



St. Francis Xavier Junior National School Acceptable Use Policy

General Approach

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.
- Promote the beneficial, professional, ethical, lawful and productive use of the schools IT systems and to define and prohibit unacceptable use of the IT systems.
- Educate users about their IT security responsibilities.
- Promote practices to ensure appropriate confidentiality and non-disclosure of the school's sensitive information.

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate consequences, as outlined in the Code of Behaviour, will be imposed

Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood. The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all online technologies and digital learning used in the school, not just those specifically mentioned.

This policy has been developed by a working group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers and representatives of the Board of Management. It is envisaged that school representatives and the Board of Management will revise the AUP annually or as required. Should serious online safety incidents take place, the principal should be informed. The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the principal and members of the Digital Learning Team.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to students, staff, volunteers, parents, carers who have access to and are users of the internet in St Francis Xavier Junior National School .

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.
- Students will use devices for educational purposes, as directed by teachers, during class time.

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:

- 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 external digital storage media in school, requires school permission.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Internet use within school will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Teachers using interactive whiteboards will be particularly vigilant and will preview the material being presented in order to ensure that it is age appropriate and adheres to the conditions of this AUP.
- The strand unit of Media Education in SPHE will focus on internet safety during May and June.
- Staff will undertake Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in relation to the AUP and internet safety.
- The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with harmful use of the internet (Appendix 3).

St Francis Xavier Junior National School will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of students or staff under this policy and associated Code of Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies. In such cases St Francis Xavier Junior National School will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and a resolution will be formulated in line with the school Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Student Internet Use – Mobile Devices

- Students are not allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into St Francis Xavier Junior National School. This includes smart watches that can send and receive messages and/or take photos
- Use of school issued tablets/iPads will be monitored by class teachers.
- Students will use devices for educational purposes, as directed by teachers, during class time.

- The Digital Learning Team/Teachers will decide what apps are appropriate for their class.
- Students must not move away from the app their teacher has opened for them to work on unless they have been instructed by their teacher.
- Students may not access the Play Store or download apps to the tablets.
- Students will be encouraged to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

Personal Safety

- If students see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes them concerned for their personal safety, they should bring it to the immediate attention of a teacher.
- Students should never share personal information about themselves or others, including phone numbers, addresses, PPS numbers and birth-dates over the Internet.
- Students should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life.
- Students must not take, use or share images of or from other students on school online platforms. (Note: General debrief required to staff to enforce)

School Website

- Students may 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.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.
- St Francis Xavier Junior National School 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.
- The St Francis Xavier Junior National School will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.
- Any photo or video uploaded to the internet by the school must contain a minimum of 3 unnamed pupils. Any such photos taken by staff or pupils should be uploaded (if necessary) to the school Drive folder for photos and should always be deleted from personal devices as soon as is practicable.
- 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.
- Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published

Staff Internet Use – School and Personal Devices

The School's e-mail systems are provided for school use. Reasonable personal use is permitted provided it is lawful, ethical and takes place during authorised breaks. The School reserves the right to monitor all e-mail to ensure compliance with policy. E-mail is not a secure method of communication.

- E-mail is admissible evidence in any legal proceedings and carries the same weight as a letter on school headed paper.
- School email accounts may not be used to register for online services such as social networking services, games and purchasing.
- Staff may use their own device on school premises provided it is lawful, ethical and takes place during authorised breaks. Personal mobile devices are, at times, used in a professional capacity as a means of communicating with other staff for time sensitive matters such as supervision and yard duty.
- Use of personal mobile phones by staff on yard duty is not permitted as yard duty is a period of supervision and not an authorized break.
- When using school computers staff must be conscious of what is displayed on screen. This includes only accessing non-work-related websites during authorised breaks.
- Free ad-blocking software is available and should be used to prevent unsuitable advertisements or content being displayed to children on interactive white boards. Recommended use of chromewebstore.google.com.

Social Media and messaging services for Staff and Students

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, microblogs such as Twitter, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia 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.

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in St Francis Xavier Junior National School :

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc. is not allowed in St Francis Xavier Junior National School.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is allowed under direct supervision of staff at certain times in St Francis Xavier Junior National School.
- 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 St Francis Xavier Junior National School 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 St Francis Xavier Junior National School in to disrepute.
- Staff and students must not represent their personal views as those of being from St Francis Xavier Junior National School on any social medium.
- Students will be provided with guidance on etiquette regarding social media in an age appropriate way in line with Internet Safety training.
- 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>

Data Protection Responsibilities

- Staff are personally responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of a student's personal data. Student information should be password protected on all digital sites. For example, ClassDojo, Aladdin, and/or any other online portfolios or sites that require student information.
- Passwords for digital platforms and accounts should not be shared.
- Personal email addresses should not be used when creating accounts on school digital platforms.
- Passwords associated with St Francis Xavier Junior National School, its email system and its Aladdin software should not be 'remembered' on any personal or classroom device.
- Only school devices should be used for the purposes of capturing and storing media.
- All school-related media and data should be stored on the school's platform.
- If student information is put onto a USB, the files on the USB must be encrypted.
- Staff should log off any workstation (CTRL+ALT+DEL) once finished.
- When communicating information about pupils, staff should use codes/abbreviations or numbers, rather than pupil names.
- Every effort should be made to not view information of staff or pupils in public (on public transport or in public places).

Distance Learning

- In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers and SNAs, acting under the direction of teachers, may use a range of online platforms including Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, Seesaw and other platforms approved by the principal to assist with distance teaching and learning.
- 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.
- Staff members will adhere to school guidelines on the use of platforms for live engagement.
- If parents sign up to Google Classroom/Seesaw for their children to engage with teachers then consent is assumed for teachers to engage with their children using these online platforms.
- Sign up to these platforms assumes that Parents/guardians agree to monitor their child's participation in lessons/activities assigned
- Children will be expected to follow school guidelines on online behaviour.

Images and Video

- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that students are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- At St Francis Xavier Junior National School students must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.
- Permission from parents or carers will be obtained at the commencement of each school year via Aladdin before photographs of students are published on the school website. Parents who wish to change the permission during the year must inform the school directly.

Inappropriate Activities

- 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
- Child sexual abuse material

Cyberbullying

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, St Francis Xavier Junior National School 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.

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

Cyber-Bullying

- 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 be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour and AntiBullying Policy.
- Harassing, defaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyberstalking are all examples of cyber-bullying. Such bullying will not be tolerated in St. Francis Xavier Junior National School.

St. Francis Xavier Junior National School is committed to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Circular 0081/2017) and will act as required. The school will support students, teachers and parents in dealing with cyberbullying.

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

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet and digital technologies should be referred to in the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying 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 Síochána.

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the internet and digital technologies. I will use the internet and digital technologies in a responsible way and obey all the procedures outlined in the policy.

Student's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but the school cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites.

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing students' work on the school website.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, and sign and return this permission form to the Principal. An online sign off process is also available using Aladdin.

School Name: Name of Student: _____

Class: _____

Student: _____

Appendix 1

Internet Safety Lessons

Delivered as part of the school SPHE programme in May and June.

Class Lessons 1st/2nd Class Chapters 2, 3, 4 of Webwise Primary Teachers' Handbook

<https://www.webwise.ie/webwise-primary-teachers-handbook-resources/>

Appendix 2

Digital Rules in St Francis Xavier Junior National School.

1. Make sure your desk is clear of any food or drink before using a device.
2. Use the device only as asked to by your teacher.
3. If you see anything online that worries you, let your teacher know immediately.
4. If taking photos for a project, save only your best three. Delete anything else.
5. Leave all apps, folders and wallpapers unchanged.

Appendix 3

The school recommends the following websites, which inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.


- 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/>
- National Parents Council Primary – www.npc.ie
- Webwise Internet Safety- <https://www.webwise.ie/>
- Common Sense Media- <https://www.commonsense.org/education/>

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 19th February 2024 and will be reviewed in June 2026.

Signed: Rachel Lillis

Date: 19/02/2024

Chairperson

Signed: 

Date: 19/02/2024

Principal: on behalf of Heidi Collins