

# Acceptable Use Policy for ICT



**Introductory Statement:** This policy updates the previous school AUP taking cognisance of the need to provide for Distance Learning.

This policy was updated in October 2020 to include procedures around the safe and acceptable use of digital technology for distance learning during the enforced school closure due to Covid 19 pandemic. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to indicate that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

The principal aim of this policy is to give guidance and direction for the acceptable use of ICT for teaching and learning and communication as appropriate for all members of the school community (ie pupils, staff, parents and approved visitors/speakers etc) who have access to, and who are users, of ICT in St. Colman's. The provision of ICT resources and access to the Internet supports teaching and learning in St. Colman's, with rights and responsibilities for all users.

**Rationale for this policy:** St. Colman's recognises that access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gives our pupils and school community enhanced opportunities to learn, engage, communicate and develop skills that will prepare them for many aspects of life as well as enhancing the learning experience for both pupils and staff. To that end, the school provides access to ICT and the internet to pupils and staff. This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviours that pupils, parents, staff and approved visitors/speakers etc are expected to follow when using ICT technologies for curricular and any other school related activities.

St. Colman's uses many forms of ICT to support the implementation of the curriculum including (i) access to the Internet, (ii) use of desktop computers/laptops/tablet devices, digital imaging equipment and recording devices etc.(iii) Distance learning platforms eg SeeSaw. The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all online and offline technologies used in the school, not just those specifically mentioned.

**The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that the school community will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school's ICT resources including Digital Learning platforms and the internet, in a safe and effective manner.**

When using ICT in St. Colman's, all members of the school community are expected:

- To take good care of all school ICT equipment and use it responsibly in accordance with school policy.
- To treat other users with respect at all times
- To respect the right to privacy of all members of the school community,
- To respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources.
- Not to engage in behaviours or misuse ICT resources in a manner that would bring the school into disrepute.

*St. Colman's implements the following strategies to promote the safe use of the internet:*

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of the SPHE curriculum. This includes but is not limited to Stay Safe Lessons and My Selfie/Webwise resource and internet safety resources from Webwise etc.
- As part of the school's Anti Bullying Awareness Initiative (reference Anti-Bullying Policy) workshops for pupils on Online Safety and Cyber Bullying are organised for pupils and parents on an annual basis.
- Safer Internet Day will be acknowledged in Senior Classes in February each year.
- School staff will be provided with continuing professional development in the area of internet safety and online communication and ICT technologies.

**Legislation and Regulation- the following legislation and Department circulars are relevant to Internet Safety.**

- **The Education Act (1998)**
- **Education Welfare Act (2000)**
- **Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)**
- **Children First Act (2017)**
- **Data Protection Act 1998** - this act was passed in order to deal with privacy issues arising from the increasing amount of information kept on a computer about individuals.
- **Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003** - this amendment extends the data protection rules to manually held records and also makes improvements to the public's right to access data.
- **Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998** - this act legislates against anyone who knowingly produces, prints, publishes, distributes, exports, imports, shows, possesses or sells child pornography.
- **Interception Act 1993** – this act stipulates that telecommunication messages can be intercepted for the purpose of an investigation of a serious offence. Authorisations are subject to certain conditions.
- **Video Recordings Act 1989** - this act prohibits the distribution of videos which contain obscene or indecent material which may lead to the depravation or corruption of the viewer.
- **Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000** – this act governs copyright in Ireland.
- **DES Guidance on the Continuity of Schooling for Primary Schools**
- **DES Guidance on for Primary Schools On Remote Learning in a COVID -19 context.**
- **DES Guidance on the Continuity of Schooling: Supporting Children at Very High Risk**

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies include but are not limited to the following:

#### **Use of the Internet**

- Pupils will be taught specific lessons on on-line safety by teachers. (Webwise/Stay Safe/Lessons for Internet Safety week)

- Pupils will use the school's internet connection only for educational activities with the permission of and under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff.
- Pupils will not intentionally attempt to visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials – pupils must report accidental accessing of any inappropriate sites etc to their teacher immediately.
- Pupils will not knowingly upload, download or otherwise transmit material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person
- Pupils will not engage in online activities such as uploading or downloading large files.
- Downloading by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their specific area of study is only allowed under the supervision of and expressed permission of a teacher.
- Pupils will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving any information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity or security reasons.
- The school takes every reasonable precaution to provide for online safety, but it cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites either deliberately or inadvertently.

### **Distance Learning**

- In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers may use SeeSaw, Zoom, (or other platforms approved by the Principal) as platforms....the "Online Platforms" to assist with remote teaching where necessary.
- The school has signed up to the terms of service of the Online Platforms in use by the school.
- The School has enabled the most up to date security and privacy features which these Online Platforms provide.
- For video/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 pupil logging on to the call, permission is assumed.
- Parents/guardians must also agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons conducted on the Online Platforms as outlined in St. Colman's NS School Policy for Remote Learning.

### **Web Browsing and Downloading**

St. Colman's has content filtering at **Level 4** of the Schools Broadband Network Content Filter.  
Pupils must only browse the internet under the direction and supervision of a teacher.

### **Social Media**

- Pupils must not use social media or the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, school staff or other members of

the school community. This applies to both in school online communication and outside of school online communication.

- Pupils must not post or share personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the St. Colman's community on social media.
- Pupils must not seek to 'friend' any member of school staff using any social media facility.
- The use of all instant messaging services or apps including Snapchat, Whatsapp, etc. by pupils is strictly forbidden in school or on any school devices.
- Access to blogs such as Word Press and Glogster etc. is allowed in St. Colmans for educational use only under the guidance and permission of teaching staff.
- Access to video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is allowed for educational purposes only with guidance and permission of teaching staff.
- Pupils must not engage in activities involving social media or any form of communications technology, which might bring St. Colmans' into disrepute.
- Pupils must not represent their own personal views as being those of St. Colmans on any social medium.

### **Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices**

Pupils are not permitted to have mobile or electronic devices on the school premises or on out-of-school or extracurricular activities.

### **Recording of Images & Video**

Pupils must not share images, videos or other content online which could be deemed harmful to another member of the school community either in school or out of school. The school permits the recording of images and videos of pupils and school activities using *school digital cameras and school iPads* only. Pupils may also take photos or videos on school grounds when participating in school activities using the school digital camera or school iPad as directed by teacher.

Pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of any member of the St. Colman's community except with the permission of the teacher / member of the school community.

### **Cyberbullying**

The school adheres to the *DES Procedures for Anti Bullying for Primary & Post Primary Schools* definition of **bullying 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 even when it happens outside the school. Additionally, the posting of an offensive comment online is considered as cyberbullying, due to its potential to be circulated to many users.** Such incidents of cyberbullying will be dealt with under the St. Colman's Anti-Bullying Policy.

- Pupils are expected to treat others with respect at all times when using any form of communications technology either as part of school-based learning or for personal use outside of school
- Awareness of and the prevention of cyber bullying is an integral part of St. Colman's Anti-Bullying policy.

- Engaging in online activities with the intention to harm, harass, or embarrass another pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

### **School Website**

St. Colman's hosts a website, which provides information to the school community on many aspects of school life including curricula and extra-curricular. It also provides information and access to school policies and procedures and as such is an important point of reference for parents, pupil, staff and management.

The website also provides a platform for highlighting the educational activities and achievements of pupils and staff. The school website uses photographs/video/other multimedia to compliment written articles on the website. The school website operates under the authority of the BOM and is managed by a member/s of the school staff on behalf of the school.

- Permission is obtained from parents/ guardians at during the Admissions process (see Acceptance of School Policies Form) to allow photographs of their child/ren to be published on the school website.
- Pupils without website permission may be asked by teacher to step out of photographs/videos etc that are intended for the school website. Such pupils and/or their schoolwork may be photographed for internal school display only.
- Pupils who do not have parental permission for their image or work to be uploaded onto the school website will be identified via the Aladdin School Management System.

### **Pupils Work and the School's Website**

Pupils may have the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the school website as deemed appropriate by teacher – this work will be uploaded by a designated staff member. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published on the school website. St. Colmans' will not publish the full names of pupils alongside images or videos posted on the school website –only first names will be used.

### **Sanctions for the Misuse of ICT and Internet by pupils**

The misuse or unlawful use of the Internet or ICT equipment during school /class time by pupils will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour, Anti Bullying Policy, and Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices Policy. Sanctions will include written warnings, withdrawal of access and privileges to ICT and other school related privileges and, in extremely serious cases, suspension or expulsion.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal or inappropriate activities to the relevant statutory authorities ie Gardaí, TUSLA, Office of the Data Commissioner etc.

### **Acceptable Use Policy For Parents/Guardians & Parents' Association**

- Parents/Guardians must not use social media or the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, other members of the school community.

- Parents/Guardians or other visitors to the school should not upload images or videos featuring pupils or staff of St. Colman's to any social media platform. This includes images from in- school concerts, events etc.
- Parents/Guardians must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of any member of St. Colman's community without their expressed permission.
- Parents/Guardians must not engage in activities involving social media or any form of communications technology, which could bring St. Colman's into disrepute.
- Parents/Guardians should ensure that their child/ren adhere to the minimum age requirements for the use of messaging services and social networks.

**IMPORTANT NOTE : Parents/Guardians are expected to take responsibility for their child's use of ICT and electronic devices (including mobile phones) and should monitor their child/ren's online behaviour outside of school.**

School authorities cannot be responsible for pupil online behaviour that arises outside of the school environment. However, the school will co-operate in so far as is possible with parents/guardians in dealing with reports of inappropriate online incidents that impact on the wellbeing of pupils and/or staff. Such matters will be dealt with in so far as is deemed necessary under the school Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

St. Colman's will, where possible, inform parents/guardians of reported incidents of inappropriate online behaviour.

**Parents' Association: Acceptable Use Policy for PA Social Media**

All content posted by the PA must abide by copyright, child protection legislation, privacy and data protection law. The PA will not use the Facebook site, page or groups to express personal opinions or create, transmit, display publish or forward any material that is likely to harass, cause offence to any person or bring the school into disrepute.

**Acceptable Use Policy For School Staff & Authorized Visitors/Outside Agencies**

**Email and Messaging**

- Staff members are provided with an email address \_\_@stcolmansns.com via Google Suite for Education account. Staff members are responsible for password protecting their school email accounts.
- Staff must ensure that their \_\_@stcolmansns.com email address is used for professional purposes only.
- Staff must not use school email addresses to set up personal/social media accounts.

**Internet Access/Web Browsing and Downloading**

- Teachers must always supervise access to the Internet by pupils in St. Colman's and websites should always be previewed before presentation to the class.

Where teachers seek to integrate a web page into a lesson, the web page must be fully previewed/evaluated to screen for inappropriate content, imagery, and text.

- Staff must ensure that school WiFi, Aladdin Pupil Management System and network administrator passwords are not disclosed to pupils or non-staff members.
- Use of the internet by staff members or authorised school visitors/agencies to access or download offensive or inappropriate material is strictly prohibited at all times. Staff or authorised school visitors/agencies is not permitted to alter the school broadband filtering preferences in any form or manner.
- Staff members may access the internet for personal purposes outside of pupil-teacher contact time only.
- Teaching practice students, transition year pupils or adults or students on a work experience/ placement may only have access to the computer facilities with the permission of their mentor or supervising class teacher. All teaching practice and placement students must adhere to St. Colman's Acceptable Use policy.

### **Recording of Images & Video**

Staff will only use school digital cameras and school iPads/other school ICT equipment for the recording of images and video of pupils for school related purposes. *Staff will not take photos or video pupils or school activities on personal mobile phones.*

### **Social Media**

Staff and authorised school visitors/agencies must not use social media or the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, school staff, or other members of the school community.

School staff and authorised school visitors/agencies must not post or share personal information, use, share, publish or distribute images about pupils, staff and other members of St. Colman's school community on any form of social media sites etc.

Staff and authorised school visitors/agencies must not engage in activities involving social media or any form of communications technology which might bring St. Colman's into disrepute.

Staff and authorised school visitors/agencies must not represent their own personal views as those of being of St. Colman's on any social medium.

All school staff should take appropriate measures to manage their online privacy and professional reputation while engaging with social media on a personal basis. (see Webwise.ie and INTO.ie for specific advice on this)

Staff authorised school visitors/agencies will adhere to the school guidelines on the use of personal Mobile Phones & Electronic Devices during the school day.

### **School Website and affiliated Social Media sites.**

- The school's website address is: [www.stcolmansns.com](http://www.stcolmansns.com)

- Students will be given the opportunity to have photos, projects, artwork and other work relating to curricular and extra-curricular school activities published on the school website as per the consent form.
- Personal information relating to the student including their full name, home address and contact details will not be included on school social media or the school's website.
- Photos/Videos may be used for the production of specific school events e.g. Communion, concerts etc. These photos/videos and the photos/videos on our website should not be copied or posted to any social media or other website or published in any way.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested not to "tag" photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested to ensure that online messages and/or comments to the school's websites are respectful. Any messages written digitally are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
- The Leadership Team will review the content of the website and the social media sites regularly.
- If any parent or guardian has any concern about the appropriateness of the content of the website or social media sites, then the Board asks that the matter be brought to the attention of the Principal as a matter of urgency.
- This Policy should be read in conjunction with our Data Protection Policy.

### **Personal Devices**

- Students may not use any personal device with recording or image taking capability while in school or on a school outing. Any such breach of the Acceptable Use Policy. (AUP) will be sanctioned accordingly.
- Any images or recordings taken by class teachers on smartphones or other personal devices must be downloaded to the school App/relevant school affiliated website and then immediately deleted from source.
- The use of E-readers may be permitted, under the supervision of the teacher. All personal devices are to be turned off during school hours.

### **Support structures and Education**

- The school will keep students and parents/guardians of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.
- The school will run a programme on acceptable internet usage, for students and parents/guardians on a regular basis. This may happen on a face to face or remote capacity. This will cover several topics including cyber-bullying.
- Staff will regularly partake in Continuous Professional Development in relation to the development of AUPs, internet safety and cyber-bullying.
- Staff will be kept informed of changes to the policies and practices relevant to this policy.

### **Use of Information Communication Technology ("ICT") Resources**

St. Colman's National School's information and technology resources (e.g. e-mail, computers, computer applications, networks, internet, photocopier, facsimile, phone and other wireless communications devices, telephone etc. are school property and are provided solely for school related activities.

Inappropriate use including hacking, pirating software, using school resources for non-school commercial activities, soliciting, distributing literature for outside entities, disclosing confidential information of the school, sending inappropriate e-mail or accessing inappropriate web sites (such as those advocating hate or violence, containing sexually explicit material promoting illegal activities), or using school resources in a way that violates the letter or spirit of the school's policies or reflects negatively on the school is forbidden.

Users of the school's information and technology resources must not share passwords. If you allow others to use your password or assigned resource, you will be held responsible for their use.

Consistent with national laws, the Board of Management reserves the right to monitor the use of its information and technology resources and to take appropriate disciplinary actions, or denying future access privileges in cases of misuse. Staff/student use of the school's information and technology resources constitute consent to such monitoring. All such monitoring will be conducted in accordance with law including, where applicable, the EU's General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR").

### **Sanctions**

- Misuse of the Internet or any activity which is in contravention with this Policy, may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, and, where appropriate, suspension or expulsion **in line with the Code of Behaviour**.
- The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.
- Access to the Internet will be withdrawn from students who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use.

This policy will be circulated to all new pupils on enrolment to the school and will also be available on the school website.

Parents/Guardian will be expected to sign the permission slip – See Appendix 1

### **Internet Safety Advice**

Useful websites for further information on online and communications technology.

- [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) (Information on Various Forms of Internet Usage)
- Get With it (Parents Guide to Cyberbullying)
- [www.iab.ie](http://www.iab.ie) (Internet Advisory Board)
- [www.esafety.ie](http://www.esafety.ie) (Internet Safety Seminars for Schools/Parents)
- [www.ncte.ie](http://www.ncte.ie) (Information on ICT in Education)
- [www.saferinternetday.ie](http://www.saferinternetday.ie) (includes information on Safer Internet Day)

### **Links with other School Policies**

This policy is linked to the following school policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Behaviour policy,

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Data Protection Policy,
- Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policies.

The Board of Management ratified this policy at its meeting on 21st October 2020

**Signed:** *Mary Hughes*

Chairperson of Board of Management  
Management

**Signed:** *Mary Garvey*

Principal/Secretary to the Board of

**Date:** *21<sup>st</sup> October 2020*

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