

**Belgrove School  
Senior Boys**

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*Principal: Conor Ryan*

### **Internet Acceptable Usage Policy**

Educationalists believe in the benefits of curriculum-based internet use. The purpose of the Internet Acceptable Usage Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources and will be protected from harmful and illegal use of the Internet.

Belgrove Senior Boys' NS will employ a number of strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Education
- Filtering/Monitoring

#### **Pupil Access to the Internet**

The school is pleased to offer the internet as an available resource to both pupils and teachers for reference purposes, researching project materials, playing interactive educational games, using educational Apps, learning to touch-type and for lesson reinforcement. Access to online resources will enable pupils to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards throughout the world.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation for living and working in this information age. The school will integrate such information as appropriate within the curriculum, and staff will provide guidance and instruction to pupils in the appropriate use of such resources, as outlined in this policy. Pupils' use of telecommunications and electronic information will be taught and provided for from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class and will only be permitted upon submission of permission and agreement forms by parents of pupils and pupils themselves. (See Enrolment Form)

1. Pupils will not be given access to the Internet without teacher supervision.
2. Internet will be used for educational purposes only.
3. Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
4. Pupils will seek permission before entering any Internet site, unless previously approved by a teacher.

5. Filtering software will be used to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
6. The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage.
7. Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety.
8. Pupils will be taught to evaluate the content of internet sites.
9. Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues.
10. Uploading and downloading of non-approved material is banned.
11. Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
12. The use of external storage devices in school requires a teacher's permission.
13. Pupils will observe good 'netiquette' (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring a school into disrepute.
14. 'YouTube' (and similar sites) can be accessed only under the supervision and direction of the teacher.

### **Email**

When pupils use email, the following rules will apply:

1. Email will be used for educational purposes only.
2. Students will only use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
3. Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
4. Pupils will only send messages to or from school email with the permission of their teacher.
5. Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details e.g. addresses, telephone numbers, or pictures via school email.
6. Pupils will never arrange to meet someone via school email.
7. Sending or receiving email attachments is subject to teacher permission.

### **Internet Chat**

Students are not permitted to use internet chat rooms.

### **School Website**

Pupils may create projects, artwork, writing or audio-visual recordings which would be suitable for publication on our school's website. Designated teachers will manage the publication of material on the school website adhering to the stipulations below.

1. Personal pupil information, home addresses and contact details will not be published on the school website.
2. Class lists will not be published.
3. Pupils' full names will not be published beside their photograph.

4. Digital photographs, video clips and audio clips will focus on groups and group activities rather than on individual pupils when possible.
5. Pupils will be given an opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the school website.
6. Teachers will select work to be published and decide on the appropriateness of such.
7. Permission to publish a student's work will be sought from pupils/parents/ guardians. This permission may be withdrawn at any time. (See Enrolment Form)
8. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

### **Education and Internet Awareness**

Belgrove Senior Boys' NS will undertake an education programme to educate children on the safe, responsible use of the Internet. Cyber-bullying has become a significant threat for children. Through education and awareness, we aim to limit our children's susceptibility to it as they progress to secondary school. 21<sup>st</sup> century life presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation from which children and young people need to be protected. At the same time, they need to learn to recognise and avoid these risks – to become internet wise.

Resources that may be used to implement this programme include:

- Use of the 'Kids' section on the [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) website

### **Filtering**

The school will use the Internet provided and filtered by the NCTE (National Centre for Technology). 'Filtering' is a term used to describe a way of limiting the content of web pages, emails, chat rooms and other electronic data to which users may be exposed. Belgrove Senior Boys' NS also uses additional filtering software on all our machines, which, while not foolproof, thus filtering pupils' access to the internet further. No filter is 100% accurate. The most effective filtering tool is adult vigilance. At Belgrove Senior Boys' NS, we believe that the advantages to pupils having access to information resources and increased opportunities for collaboration far exceed the risk of disadvantages.

The access to websites from all school devices is monitored and regularly reviewed by the NCTE. Websites are only allowed through following a verification of their suitability.

Many browsers have their own built in filtering tool e.g. Google. Google's search engine has a built-in "Safe Search". This filter eliminates sites that contain pornography and explicit sexual content from search results. It is easily applied by clicking on the **Preferences** link on any Google page. Unfortunately, it is also easily removed.

Windows has a built-in firewall. Firewall software can be purchased or downloaded free from the Internet. Belgrove Senior Boys' NS has installed firewall software.

### **Laptops/iPads/Chromebooks**

Every site that is accessed within the school network or by a school machine is monitored and reports of all access are sent to the management team on a weekly basis. Each laptop/iPad/Chromebook has a number and the children of each class will be designated a specific device. Teachers check computer logs of all information accessed by pupils. An audit of internet usage may be run at any time.

Use of laptop/iPad/Chromebook that travel between home and school are subject to all stipulations, procedures and sanctions outlined in this policy 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Parents of children who have been sanctioned laptops are instructed to be vigilant in monitoring their use in the home, as per procedures for school. Parents of all children are advised to keep laptops in a common area (i.e. kitchen or living room) with the screen visible to others while a child may be on the internet. The use of devices by children in their bedrooms is not recommended.

### **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 our 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 are protected.

This policy applies to personal websites such as social networking sites (for example Instagram and TikTok), blogs, microblogs such as X, 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.

- 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 Belgrove Senior Boys' 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 Belgrove Senior Boys' NS into disrepute.
- Staff and students must not share their personal opinions online in a way that suggests they represent Belgrove Senior Boys' NS.
- 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>

## **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Belgrove Senior Boys' NS recognises the potential benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and is committed to its responsible, ethical, and safe use within our learning environment.

The school will support teachers through training and professional development so they can effectively and confidently use AI tools in their teaching and remain up to date with technological developments.

The selection and use of AI tools in Belgrove Senior Boys' NS will align with our educational goals, supporting learner agency, creativity, critical thinking, and positive learning outcomes. AI technologies may be integrated into teaching and learning to enhance pupils' experiences and support skill development.

The school will regularly review the use and impact of AI on teaching and learning. Adjustments will be made based on feedback and ongoing evaluation to ensure continuous improvement.

### *Ethical and Responsible Use:*

Staff and pupils will receive guidance and instruction on the ethical use of AI. This includes:

- Understanding data privacy and protection
- Recognising potential bias in AI-generated content
- Verifying and fact-checking AI-generated information

All AI tools approved for use in Belgrove Senior Boys' NS will comply with data protection legislation, including GDPR. Entering personal, sensitive, or confidential information into any AI system without appropriate authorisation is strictly prohibited.

### *Acceptable Behaviour:*

Pupils must not create, share, or send AI-generated material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory, or intended to annoy, threaten, or intimidate others.

Staff and pupils must not use AI in any way that harasses, insults, abuses, or defames pupils, their families, staff members, or any member of the school community. AI must not be used in a manner that could bring Belgrove Senior Boys' NS into disrepute.

### *Teaching, Learning, and Attribution:*

The school promotes digital literacy and critical thinking to help pupils understand what AI is, how it works, and how to use it responsibly. This includes learning to question AI outputs, check accuracy, and recognise limitations.

AI-generated material may be used for:

- Research
- Brainstorming ideas
- Revising or improving written work

Use of AI for other activities may be permitted with prior school approval.

When AI-generated text or images are used in assignments or homework, pupils must clearly acknowledge this. Teachers will also attribute AI-generated material when used for teaching purposes.

Where AI is used for research, pupils must:

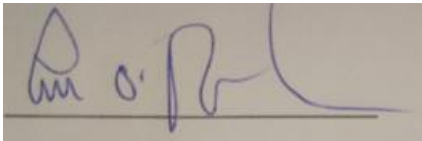
- Fact-check information
- Consult other reliable sources
- Reference sources appropriately

AI systems used in Belgrove Senior Boys' NS will aim to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability in all educational practices.

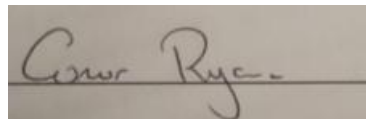
### Sanctions

If a pupil deliberately misuses the internet or email, is found running searches on inappropriate topics or attempting to access inappropriate/unsuitable websites, this will result in disciplinary action, including the withdrawal of access privileges. Parents/guardians will receive notification of misuse by a pupil. Further misuse will result in longer withdrawal of access privileges, as seen fit by the school staff.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026



Signed:  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)



Signed:  
(Principal)

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Date of next review: February 2028.

## Responsible Internet Use - Pupil Undertaking

We use the school computers and Internet connection for learning. These rules will help us to be fair to others and keep everyone safe.

- I will ask permission before entering any website, unless my teacher has already approved that site
- I will not bring external storage devices such as pen drives (or memory sticks/USB keys etc) into school without permission
- I will not use email for personal reasons
- I will only use email for school projects and with my teacher's permission
- The messages I send will be polite and sensible
- When sending email, I will not give my home address or phone number or arrange to meet anyone
- I will ask for permission before opening an email or an email attachment
- I will not use internet chat rooms
- If I see anything I am unhappy with, or if I receive a message I do not like, I will tell a teacher immediately
- I know that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the sites I visit
- I understand that if I deliberately break these rules, I could be stopped from using the Internet and computers and my parents will be informed.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ Pupil(s)

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

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