



**Cherrywood  
Educate Together  
National School**

## ***Acceptable Use Policy***

Ratified by the Board of Management: December 2020

Review Date: 2023

<b>Contents</b>	
Introduction	1
ICT and Internet access in school	1
School Strategies	3
General	3
World Wide Web	4
Email	4
Web 2.0	5
School Website and Social Media Including Digital Learning Platforms	6
Images of children	6
Mobile Phones / Electronic Devices	7
Legislation	8
Support Structures	8
Sanctions	8
Appendix one: Permission slip for use of photos	10

## **Introduction**

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) 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 at school is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions, as outlined in the AUP, will be imposed.

This version of the AUP was created in September 2020 following collaboration between staff and parents. The policy has been heavily informed by other documents from other schools and from the Irish Primary Principal's Network (IPPN). The AUP will be reviewed on a regular basis by school and parent representatives. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully, to indicate that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

## **ICT and Internet access in school**

Information and communication technology (ICT) has brought profound changes to almost all aspects of our lives in recent years. It has transformed activities as basic as how we work, communicate with each other, treat illnesses, travel, shop and enjoy our leisure time. It has also impacted hugely on education and schools. ICT and internet access have opened up a whole new world of teaching and learning in schools. While they should never replace teacher/student contact, online and digital learning platforms can provide an extra dimension to how schools operate. This is particularly important during times when schools may need to close unexpectedly for indefinite periods of time.

The internet is an essential element for education, business and social interaction. Internet use is part of the curriculum and a necessary tool for education. Providing access to the Internet in school will raise educational standards and support the professional work of staff. Teachers and pupils will have access to web sites worldwide, for example, museums, art galleries offering educational resources, news and current events. There will be opportunities for discussion with experts in many fields and to communicate and exchange information with students and others worldwide.

In addition, staff will have the opportunity to access educational materials and good curriculum practice, to communicate with the advisory and support services, professional associations and colleagues; exchange curriculum and administration data with other schools and educational centres.

The internet may also be used to enhance the school's management information and business administration systems.

This Acceptable Use Policy will address all rights, privileges, responsibilities and sanctions associated with access to and use of the internet in Cherrywood ETNS.

## School Strategies

This policy has been drawn up in order to protect the children from the risks associated with the internet while they are at school or engaging in online distance learning. Parents and Guardians are advised however that while the children may be given internet-based homework assignments from time to time, the school take no responsibility for the internet usage of the students while they are outside school. It is important that all parents and guardians monitor their own child's internet usage at home and ensure that their children are aware and respectful of the risks involved.

Due to the international scale and linked nature of information available via the Internet, it is not possible to guarantee that particular types of material will never appear on a computer screen. *Neither the school nor Board of Management can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences thereof.* Any intentional incorrect use of the internet by a student will be dealt with using the steps of the Code of Behaviour. The Child Protection Risk Assessment will also be updated and steps will be put in place to ensure it cannot happen again.

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

### General

- All staff and any other adults involved in supervising children accessing the Internet, will be provided with this Acceptable Use Policy, and will have its importance explained to them.
- Parents' attention will be drawn to the Acceptable Use Policy on enrolment of their child in the school. The policy will be published on our school website.
- Access to internet will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Broadband will be installed by the Dept. of Education & Science and a centrally managed service will be provided to all schools through the NCTE which will include filtering, website blocking, web content blocking, anti-virus and anti-spam controls. **(Note: The Internet from the NCTE is not in place yet and Cherrywood ETNS is getting its internet from a SIM card router temporarily. No child will be given access to the internet on a personal device while this temporary arrangement is in place.)**
- Up-loading and down-loading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Students, parents and staff are advised to visit [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) for information on the safe usage of the internet.
- The use of any form of removal storage or other digital storage media (such as memory sticks, CD-ROMs etc.) requires a teacher's permission.
- Teachers using interactive whiteboards and projectors must be particularly vigilant and must preview the material being presented in order to ensure that it is age appropriate and adheres to the conditions of this AUP.
- Students should never attempt to upload or download software, music or videos without the prior permission of a staff member.

- Students will practise good 'netiquette' (i.e., etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute or harm themselves. Good netiquette will be demonstrated to the children through activities on [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie).
- It is important that parents/ guardians and pupils are aware of our Anti-Bullying Policy in relation to social media.

### World Wide Web

- All websites accessed must be approved by the teacher.
- Neither pupils or staff (including people employed by the school/contractors etc.) may visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials. Any breach will be dealt with by the Board of Management's disciplinary procedures and/or child protection procedures. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.
- Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will use the internet for educational purposes only during class times.
- Students will be taught about copyright issues relating to online learning. Students who copy information or images from the Web into their assignments will acknowledge the source.
- 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 usage 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.

### Email

- In Junior Classes (Junior Infants - 2nd class), students will not have access to email facilities at school. Any emails to other children/schools will be sent through the school email address.
- In Senior Classes (3rd - 6th), students will use approved class email accounts under the supervision of or with permission from a teacher.
- Explicit permission from parents must be given before any email address is used.
- Students will only use their school email addresses to send emails from school.
- Students will not send any material that is illegal, obscene or defamatory, or material that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers, pictures or passwords.

- Students are not permitted to send individual photos by email. Photographs of students involved in group activities will only be sent with the permission of the teacher.
- 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.
- If students have any concerns about the content of any email they receive at school, they should inform a member of staff immediately.

## Web 2.0

Web 2.0 refers to websites which rely on ease of use, user generated material and compatibility with other websites

With the advent of Web 2.0, the internet has become a two-way communication system for the school and the wider community and an invaluable resource for distance learning. Services such as Aladdin, SeeSaw, Facebook, Zoom, Twitter, G Suite, Padlet and other online tools/ social media may be used by the school to communicate with parents and pupils, and also for parents and pupils to communicate with the school. These services, although not owned by Cherrywood Educate Together, form part of our web services and all content that is placed on these services falls under this policy.

The safety of our children on the web is of utmost importance so the following rules apply to the school and parents. Web 2.0 is open to potential dangers when used inappropriately.

- Many social media sites have minimum age requirements. While the school will not monitor this, we would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Twitter, etc. until they are the appropriate age. Many social media sites will be used by teachers in class, for example, Twitter. However, all interactions will be under the supervision of the teacher, and through the teacher's school account.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to regularly check their child's online activity / digital footprint. Parents are encouraged to check social media apps (e.g., Facebook, Snapchat, Zoom, Viber, WhatsApp, Instagram etc) on mobile phones and electronic devices to ensure they are aware of their child's online interaction with others and approve of the same. Please refer to supports at the end of this policy.
- Any online communication with parents/ pupils from the school will be password protected where possible on any online platforms used e.g., Zoom, SeeSaw.
- All members of the school community should respect any online communication, via online platforms e.g., Zoom, G Suite, by not

recording any webinar, conversation, video call etc when engaging in distance learning/ school webinars/ online meetings etc.

- Do not “tag” photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- If you are uploading a photograph to any public website. Ensure that it does not identify anyone else’s child in any way. Please make sure photograph size is kept as small as possible (no bigger than 800x600 pixels)
- Please ensure that online messages and comments to the school are respectful. Any messages written on social media are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
- Avoid any negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts.
- Do not request to “friend” a member of staff in the school. The staff would like to keep their personal lives personal. It may be awkward for a staff member to be asked to ignore a Facebook or other social network request.
- Please do not add advertisements to our wall without prior permission of the principal.
- Failure to keep the above guidelines may result in a permanent ban to our Web 2.0 services and social media accounts.

### School Website and Social Media Including Digital Learning Platforms

- Pupils may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the school website and/or social media accounts including digital learning platforms. e.g., Seesaw
- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated and overseen by a teacher.
- The website/platforms will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff
- Students’ work will appear in an educational context on the school website with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
- Surnames will never be used. The second initial may be used in cases where there are two people with the same first name.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will never be published on the school website/ social media accounts or be visible to other students/ parents on any communications platforms.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

### Images of children

Images of children will only be used with explicit consent from parents/ guardians. Permission obtained from parent/ guardians will last for the duration of the child’s time in the school. (Appendix 1)

- Digital photographs or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website/ social media accounts. Instead photographs and video clips will focus on group activities.
- Parents have the right to get a photo of their child removed at any stage off any digital platform.
- Where a photograph, audio or video clip of a child is published, the children's names will not be used.
- Photographs and video clips should not show children wearing name badges.
- Photos will only be taken on devices owned by the school. Each class teacher will have access to an electronic device where they can take photos of the children throughout the day. These photos will be backed up to a google account controlled by the school, where they will be stored for the duration of that class' time in the school. These photos may be used again for things such as memory books, graduation photos and other celebrations. Access to these accounts will be kept to the absolute minimum number of staff.
- Images may also be used in assessment methodologies by teachers e.g., group targets, social achievements in playtime. Teachers may use these photos in their assessment folder and follow the Data Retention Guidelines as outlined by the Department of Education.
- Each class will have a class blog on Seesaw which will be updated regularly (at least weekly). This is with the aim of creating a bridge between home and school. As a school, we believe it is important that parents are constantly receiving photos of their child's progress in school so they have a clear understanding of the activities their children engage in.
- In the interests of developing a sense of community with the local area and with other schools, and also with the intention of promoting the school the school's Facebook and Twitter account will be updated on a weekly basis. These updates will sometimes include photos of activities the children will have participated with in school. Each parent will be asked to give specific permission for their children to be included in these images.
- Children's names will never be mentioned with their photo.

### Mobile Phones / Electronic Devices

While the children of Cherrywood Educate Together National School are currently all too young to have mobile phones or other electronic devices at school, this will change as the school grows. With that in mind:

- Children in Junior Classes (Junior Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup> class) should never have a mobile phone or other electronic device at school with them.
- In Senior Classes (3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>), we acknowledge that sometimes parents would like children to have a mobile phone. While at school, this should be switched off and in the child's schoolbag.
- All communication between children and parents during the school day should be through the office or the class teacher.
- The school acknowledges the usefulness and practicality of electronic devices and recognises their potential as an educational resource.



- Many features on electronic devices such as Organiser (calendar, calculator, convertor etc) Applications (voice recorder, stopwatch, image editor, video recording) or even Alarms are very useful and may be used under the direction of the class teacher. If and when any such activities take place parents will be notified in advance.
- The unauthorized taking of images with a mobile phone camera or electronic device, still or moving, by a student in school, is in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Usage Policy, and will be addressed using the school's Code of Behaviour.

## Legislation

The following legislation relates to the use of the internet which parents, students and teachers should familiarise themselves with:

- Child Trafficking & Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- The Data Protection Act 2018

## Support Structures

- NCTE - <http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety/>
- Webwise - <http://www.webwise.ie/>
- Make IT Secure - <http://makeitsecure.ie>
- Safe Internet - <http://www.saferinternet.org/ww/en/pub/insafe/>
- Technical Support – [www.techsure.ie](http://www.techsure.ie)
- Parental Advice and Tips - <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/673340-parenting/>

The Information and Advice for Schools NCTE Handbook, Be Wise on the Net, is available in the school.

## Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion as per the school's Code of Behaviour. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

## **Appendix one: Permission slip for use of photos**

Dear parents/ guardians,

Cherrywood ETNS would like to take photos of your children throughout the day. The photos are used for school administration/ assessment, communicating with you as parents what your child is doing in school, and also promoting the school on the internet.

I attach to this letter a permission slip for all the uses of your children's images. They are:

- Photo being used for school administration/ assessment
- Communicating with parents/ guardians through Seesaw (at least weekly)
- Posting school activities publicly on the school website (approx. one post weekly)
- Posting school activities on Facebook/ Twitter account (1 post per week)

This permission slip will last for the duration of your child's attendance in school.

Please sign and return,

Regards,  
Joe

Childs Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree for my child's photo to be used for school administration.

Yes  No

I agree for my child's photo to be used for communication with parents through Seesaw / password protected blog.

Yes  No

I agree for my child's photo to be used on the school's website.

Yes  No

I agree for my child's photo to be used for posting school activities on social media.

Yes  No

Name of Parent/ Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/ Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_