

Acceptable Usage Policy

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. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school's AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed. The Board of Management will review the AUP regularly. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

Our School's Strategy

The Internet and digital media can help our pupils learn, create and communicate in ways that we would never have imagined in our youth. The online world is very much part of their lives, they are “growing up digitally” with technology embedded in every aspect of their lives. Digital literacy skills are key life skills for children and young people today. 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; know to respect copyright and intellectual property and know where to get help if problems arise. The Internet is a valuable teaching and learning tool. It can develop children's independent research skills and promote lifelong learning. The school employs several strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. The school's policy is to seek opportunities across the curriculum to reinforce online safety messages.

Security Measures

- Internet use by children in school will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software such as the Schools Broadband Programme will be used in order 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, web hosting, and security services. These services are managed by the NCTE working closely with the Department of Education and Science 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.
- Students and teachers will be provided with training and information in the area of Internet safety. (e.g. www.webwise.ie)
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.

- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of memory sticks or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Children are expected to respect computers, hardware, and software and not to intentionally waste limited resources in school such as paper or ink.
- 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

- Students will use the Internet in school for educational purposes only.
- In the event of a child accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the student will immediately minimise 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 Co-coordinator.
- A list of appropriate websites will be made available to every teacher. Also, a list of educational websites will be saved in the favourites folder on the school computers.
- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies, is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- Students 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.

Chromebooks, laptops and computers

- Students should never leave their device unattended when in use.
- Students should follow the teacher's instructions accessing only the applications to which the teacher has agreed.
- Students require permission before sending any form of electronic message.
- Audio or vision taken at school cannot be transmitted, broadcast or transferred without the teacher's permission.

- The camera and audio recording functions may only be used under the teacher's direction.
- Identity theft (pretending to be someone else) is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- In the event of a child accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the student will immediately minimize the page and report the incident to the class teacher without attracting the attention of other students.
- Devices must be handled with care at all times.
- Any damage to the device must be reported immediately to the teacher.

Email

- Students may use approved email accounts under supervision by or with permission from the class teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Children are not allowed to access their own email accounts in school.
- 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 only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school.

Legislation

Information is available on the Internet on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

School Website - www.gortskehy.com

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish work on the school website.
- Personal pupil's information (full name, address etc) will be omitted from the school web pages.
- Pupil's first name in relation to work, achievements, projects etc. may be included on the school website.
- Pupils will continue to own copyright on any work published. The website will be checked regularly to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.

Gortskehy NS Facebook page

The purpose having of a school Facebook page is to provide:

- Communication with parents regarding specific events & activities
- Communication with new or prospective parents
- Communication with wider audience regarding positive advertisement of school, promotion of school & enrolment dates
- Communication with a wider audience of school life via possible communication tours - photos of pupil's projects, notice boards, etc.
- Communication between parents especially new parents
- Continued advancement of our school communication system with information shared via paper notes, email, website & now Facebook.

Gortskehy NS Twitter account - Gortskehy NS @gortskehy

The purpose having of a school Twitter account is to provide:

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

Personal Devices

- From time to time, as permitted by the class teacher, pupils can bring their own electronic devices to school. Pupils using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages or the unauthorised taking of images with a mobile phone camera, still or moving is in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- All personal devices are to be turned off during school hours.

Cyber-bullying

Harassing, blaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyber-stalking are all examples of cyber-bullying. Such bullying will not be tolerated in Gortskehy NS.

We advise the following:

- Our students 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 result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges.
- In some cases, cyber-bullying is a crime.
- Remember that your activities are monitored and retained.

The school will support students, teachers and parents in dealing with cyberbullying.

Gortskehy NS is committed to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Circular 0065/2011) and will act as required by the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the Department of Justice and Equality and the Health Service Executive.

Staff

- The Internet is available for Staff personal and professional use. Personal use of the Internet should not occur during class time.

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.
- From time to time parents will receive information and advice regarding Internet safety in the home.

Sanctions

- Some material available on the Internet is unsuitable for children and therefore the guidelines in this policy must be adhered to at all times. Access to the Internet will be withdrawn from pupils who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use. Internet access in school includes a strict filtering service yet no filtering service is completely foolproof.
- Procedures are in place should a child accidentally access inappropriate material and also should a child deliberately abuse the use of the Internet in school.
- Intentional misuse of the Internet will 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.
- All of these sanctions are in line with our school's discipline policy.

Implementation Date:

This policy has been reviewed regularly and this current policy was reviewed in March 2022.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____