Scoil Muire agus Treasa
Swinford
Co. Mayo
00353 94 92 52055
swinfordps@gmail.com

Swinford NS

Acceptable Use Policy

General Approach

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's digital resources in a safe and effective manner. The responsible use of internet and digital technologies, both online and offline and access is considered an integral part of teaching and learning. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to agreed sanctions will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school staff, parents and pupils will revise the AUP annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

When using the internet students, parents and staff are expected:

- To treat others with respect at all times.

● Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

● Respect the right to privacy of all other members of the school community.

● Respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources

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:

● Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE and Stay Safe curricula.

● Swinford NS participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.

● Internet sessions will be supervised by a teacher

● Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.

● Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.

● The use of personal USB and memory sticks/cards, CD-ROMs/DVDs, or other digital storage media, in school requires a teacher's permission.

● Students will observe good "netiquette"– ie. etiquette on the Internet– at all times, will treat others with respect and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to students who have access to and are users of the internet in Swinford NS .

Misuse of the internet may 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.

Swinford NS will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of students or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases Swinford NS will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed regularly by the following stakeholders:

Board of Management, teaching staff, parents and pupils.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the principal or deputy principal should be informed.

Content Filtering

Swinford NS has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

Level 4 This level allows access to millions of websites including games and YouTube but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the Social Networking category.

Students taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

Internet Use

Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

Students will be encouraged to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.

Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).

Students and staff 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.

Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.

Students will not engage in online activities such as uploading or downloading large files that result in heavy network traffic which impairs the service for other internet users.

Students will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

Students will never disclose or publicise personal information or passwords.

Students will be aware that any usage of the internet and school's digital platform, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, will be monitored.

Use of file sharing and torrent sites is not allowed.

Email and Messaging

Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.

- Students will use approved class email accounts only under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Students should be aware that email communications are monitored.

Students will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or 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 or pictures.

Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.

Students should report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication. Pupils should report any such communications to a teacher.

Social Media and messaging services for Staff and Students

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow us to interact and keep in touch. While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that members of your school community are expected to follow when using social media.

The principles set out in this policy are designed to help ensure that social media is used responsibly so that the confidentiality of pupils and other staff and the reputation of the school is protected.

This policy applies to personal websites such as social networking sites (for example Instagram and TikTok), blogs, mircoblogs such as X, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us and content sharing sites such as flickr and YouTube. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media.

● All social media sites have minimum age requirements. We would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok etc. until they are the appropriate age. This is usually at least 13 years of age. It is illegal to set up an account if you have not reached this age, even with parental permission.

● 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, 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 same.

<u>Parents:</u>

- Please do not "tag" photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.

- If you are uploading a photograph of your child to your social media, please ensure it does not contain other children from Swinford NS.

While photographs at school events are generally permitted we request that they not be shared on any social media.

- 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.

- Please 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.

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Swinford NS :

- Use of blogs such as WordPress, Tumblr etc. is allowed in Swinford NS with express permission from teaching staff.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is with express permission from teaching staff.

All members of the school community must not use social media, messaging services and the internet in any way to harass, impersonate, insult, abuse or defame others.

Staff and students must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Swinford NS community on social media.

Staff and students must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff and students must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Swinford NS into disrepute.

Staff and Students must not represent your personal views as those of bring Swinford NS on any social medium.

Students will be provided with guidance on etiquette regarding social media.

Teachers can read further information about the use of Social Media and Electronic Communication here: https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/2021/guidance-for-registered-teachers-about-the-use-of-social-media-and-electronic-communication.html

Personal Devices

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, smartwatches, in Swinford NS :

The following statements apply to all mobile phones and the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, audio recording devices, smartwatches and digital music players in Swinford NS:

● Pupil's personal mobile phones / smart devices / smart watches with cameras are strictly prohibited in the grounds of Swinford NS and on any school-organised field trips.

● Where a pupil breaks the above rule, the class teacher may confiscate the pupil's device. The device will be placed in an envelope in the office and returned to the child's parent/guardian when they come to sign for it.

● In very exceptional circumstances if a pupil must bring their phone to school, it should be handed into the office first thing in the morning and may be collected at the end of the school day. Permission for this facility is at the discretion of the principal and may be withdrawn at any time, particularly in the event of it becoming a regular occurrence.

● The Board of Management of Swinford NS does not accept any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of pupils' personal devices while they are on school property

Audio, images and video

At Swinford NS pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.

● Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff using school approved devices such as the ipads (never personal devices).

● Pupils must not share images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community.

● Digital photographs, audio and/or video clips that appear on the School website are subject to copyright and cannot be copied and/or used in any other setting without express written permission.

- Digital photographs, audio and/or video clips captured by parents/guardians, family members and friends of groups of children in school, or engaged in any school-related activity, cannot be used on any social media site without express written permission from the parents/guardians of every child in the group.

Inappropriate Activities

- Promotion or conduct of illegal acts, e.g. under the child protection, obscenity, computer misuse and fraud legislation
- Misuse and fraud legislation
- Racist material
- Pornography
- Promotion of any kind of discrimination
- Promotion of racial or religious hatred
- Harmful content or threatening behaviour, including promotion of physical violence or mental harm
- Any other information which may be offensive to colleagues or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the school or brings the school into disrepute
- Using school systems to run a private business
- Use systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards employed by the school
- Uploading, downloading or transmitting commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, without the necessary licensing permissions
- Revealing or publicising confidential or proprietary information (e.g. financial / personal information, databases, computer / network access codes and passwords)
- Creating or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files
- Carrying out sustained or instantaneous high volume network traffic (downloading / uploading files) that causes network congestion and hinders others in their use of the internet
- Online gaming
- Online gambling

- Online shopping
- Use of social networking sites, instant messaging and online forums
- Child sexual abuse material
- Any other activity considered questionable

School Websites

Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.

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

The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.

Webpages allowing comments or user-generated content will be pre-moderated and checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain any inappropriate or offensive content.

Swinford NS will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips of focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.

The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.

Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Swinford NS web pages.

Swinford NS will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named and will not use students' names in image file names or ALT tags if published online.

Cyberbullying

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, Swinford NS considers that posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social media, e-mail, messaging, apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyberbullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyberbullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyberbullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a persons sexuality, appearance etc.

Access to technology means that cyberbullying can happen around the clock and the students home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Students are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. The nature of these technologies means digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and is almost impossible to delete permanently. While cyberbullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can also be felt in school.

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, Swinford NS considers that a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

When using the internet students, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times.

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

Measures are taken by Swinford NS to ensure that staff and students are aware that bullying is defined as targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

In accordance with the Department of Education Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools; Swinford NS considers that a school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

Artificial Intelligence

Swinford NS recognises the potential benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and is committed to its responsible and ethical use within our learning environment.

Learners will not create, share or send any AI generated material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Staff and learners must not use AI in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame learners, their family members, staff, other members of the Swinford NS community

Staff and learners must not engage in activities involving AI generated material which might bring Swinford NS into disrepute.

Permission Form

Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 and Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
- Children First Act 2015
- Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 (Coco's Law)
- Criminal Damage Act 1991

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.

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet and digital technologies should be referred to in the school's Code of Behaviour and Bí Cinéalta Policy and related sanctions regarding misuse as appropriate should be outlined therein. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities, including An Garda Síochana.