



Assistive Technology Policy

Introduction

This policy, the terms and conditions and the attached agreement was compiled in line with Department of Education and Skills Circular 10/2013 in relation to essential assistive technology equipment for pupils with physical or communicative disabilities. This policy should be read in conjunction with Leixlip ETNS Acceptable Use Policy, Child safeguarding Policy, Anti Bullying and Bí Cineálta Policy.

Rationale and Aims

The purpose of the policy is to ensure clear guidelines for the acquisition and use of specialist equipment which has been recommended by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) as being essential for pupils who have been diagnosed as:

- 'having a serious physical disability
 - and/or sensory or communicative disability to the extent that their ability to communicate through the medium of speech or writing is materially curtailed
 - where it is clear that existing equipment in the school is insufficient to meet the child's needs without unduly depriving other children of access to the equipment.
 - where without such equipment it will not be possible for such children to access the school curriculum'.
- (Circular 10/2013)*

Definition and types of Assistive Technology

'The Department of Education and Skills and Youth characterises AT as being any technology that enhances the performance of a learner with special educational needs by overcoming barriers in terms of presence, participation (engagement) and learning' *(NCSE Research Report No 22 p43)*.

Given the wide range of equipment and the fact that new assistive technology equipment is constantly being developed, it is not possible to list all of the types of equipment or software provided by the Department of Education. Examples of the type of equipment which may be provided include:

- 'Audiology Supports for children with hearing impairment i.e. FM Radio Systems, Soundfield Systems, Hearing Aids and classroom hearing supports;
- Equipment to assist children with visual impairment including Braille Equipment/Braille Keyboards/ CCTV Equipment with Distance Camera, computer equipment for enhanced text reading and online library and audio equipment for audio books;
- For children with physical or severe communication disabilities: laptop/tablet computers with associated modified software, joysticks, keyboards, touch pads, where it has been outlined that the equipment is essential to access the curriculum'. *(Circular 10/2013)*

Access to Assistive Technology

Student access to the use of Assistive Technology will be permitted by the Board of Management when all of the following steps in the application process have been satisfied:

- Evidence of a recommendation for AT in a professional report or letter of recommendation from an NCSE Visiting Teacher
- Evidence of a recommendation by the NCSE SENO to the DE in favour of the application for said assistive technology

- An official Department of Education sanction letter/email granting said assistive technology has been received by Leixlip ETNS

It is the responsibility of the SENCO to ensure that applications for Assistive Technology are completed appropriately as outlined in Circular 10/2013. Further information about application process and Assistive Technology Application forms can be located on the following website <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/237c68-assistive-technology-grant/>. All Assistive Technology applications will include original signatures of the principal and parent/guardian indicating their full knowledge and permission for the application process. It is the joint responsibility of the SENCO and Principal to ensure that all Assistive Technology purchased on behalf of the DE by the school is claimed for and fully repaid by the DE as outlined in the 'Claiming Refunds' section of the following website <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/237c68-assistive-technology-grant/#claiming-refunds> and in line with Appendix 1 of Circular 10/2013.

In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may consider access to AT for pupils who urgently require assistive technology (as recommended in a professional report) while awaiting an official sanction letter/email from the Department of Education, should said resources be available in the school. In this situation, a parent / guardian should write to the Board of Management outlining the exceptional circumstance to be considered.

It is important to note that DE sanction of Assistive Technology to primary school students does not have any bearing on applications for RACE (Reasonable Accommodations for Certificate Exams) at post primary level. Applications for reasonable accommodations for State examinations e.g. Junior / Leaving Certificate are made to the State Examinations Commission (SEC) by post primary schools in line with DE RACE criteria.

Ownership of Assistive Technology

Any equipment purchased by the school under Department of Education and Skills Guidelines remains the property of the school and should normally be kept in the school and is subject to inspection by the Department of Education and Skills.

Transfer of Assistive Technology

In accordance with DES Circular 10/2013 Section 14, although equipment is sanctioned to support a particular pupil, the equipment is sanctioned to a school and will, as a general rule, remain the property of the school and be available for allocation to other or subsequent students with similar disabilities.

However, should a student with highly specialised equipment that is individualised in nature transfer to another school (including proceeding to post-primary school), the SENCO at Leixlip ETNS will consult with the SENCO/ Visiting Teacher with regard to its transfer with the student where it is still appropriate for the students assessed needs. This will ensure that there is no gap in support for the student and enable the student to continue to use suitable and familiar resources in their new setting.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to inform the new school (including post primary school) of the assistive technology their child is accessing. An application form requesting transfer of equipment (including terms and conditions of transfer is attached to this policy (see Appendix A).

Usage

Use of Assistive Technology is subject to all other policies of Leixlip ETNS, including the Acceptable Use and Code of Positive Behaviour Policy.

Assistive technology will be used solely by the designated student and will not be shared with other students whilst the designated student is attending Leixlip ETNS.

Only school approved packages/applications may be used. Any programmes and e books used by the student must be set up/ approved by the Class SET teacher. Passwords and usernames may only be changed by teachers from Leixlip ETNS.

Upon receipt of the relevant equipment the student's Special Education teacher will make the student aware of the key principles of the school's Acceptable Use Policy and teach them key skills and safety procedures around the use of the equipment. The assistive technology will remain with the SET until the student has gained a sufficient level of independence and awareness of safety procedures or in the case of a student with complex needs a designated adult e.g. ANA can support the student with the assistive technology in the classroom. The child and a parent / guardian will complete the child friendly contact in Appendix B of this policy, acknowledging their understanding and agreement of safe and acceptable use of the Assistive technology.

Classroom use and storage

- The allocated assistive technology is used to assist the designated child's learning in school and is used as necessary throughout the school day as specified by the class / SET teacher.
- Where possible, a storage unit such as a laptop bag is purchased with the laptop. At the end of the day, the assistive is stored securely in a locked cabinet by the class teacher.
- When moving the equipment in the room, the child should ensure that it is secure e.g. laptop is closed to protect the screen.

Support classroom use

- Students are taught key assistive technology skills in the support room setting as appropriate to their learning needs e.g. typing, word processing skills, use of key programs or applications such as but not limited to Powerpoint / Slides or Google Classroom.
- The transfer of assistive technology from the classroom to the support classroom and vice versa must be supervised by the SET teacher. Students should ensure that the equipment is secure for movement e.g. laptop is closed to protect the screen and that they walk safely whilst carrying said equipment.
- All assistive technology should be returned to the classroom at the end of SET sessions.

Home use

Any equipment purchased by the school under the Department of Education and Skills Guidelines remains the **property of the school and should normally be kept in the school**. However, the Board of Management may, in certain circumstances allow the use of the equipment in the pupil's home. Such circumstances are where it is agreed that the pupil could potentially benefit from, or achieve a degree of improvement to their academic and educational performance, their learning and their completion of homework through the use of technical support or equipment such as a school laptop/tablet/ reader pen.

Procedure to allow student to take Assistive Technology home

1. Parent / Guardian must apply to the Board of Management outlining the reason why they believe it is necessary for the student to bring the assistive technology home.
2. The application will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management and a decision made.
3. Parent / Guardian will be required to read in full and sign the Assistive Technology Home Use Agreement attached to this policy (see Appendix C).

Storage

All Assistive Technology will be stored securely in the classroom of the student it is designated to. The class teacher with assistance from the student and ANA (where applicable) has responsibility for the safe storage of Assistive Technology during the academic year.

At the end of the academic year, the class teacher should transfer the assistive technology to the student's teacher for the following academic year. The Assistive Technology will be stored securely by the new class teacher in the new classroom over the Summer holidays. In situations where this is not possible (i.e. new class teacher has not yet been appointed or new classroom is not ready), the Assistive Technology will be returned to the school SENCO for safe and secure storage over the holidays.

Parents / guardians are responsible for safe and secure storage of Assistive Technology (as per Home Use Agreement

in Appendix C of this policy) when Assistive Technology is off the school site as agreed by the Board of Management.

Repair / Replacement of Assistive Technology

In line with DE Circular 10/2013, “the school’s management authority will have responsibility for maintenance, repair, insurance etc. of the equipment. While the assistive technology is on the school site, the designated student, class / SET teacher, ANA (where appropriate) have a responsibility to ensure that equipment is cared for and stored in an appropriate and safe manner and that any defects are reported to the SENCO in a timely manner.

Where faults/defects are reported, the SENCO will consult with Leixlip ETNS IT consultants regarding the nature of the fault. The SENCO will then consult the NCSE SENO regarding the fault and repairs/replacement required. Please note that repairs / replacement equipment should only be sought following written confirmation from the NCSE SENO. An application for refund of payment of approved equipment (repair) may then be made in line with Circular 10/2013 using the claim form in Appendix 2 of the circular.

Where assistive technology is damaged, lost or stolen whilst offsite, it is the responsibility of the student’s parents/guardians own responsibility to bear the cost of repair / replacement of equipment as outlined in the Assistive Technology Home Use Agreement in Appendix C of this policy.

Email

For the administration of some devices e.g. laptops, it will be necessary to provide students with a school email address (i.e. @leixlipetns Google workspace email address). The decision to create such an email address will be made by the ISM team. Any student email addresses must only be used for school purposes and their usage is governed by the school’s Acceptable Use Policy.

Roles/responsibilities:

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

The principal is responsible for communicating the school’s Assistive Technology Policy to staff and parents.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that Assistive Technology is covered under the school’s insurance.

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 Assistive Technology

The SENCO at Leixlip ETNS in association with the Principal is responsible for liaising with NCSE SENO, parents and teachers with regard to applications for Assistive Technology or Applications for Repair / Replacement of Assistive Technology

Teachers and parents/guardians are responsible for the education of the children in internet safety, in line with Leixlip ETNS Acceptable Use Policy.

Parents and guardians are responsible for the safe and secure use and storage of Assistive Technology whilst equipment is off site (as per Home Use Agreement).

It is the student’s responsibility to follow the school rules and guidance and adhere to this policy with regard to the safe and secure use and storage of Assistive Technology.

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

Consultation and Communication of the Policy

The policy was formulated in **February 2025** following consultation with staff, parents/guardians and the Board of Management of Leixlip ETNS. This policy should be read in conjunction with Leixlip ETNS Acceptable Use Policy, Child safeguarding Policy and Anti Bullying Policy.

Ratification and Review

This policy was formally ratified by the Board of Management of Leixlip ETNS on 10/2/2026. It will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if required to reflect changes to legislation, DE policy or procedures or other Leixlip ETNS school policies.

Signed: Mary 10/2/2026
Mary McDowell (Principal)

Signed: Sarah Hearne
Sarah Hearne (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Appendix A: Application for Transfer of School Assistive Technology

Application for Transfer of School Assistive Technology

Terms and Conditions: (Ref: DES Circular 10/2013 Section 14)

The 'School' in these terms and conditions is Leixlip ETNS

1. The Assistive Technology/Equipment is sanctioned to the School and will, as a general rule, remain the property of the school and be available for allocation to other or subsequent students with similar disabilities.
2. Where the equipment is of a specialised and individualised nature and may not be suitable for other students in the school it is not efficient that such equipment be retained in the school.
3. Should the student in respect of whom the technology is sanctioned change school, including proceeding to post-primary school, Leixlip ETNS will consult with the SENO/ Visiting Teacher with regard to its transfer with the student where it is still appropriate for the students assessed needs.
4. Retention of technology in the school may be considered in certain circumstances outlined in Circular 10/2013 Section 14.
5. Where the school or the student has no further requirement for the equipment, the SENO or visiting teacher in conjunction with the SENO, may allocate it to another school.
6. Leixlip ETNS may contact the school to which the student is transferring while processing any application for Transfer of Equipment.
7. The Board of Management will consider each application for Transfer of Equipment, in respect of any student to whom the technology is sanctioned who is changing school, including proceeding to post-primary school.
8. Following the Transfer of Equipment with a student to another school, Leixlip ETNS will no longer have responsibility for the equipment named in the application.

As the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____ (Student's Name) we/I wish to apply for transfer of the following equipment provided for under the Department of Education and Skills scheme of grants towards the purchase of essential assistive technology equipment for students with physical or communicative disabilities, to

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

School Contact Number: _____

Make and Serial Number of Equipment: _____

This equipment will be used to continue to support my child in her new school setting.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept the Terms and Conditions of this application as determined by Leixlip ETNS.

Name of Student: _____ Class: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Appendix B - Student / Parent Contract for Use of Assistive Technology

Student / Parent Contract for Use of Assistive Technology

We use assistive technology to help everyone learn and do their best. This contract will help us remember how to use our devices responsibly and respectfully.

1. Use Technology for Learning

I will use my device to help me learn, listen, read, write, and complete my work.

2. Be Kind and Respectful

I will treat my device with care and use it in a way that helps me and others. I will not use it to distract myself or my classmates.



3. Keep It Safe

I will carry and store my device carefully and follow my teacher's instructions about where and when to use it.

I will ensure that my assistive technology is not near any food or drinks.

4. Follow School / Classroom Rules

I will only use assistive technology tools e.g. apps that my teacher has approved. I will ask for help if I am unsure

5. Use My Own Device

I will not touch or use someone else's assistive technology unless I have permission.

I will not allow other students to use my assistive technology. I will ask for help if I am unsure about this.

I will only use my own login and passwords and I will keep these details safe.

6. Be Honest and Responsible

If something is not working or is broken, I will tell my teacher right away.

I Promise to Follow This Contract!

I understand that using assistive technology is a privilege, and I will follow these rules to help me use my assistive technology in a safe and responsible way to help me learn.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Agreement

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept Leixlip ETNS Assistive Technology Policy.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept Leixlip ETNS Acceptable Use Policy.

I understand that DE sanction of Assistive Technology at primary level has no bearing on RACE accommodations at Post Primary level.

Please note that policies can be viewed on <https://leixlipetns.ie/about/our-policies>

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C - Assistive Technology Home Use Agreement

Assistive Technology Home Use Agreement

This agreement endeavors to ensure the safe custody and handling of the equipment when in the care of the student outside of the school.

Terms and Conditions:

1. The Assistive Technology remains the property of Leixlip ETNS.
2. Should the designated pupil change school, including to post primary, the school will consult with the SENO with regard to the transfer of any approved assistive technology/equipment with the pupil where it is still appropriate for the pupil's assessed needs. The final decision regarding transfer will rest with the Board of Management of Leixlip ETNS.
3. The assistive technology/equipment will be used solely by the designated student and will not be used by or transferred to a third party.
4. The parent / guardian will remind and teach their child to take due care of the assistive technology at all times when handling, transporting and using the equipment.
 - It is not to be left unattended in a public place.
 - It is not to be left unattended in a classroom or other place in the school.
 - All assistive technology leads must be unplugged from sockets and all accessories are to be stored safely and securely when work is complete.
 - It is not to be left in plain view in an unattended or unsecured vehicle but kept out of sight in the locked boot.
 - It is not to be interfered with, tampered with or altered by a third party.
5. The laptop will be used solely to assist with typing skills, completion of homework assignments and other school related activities. Only school approved software packages/applications may be used.
6. The designated student will have use of the assistive technology each evening from Monday to Thursday during school terms and it is to be returned to the school on Fridays for safekeeping over the weekends.
7. The assistive technology must be returned to the school in good working order on or before the last day of the school year or earlier if requested by the School.
8. The assistive technology is covered under school insurance, however, the parent /guardian must take reasonable care to avoid damage or loss.
9. Use of the assistive technology and including all internet usage will be supervised by a parent / guardian and will be of an appropriate nature to ensure students are not exposed to inappropriate material.
10. The School will make regular checks to update the assistive technology and also to check for inappropriate use.
11. The assistive technology will be used lawfully and in accordance with the school's Acceptable Use Policy regarding the ethical use of technology, use of legal software, use of the Internet and the protection of personal data. The parent / guardian shall agree to review and adhere to the current School Acceptable Use Policy, specifically where this policy relates to the safe and appropriate use of approved IT equipment such as laptops.
12. The following is deemed by the School as being completely unacceptable and will result in the equipment being reclaimed:
 - Accessing, transmitting or receiving inappropriate content

- Engaging in cyber cheating or plagiarism (taking material created by others and presenting it as if it were one's own)
- Engaging in cyber bullying
- Downloading or loading software or applications that are not approved by the school

13. The assistive technology will be kept in good working order. All faults, defects or malfunctions while in the care of the student are to be reported to the Principal or Class Teacher who will inform the teacher with responsibility for the servicing and upkeep of the assistive technology.
14. Any repairs necessary due to damage caused to the assistive technology while in the care of the student will be arranged by the school and paid for by the parent / guardian of the pupil.
15. The assistive technology will not be sold, assigned, transferred or otherwise disposed of.
16. Any assistive technology markings, tags or plates or engravings will not be removed, concealed or altered. The assistive technology must not be marked in any way that might reduce its value.
17. If the assistive technology is lost, stolen or damaged the parent / guardian will advise the Principal and the Gardaí as soon as possible orally and in writing including all relevant details, record of events etc.
18. Due to current software licensing arrangements covering home use, the assistive technology package cannot be used for any commercial purpose.
19. If any of these terms or conditions are breached, the School Board of Management may at any time revoke this arrangement.

Please note: The School's Assistive Technology and Acceptable Use Policy can be viewed on <https://leixlipetns.ie/about/our-policies>

Agreement for Signing by Pupil and Parent
Re: Home Use of School Owned Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology Make and Serial Number: _____

Value of equipment at time of purchase : _____

I confirm that I accept responsibility for taking into my possession Assistive Technology which is the property of Leixlip ETNS Roll Number: 20526D after school on weeknights when my child requires it.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept the Terms and Conditions attached to this agreement.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept Leixlip ETNS Assistive Technology Policy.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept Leixlip ETNS Acceptable Use Policy.

Name of Student: _____ **Class:** _____ **Teacher:** _____

Signature of Student: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature of Principal: _____