



Gardiner Street Primary School

Acceptable Use Policy

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 is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school's AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

When using the internet, pupils, 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.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to:

1. Pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in Gardiner Street Primary School.
2. Members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in Gardiner Street Primary School.
3. To all school personnel who use digital tools in remote teaching and learning.

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.

Gardiner Street Primary School implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in Gardiner Street Primary School through online programs such as WebWise.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Gardiner Street Primary School provides Internet safety sessions with Zeeko.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.
- Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).

- Internal monitoring data for network activity. Should serious online safety incidents take place, the principal will be informed.

The implementation of this internet Acceptable Use Policy will be monitored by the Digital Team.

The Board of Management will review the AUP regularly. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

Our School's Strategy

Digital literacy skills are key life skills for children and young people today and the internet is a valuable teaching and learning tool. It can be used to develop children's independent research skills and promote lifelong learning. The internet and digital media can help our pupils learn, create and communicate in ways that we would never have imagined in our youth. The online world is very much part of their lives, they are "growing up digitally" with technology embedded in every aspect of their lives. Digital literacy skills are key life skills for children and young people today. They need to be media savvy and know how to effectively search for and evaluate online content; know how to protect personal information and reputation; know to respect copyright and intellectual property and know where to get help if problems arise. The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the internet. The school's policy is to look for opportunities across the curriculum to reinforce online safety messages.

Security Measures

- Internet use by children in school will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software such as the Schools Broadband Programme will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material. Gardiner Street Primary School has chosen to implement Level 4 on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network. This level gives access to millions of websites including games and 'YouTube'. This level blocks websites that are categorized as "personal", such as blogs and Social Networking e.g. Facebook.
- Pupils 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
- The Irish Schools Broadband Programme provides an integrated set of services to schools which includes broadband connectivity and services including content filtering, webhosting, and security services. These services are managed by the NCTE working closely with the Department of Education and Science and are coordinated and supported by the NCTE Service Desk which is the single point of contact for schools for all broadband related issues, providing information, advice and support to schools. We also get support from Educom.
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage. Teachers will supervise all internet use and will monitor search history on school devices.
- Students and teachers will be provided with training and information in the area of internet safety (e.g. Zeeko, www.webwise.ie).
- 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 memory sticks or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Children are expected to respect computers, iPads, laptops, Chromebooks, hardware, and software and not to intentionally waste limited resources in school such as paper or ink.
- Students will observe good "netiquette" (etiquette on the internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

Use of the Internet

- Students will use the internet in school for educational purposes only.
- In the event of a child accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the student will immediately minimize the page and report the incident to the class teacher without attracting the attention of other students. The teacher should report the incident to the ICT Post Holder.
- A list of appropriate websites will be made available to every teacher. Also, a list of educational websites will be saved in the favourites folder on the devices.
- Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.
- 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 use 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.
- Use of file sharing and torrent sites is not allowed.

When using the internet, pupils, 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.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities. If the school are made aware of illegal activity, we will report to the relevant authorities.

Gardiner Street School implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils are taught internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in Gardiner Street School through specific WebWise lessons. www.webwise.ie
- Teachers are provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety and digital technology.

iPads and Chromebooks

- Students should never leave their device unattended when in use.
- Teachers must make every effort to monitor iPad usage including circulating and having all screens visible to them at all times.
- Students should follow the teacher's instructions accessing only the applications to which the teacher has agreed.
- Students require permission before sending any form of electronic message.
- Audio or vision taken at school cannot be transmitted, broadcast or transferred without the teacher's permission.
- The camera and audio recording functions may only be used under the teachers' direction.
- Identity theft (pretending to be someone else) is in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- In the event of a child accidentally accessing inappropriate material or images during a lesson, the student will immediately minimize the page and report the incident to the class teacher, without attracting the attention of other students.
- iPads must be handled with care at all times.
- Any damage to the device must be reported immediately to the teacher.

Email

- The use of personal email accounts is only allowed at Gardiner Street Primary School with expressed permission from members of the teaching staff.
- Pupils should not under any circumstances share their email account login details with other pupils.
- Pupils should not use school email accounts to register for online services such as social networking services, apps, and games.
- Pupils will use approved class email accounts only under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Pupils should be aware that email communications are monitored.
- Students may use approved email accounts, under supervision by, or with permission from, the class teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Children are not allowed to access their own email accounts in school.
- 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 will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Students will not have access to **any** chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums.

Relevant Legislation

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

Social Media and School Website

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Gardiner Street Primary School:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, G Chat etc. is not allowed in Gardiner Street Primary School.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is only allowed by teachers and all videos from the internet must be watched in advance of lessons.
- Staff and pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff or other members of the Gardiner Street Primary School community.
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Gardiner Street Primary School community on social media.
- Staff and pupils must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Gardiner Street Primary School into disrepute.
- Staff and pupils must not represent personal views as being those of Gardiner Street Primary School on any social medium.
- On occasion, pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet. This is only carried out in accordance with clear approval processes regarding content that can be loaded to the school's website or Instagram account. Any publication of student work will be coordinated by teachers.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff. Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Gardiner Street Primary School's web pages. Thus, Gardiner Street School will avoid publishing the surname of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.
- Gardiner Street Primary 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.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Gardiner Street Primary School web pages.
- Gardiner Street Primary School will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions online.

Personal Devices

- Pupils using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages or the unauthorized taking of images with a mobile phone camera, still or moving, is in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Use Policy and will be dealt with through the Code of Behaviour.

- All personal devices are to be turned off during school hours.

Images & Video

- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- At Gardiner Street Primary School, 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 strictly forbidden.
- Photographs of pupils may be published on the school website unless parents or carers inform the school that they do not give permission.
- Pupils must not share images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community, regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.
- Sharing explicit images and in particular explicit images of pupils and/or minors is an unacceptable, illegal and absolutely prohibited behaviour.

Staff

- The internet is not available for staff personal use as this slows down the network for others. The internet is available for professional use.

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.
- From time to time, parents will receive information and advice regarding internet safety in the home.

Sanctions

- Some material available on the internet is unsuitable for children and therefore the guidelines in this policy must be adhered to at all times. Access to the Internet will be withdrawn from pupils who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use. Internet access in school includes a strict filtering service, yet no filtering service is completely foolproof.
- Procedures are in place should a child accidentally access inappropriate material and also should a child deliberately abuse the use of the internet in school.
- Intentional misuse of the Internet will 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.
- All of these sanctions are in line with our school's Code of Behaviour.

Implementation

The procedures outlined in this policy will be implemented from the 2025/2026 school year onwards.

Review Timetable

This policy will be reviewed as necessary.

Ratification & Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____ .

All teachers have a copy of the policy in their Administrative Folder.

A copy of the reviewed policy will be included in the enrolment pack for Junior Infant pupils and be available to all parents on request. The policy will be published on the school website.

Signed: _____

Chairperson, BOM

Date: _____

Internet Use Opt-Out Form (for Parents)

As part of our commitment to digital learning, all pupils are given access to the Internet under the guidance of our **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)**. This includes supervised access to online educational tools and resources that support the curriculum.

All pupils are expected to use the Internet responsibly and in accordance with the rules outlined in the AUP, which has been shared with both pupils and parents/guardians.

While this is an opt-out policy, all pupils will still be asked to complete an Internet Use Agreement in class with their teacher to ensure they understand the expectations for responsible online behaviour.

No action is required if you give permission.

If you **do not** wish your child to use the Internet at school, please complete the opt-out section below and return this form to the class teacher.

Opt-Out Section (Only complete if you do not give permission)

I **do not** give permission for my child to use the Internet at school. I understand that this may limit their access to certain digital learning activities.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Gardiner Street Primary School – Internet Use Agreement for Pupils

Staying Safe and Responsible Online

Using the internet at school is a useful and important part of learning. It helps us explore, research, and create. However, it must be used safely, respectfully, and for school-related activities only.

By following these rules, you help make sure that everyone in our school can enjoy learning online in a safe and respectful way.

Key Rules for Using the Internet at School

1. Be respectful at all times – Treat others kindly in everything you write, say, or share online.
2. Use the internet only for schoolwork – Only go to websites and use apps or games that your teacher allows.
3. Always ask before clicking – Get permission from your teacher before opening new websites or downloading anything.
4. Keep your information private – Do not share your name, address, phone number, or any personal details online.
5. Never speak to anyone online – You are not allowed to chat, message, or respond to people online, unless your teacher has given permission.
6. Report anything unusual or upsetting – If something on a screen worries you or doesn't seem right, tell your teacher immediately. Do not try to fix it yourself.
7. Look after all school devices – Use iPads, Chromebooks and other equipment with care and follow your teacher's instructions.
8. Only use your own login – Never share your username or password with anyone. Use email only with your teacher's permission.

You Must Not

- Visit websites that are rude, unsafe, or inappropriate.
- Try to get around the school's internet filter or settings.
- Send messages that are unkind or upsetting.
- Pretend to be someone else online.
- Take photos or videos of others without permission from your teacher.
- Share images, videos, or schoolwork online without permission.
- Use mobile phones or personal devices during school time.

iPad Use Rules

When using an iPad in school, it is important to handle it responsibly and follow these rules at all times:

- Always take good care of your iPad and use it gently.
- Never leave your iPad unattended. If you're not using it, put it away safely.
- Return your iPad to the correct charging port when you are finished using it.
- Do not lend your iPad to others. You are responsible for your own device.
- Keep food and drinks away from your iPad to avoid spills or damage.
- Do not try to take apart or fix the iPad yourself.
- Only use apps and tools your teacher has told you to use. Stay focused on your work.
- The iPad can be checked by teachers at any time.
- Only take photos or videos if your teacher says it is okay.
- Always ask permission before taking photos of other people.

- Never share pictures or videos of others online unless your teacher has given permission.
- Never use someone else's iPad to cause harm or upset.

By using the iPad in the right way, you help keep yourself and others safe while showing respect for school equipment.

Photos and Videos

- You may only use the camera or microphone with your teacher's permission.
- Any school photos or videos must stay private unless a teacher says they can be shared.
- The school will ask your parent or carer before posting your photo or schoolwork online.

Emails and Messages

- You can only use email accounts set up by the school and only with permission from your teacher.
- You are not allowed to use your personal email account at school.
- Do not send or open messages that are rude, mean, or inappropriate.
- You must not reply to any messages from people you do not know.

Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

- Phones and other personal devices must stay switched off during school hours.
- Taking photos or sending messages on your personal device at school is not allowed.

Monitoring and Safety

- Teachers will supervise and check how the internet is being used.
- Everything you do on school devices or internet accounts may be checked.
- If school rules are broken, your access to the internet or devices may be taken away.

What Happens If Rules Are Broken

If you do not follow these rules:

- You may not be allowed to use the internet or school devices.
- You may be given a warning or other consequences, based on the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Serious or unsafe behaviour will be reported to school leaders or the relevant authorities.

Agreement

By signing this agreement, you show that you understand the rules and promise to use the internet safely, respectfully, and responsibly.

Pupil's Name: _____

Pupil's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Internet Use and Safety Agreement - Staff of Gardiner Street Primary School

As a staff member of Gardiner Street Primary School, you are entrusted with the care, supervision, and digital safety of our pupils. Your professional conduct in the use of the internet, devices, and digital communication tools is critical to maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment.

The following rules must be read carefully and adhered to at all times. Breaches of this agreement may result in disciplinary action, in line with the school's policies and employment regulations.

Professional Conduct & Responsibility

- You are a role model. Staff must demonstrate exemplary behaviour when using any form of digital technology within the school environment, both in-person and online.
- Supervision is not optional. All internet and device use by pupils must be actively and continuously supervised. Passive oversight is not acceptable.
- You are responsible for what happens under your watch. Allowing pupils to access unsuitable websites, apps, or devices without intervention is your responsibility.
- You must monitor and guide pupil behaviour. This includes checking search histories, supervising app usage, and reviewing digital output created by pupils.
- Devices must not be left accessible to pupils unsupervised. Staff must ensure secure storage of all school devices when not in use.
- Teachers must ensure pupils log out of accounts and shut down devices appropriately.

Use of Internet & Digital Tools

- Internet access is for educational and professional use only.
- Staff must not access inappropriate, illegal, or offensive content on school networks.
- You must never use school internet to engage in social media activity unrelated to school responsibilities.
- Staff are prohibited from using personal email accounts, messaging apps, or social platforms to communicate with pupils under any circumstances.
- You must never share your login credentials with pupils or leave devices logged in to accounts accessible by pupils.

Images, Video & Content Sharing

- Photographs, videos, or recordings of pupils must be taken only in accordance with school policy. This means that teachers and school staff may capture images or footage of activities, projects, school trips, and other notable moments for the purpose of sharing them on the school's official Instagram account, website, or through parent communication platforms such as Aladdin.
- Any media containing pupil images or voices may only be shared via school-approved platforms and only with prior parental consent.
- Publishing student content online (e.g., on websites or social media) must follow strict guidelines to protect student identities and privacy.

Child Protection and Online Safety

- Staff must report any instance of unsafe, inappropriate, or concerning online behaviour immediately to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).
- You are expected to uphold and actively teach safe, ethical internet behaviour.

- You must complete all internet safety training required by the school. Failure to participate in training is considered a breach of professional standards.

Monitoring and Accountability

- All staff activity on school networks, devices, and email systems is subject to monitoring.
- Staff must not attempt to bypass school internet filters or install unauthorised software.
- Staff have a legal and ethical duty to maintain data protection, confidentiality, and appropriate boundaries at all times.

☒ **Declaration**

I have read and understood the Gardiner Street Primary School Staff Internet Use and Safety Agreement. I accept full responsibility for upholding the standards set out in this document and understand the consequences of failing to do so.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____