



**Acceptable Use Policy**

**School Name: Scoil Mhuire Náisiúnta Cora Finne**

**Address:  Corofin, Co. Clare**

**Introduction**

Scoil Mhuire Náisiúnta Cora Finne recognises that access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gives our pupils enhanced opportunities to learn, engage, communicate and develop skills that will prepare them for many aspects of life.

To that end, we provide access to ICT for pupil use. We maintain www.corofinns.ie as our school website and tweet at @CorofinNS.

**Aim**

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. It outlines the guidelines and behaviours that our pupils are expected to follow when using school technologies for school activities of any nature. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege; it is not a right. Therefore, if the school’s AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in this AUP – will be imposed.

Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

This version of the AUP was created in November 2021.

**School’s Strategy**

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**

* Internet sessions will always 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.
* The school community will be made aware of internet safety by the provision of talks by qualified speakers periodically.
* 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 personal memory sticks, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher’s permission.
* Pupils will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
* Pupils will not access other people’s files.

**Technologies Covered**

Scoil Mhuire may provide pupils with Internet access, desktop computers, digital imaging equipment, laptop or tablet devices, videoconferencing capabilities, virtual learning environments and more.

The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all online technologies used in the school, not just those specifically mentioned.

**Scoil Mhuire ICT Network/World Wide Web**

The Scoil Mhuire computer network is intended for educational purposes only.

* All activity over the network may be monitored and retained. Access to online content via the network is restricted in accordance with our policies and the Department of Education and Skills through its agency, the National Centre for Technology in Education. Pupils are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution, and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web. If a site is blocked and a pupil believes it should not be, the pupil can ask his/her teacher to submit the site for review. This is done via the Professional Development Service for Teachers Technology filtering service BrightCloud.
* Pupils may 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.
* Pupils 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. Teachers have full editorial rights over the school website and social media account. Pupils will not have access to relevant passwords.
* Pupils are expected to follow the same rules for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline – these rules are found in the Scoil Mhuire’s existing Code of Behaviour.
* Misuse of school resources may result in disciplinary action.
* We make a reasonable effort to ensure pupils’ safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of school technologies.

Pupils are expected to alert his/her teacher immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

**Email**

* Pupils may be permitted to use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
* Pupils may not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
* Pupils may not reveal their own or other people’s personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
* Pupils may never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
* Pupils may note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
* Pupils may not have access to chat rooms, discussions forums, messaging or other electronic communication except under direct supervision of a teacher, and will only be used for educational purposes.
* Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.

**School Website/Social Media Accounts**

* The school website [www.corofinns.ie](http://www.corofinns.ie), twitter account and any relevant changes to future social media usage will be addressed, maintained and updated by authorised personnel.
* Scoil Mhuire uses the website to celebrate the success stories and great achievements of our pupils.
* Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website and social media in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to these platforms.
* The website and social media will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
* The website and social media will be checked frequently to ensure that it does not contain personal details.
* The publication of pupils’ work will be co-ordinated and uploaded by an authorised member of staff.
* Pupils’ work will appear in an educational context on these platforms with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
* The school endeavours to use photographs/video/other multimedia to compliment text content on the school’s website and social media.
* The school endeavours to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual pupils will not be published on the school website or social media without express parental permission provided at the start of the year. (see Scoil Mhuire’s separate Policy on the Use of Pupils’ Images and related consent form in the enrolment pack). Video clips may be password protected.
* No child shall be photographed and named under that photograph specifically if they are the only pupil photographed.
* If a pupil is named in the text, a photograph of that child will not be included.
* Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from the school’s online platforms.
* The school will avoid publishing the full name of individuals in a photograph online.
* The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use pupils’ names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
* Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

**Scoil Mhuire’s own Mobile Devices**

* Scoil Mhuire may provide pupils with mobile computers, digital recorders or other devices to promote learning both inside and outside of the school.
* Pupils should abide by the same Acceptable Use Policy, when using school devices off the school network, as on the school network.
* Pupils are expected to treat these devices with respect. They should report any loss, damage, or malfunction to their teacher staff immediately. Use of school-issued mobile devices will be monitored.

**Mobile devices in the possession of Scoil Mhuire Pupils**

* Pupils may not use personally-owned devices whether electronic recording device or manual recording or any device that is capable of recording video or audio in school (e.g. laptops, tablets computers, digital-cameras, smart-phones etc.) during school hours, unless in emergency situations where a teacher permits the use thereof and/or explicitly stated in notes read and signed by parents/guardians and written by their classroom teacher.

**Scoil Mhuire Security**

* We ask that our pupils use common sense if they think a website does not look ‘right’. They must inform their teacher of any concerns. They must think twice before they click on anything they feel is not right. If they believe a computer or mobile device they are using might be infected with a virus, they must alert their teacher.

**Netiquette**

* Netiquette may be defined as appropriate social behaviour over computer networks and in particular in the online environment. To this end:
* Pupils should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.
* Pupils should also recognise that among the valuable content online is unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content.
* Pupils should not post anything online that they would not want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see.
* More detailed examples of expected use and unacceptable use are given in Appendices 1 and 2.

**Plagiarism**

* Pupils should not plagiarise content (copy or use as your own without citing the original creator), including words or images, from the Internet for inclusion on our school website.
* Pupils may not copy information into assignments without acknowledging the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
* Pupils should not take credit for things they did not create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online.

The school will encourage pupils who create original content to claim ownership of it.

**Personal Safety**

* If pupils see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes them concerned for their personal safety, they must bring it to the immediate attention of:
* a teacher if they are at school.
* a parent / guardian if they are at home.
* Pupils should never share personal information about themselves or others, including phone numbers, addresses, PPS numbers and birth-dates over the Internet without adult permission.
* Pupils should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life without parental permission.
* Pupils’ images will not be shared online (on the Scoil Mhuire website) without explicit expressed permission from their parents.
* Consequently, other pupils must not take, use or share images of or from other pupils in school on school online platforms.

**Cyber-bullying**

Harassing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyber-stalking are all examples of cyber-bullying. Such bullying will not be tolerated in Scoil Mhuire and will be subject to the school’s disciplinary policy. Our pupils 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 pupils, teachers and parents in dealing with cyberbullying.

Scoil Mhuire 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.

**Legislation**

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

* The Children First Act 2015
* Child Trafficking and Pornography Acts 1998 and 2004
* The Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003
* Interception Postal Packages and Telecommunications Messages (Regulation) Act 1993
* Video Recordings Act 1989

**Support Structures**

Information on key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet can be obtained from the school.

**Sanctions**

* Violations of this policy in Scoil Mhuire may have disciplinary repercussions in accordance with the school’s disciplinary policy, including:
* Suspension of computer privileges.
* Notification to parents.
* Detention.
* Suspension from school and/or school-related activities.
* Expulsion.
* The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

**POLICY APPROVAL/RATIFICATION**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire, Cora Finne on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chairperson, Board of Management

**Appendix 1**

**Examples of Expected Use**

I will:

* Use school equipment for school-related activities only.
* Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behaviour online that I am expected to follow offline.
* Treat school resources carefully, and alert teachers if there is any problem with their use.
* Alert a teacher if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, postings) online.
* Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for learning reasons.
* Recognise that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
* Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
* Help to protect the security of school resources.
* This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Pupils should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

**Appendix 2**

**Examples of Unacceptable Use**

I will not:

* Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful to me or others.
* Search inappropriate images or content.
* Engage in cyber-bullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
* Try to find ways to change the school’s safety measures and filtering tools.
* Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
* Plagiarise content (copy, use as their own, without citing the original creator) I find online.
* Post personally identifying information, about myself or others or agree to meet someone I meet online in real life.
* Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
* Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
* Attempt to access sites, servers, accounts, or content that is not intended for my use.
* This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Pupils should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.