and parents.

The Board of Management, Principal and teachers are responsible for carrying out sanctions for inappropriate or illegal use of the internet or school devices in line with the school's policy, child safe-guarding procedures and relevant legislation.

This policy and its associated procedures will be monitored on an ongoing basis but will be undergo full review in 2026, or earlier if necessary

This final draft of this policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Leixlip ETNS, following consultation with staff and parents.



Signed: Mary McDowell, Principal

Date: 10/2/2026

Signed: Sarah Horne, Chairperson

Date: 10/2/2026