

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

St. Louis GNS
Park Road
Monaghan

Telephone: 047-81305

Email: info@stlouisgns.com

Website: www.stlouisgns.ie

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General Approach

The aim of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from the 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. If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.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 when using online content and resources.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in St. Louis Girls' School.

It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in St. Louis GNS.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

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

Strategies to promote online safety

- 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 also provided to pupils through our Anti-Bullying Campaign Lessons and Anti-Cyber Bullying Workshops.

- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- St. Louis GNS participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.
- 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 and other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually by the following stakeholders: Board of Management, teaching staff, and support staff.

This policy was originally developed by the e-learning committee in consultation with staff and representatives of the Board of Management and Parents Association. It was updated by our new Digital Learning Committee in October 2020 to include procedures around the safe and acceptable use of digital technologies for distance learning during the Coronavirus pandemic.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.
- Survey of pupils.
- 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 Digital Learning Committee.

Content Filtering

St. Louis GNS 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.

Web Browsing and Downloading

- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom to their teacher.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school but outside the classroom to their class teacher.
- Pupils 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.
- Pupils will use the school's internet connection only for educational activities.
- Pupils 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.
- Pupils 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 pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.

Email and Messaging

- Students will not be given access to email. However, they will be provided with Google credentials for accessing other communication tools such as Google Classroom.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, 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 passwords, addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know online
- Students will note that sending and receiving files is subject to permission from their teacher
- Pupils should immediately 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.

Social Media

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in St Louis GNS:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, Whats Apps, G Chat etc. is not allowed in St Louis GNS
- Use of blogs such as Word Press, Tumblr etc. is allowed in St Louis GNS with express permission from teaching staff.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is allowed with express permission from teaching staff.
- 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, other members of the St Louis GNS community.
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the St Louis GNS 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 St Louis GNS into disrepute.
- Staff and pupils must not represent their personal views as being those of St Louis GNS on any social medium.

Personal Devices

Pupils are not permitted to bring their own devices into school. The only exception to this is a child with Special Educational Needs e.g. dyslexia, who has not been granted assistive technology, but has a laptop of their own which facilitates the use of suitable online programmes. Parents must sign consent for the child to bring their device to school and all guidelines governing the use of the internet within the school must apply. This is an exceptional occurrence as most children with SEN who need AT are generally sanctioned it by the SENO and DES.

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 St Louis GNS 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.
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained (through the enrolment form) before photographs of pupils are published on the school website.
- 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 and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other pupils automatically incurs suspension as a sanction.

Cyberbullying

When using the internet pupils, 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 pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.
- Measures are taken to ensure that staff and pupils are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. This definition includes cyber-bullying even when it happens outside the school or at night.
- Any offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, even if it is a once-off, still falls within the definition of bullying. This is because of the possibility of it being shared online multiple times and hence being repetitive in nature. Such will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

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

School Website www.stlouisgns.ie

- Pupils 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.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.
- The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained (through the enrolment form) before photographs of pupils are published on the school website.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on St Louis GNS web pages.
- St. Louis GNS will avoid publishing the surname of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

Permission Form

When their child is being enrolled in the school, parents will be directed to the school website where a copy of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy is published. They will be asked to sign permission for their child to use the internet, in accordance with school regulations.

Legislation

The school AUP complies with the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

EU General Data Protection Regulation 2018
Anti-Bullying Guidelines for Primary Schools 2013
Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
Interception Act 1993

Video Recordings Act 1989
The Data Protection Act 1988

Distance learning

In the event of a pod, class or whole school closure due to the Covid-19 global pandemic, teachers will engage with their classes using a combination of the following online platforms: Seesaw (2nd, 3rd & 4th class), Google Classroom (5th & 6th class) and Zoom. Children who are restricting their movements or self-isolating will also have their learning supported in this way. The principal and staff will engage with parents by the Aladdin Connect App and by school email.

Parents are required to sign permission in advance of any of the above platforms being used for distance learning. Children will receive instruction and practice at school in the use of the online platform and will get occasional homework to help prepare them for the possibility of distance learning.

The school will take every precaution to ensure the safety of the children while using these online platforms. Strict guidelines as laid out in our *Remote Teaching and Learning Plan* will be adhered to at all times and parents will be expected to supervise their children and monitor their use of the platforms at home.

Ratification

This amended version of the AUP was ratified at a Board of Management meeting on 9th December 2020. It will be reviewed annually by the Digital Learning Committee and amended further when necessary.