

Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS

Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy

Introduction

This policy was originally drawn up by the school's Digital Learning Team, in consultation with staff members, pupils, parents and the Board of Management. It is being reviewed by the Board of Management in the context of the closure of the school due to Covid-19, and the resulting need to update the policy to cater for the possibility of distance learning. (cf. Appendix 2 Etiquette and Protocol for Live Video Meetings/Conferencing Lessons).

Rationale

Educationalists believe in the benefits of curriculum-based internet use. The purpose of the Internet Safety and 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. This policy aims to establish minimum standards for, and let the staff, pupils and parents/guardians know of the school's administration and monitoring of the school's devices, equipment and networks.

This policy applies to the staff, pupils of Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS. The school reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time at its discretion.

This policy applies to all of the school's "Devices" which means all computers, tablets, laptops, smart phones and any other IT resources that connect to the school's network.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS is a Catholic school for girls. The Board and the Staff promote respect for all and value each member of the school community.

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure that all pupils and staff make safe use of the internet and ICTs during school hours
- To educate pupils on the proper use of the internet and ICTs as tools for learning

Content

Our Lady of Good Counsel will employ a number of strategies to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet.

These strategies are as follows:

1. Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP)
2. Education
3. Filtering/Monitoring

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, 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 Infants - 6th class and will only be permitted upon *submission of permission and agreement forms by parents of pupils and pupils (3rd to 6th) themselves. (Appendix 3)

* Parental agreement forms will be added to the Enrolment and Admissions Form and this proviso will apply from the beginning of the 2021/2022 school year.

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. Websites will be previewed / evaluated by a teacher before being integrated into lessons.
7. The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage

Some examples of how this may be done:

- Teacher observation
- Research and keep up to date on the use of appropriate filters and monitoring systems
- Search Browser History
- Supervision of screens in a teacher led class
- Research programme to monitor screens from teacher's laptop.

8. Pupils will receive training in the area of internet safety
9. Pupils will be taught to evaluate the content of internet sites

Some examples of how this may be done:

- Follow rules from the Code of Behaviour – online and off line
- Using the SPHE Curriculum

Strand: Myself and the Wider World

Strand Unit: Media Education

- Stay Safe Programme
- Use Webwise resources to teach AUP to pupils
- Each class teacher draws up “*Responsible Use Rules*” or “*Digital Learning Contract*” for the classroom.

10. Teachers will be made aware of internet safety issues
11. Uploading and downloading of non-approved material is banned
12. Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis
13. The use of personal external storage devices or CD-ROMS in school requires a teacher’s permission
14. 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
15. ‘YouTube’ (and similar sites) can be accessed only under the supervision and direction of the teacher.

Distance Learning

In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers may use online platforms approved by the Principal to assist with remote teaching where necessary.

1. The school will sign up to the terms of service of the Online Platforms in use by the school.

2. The School has enabled the most up to date security and privacy features which these Online Platforms provide.
3. If staff are using online platforms for distance teaching and learning, parents/guardians must submit their own email address for their child to access lessons.
4. Parents/Guardians must also agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons conducted on online platforms.

Personal Devices

Use of Pupils' mobile phones or personal electronic devices in school is prohibited.

1. Students may not use any personal device with recording or image taking capability while in school or on a school outing.
2. Any images or recordings taken by class teachers on smartphones or other personal devices must be downloaded onto a school device and then deleted from source.
3. The use of E-readers may be permitted, under the supervision of the teacher.
4. Staff personal devices are to be turned to 'silent' during school hours.

Email

If pupils are allowed to 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 not send messages to or from school email.
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 during school hours

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' 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
8. Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
9. Parents/Guardians will not 'Tag' photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.

Education

Our Lady of Good Counsel will undertake an education programme to educate children on the safe, responsible use of the Internet.

Resources that may be used to implement this programme include

- NCTE Internet Safety Awareness Video
- Use of the 'Kids' section on the www.webwise.ie website
- SAFT Internet Safety Awareness Education Programme and exemplars
- Collaboration with external agencies such as Foróige

Filtering

'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. No filter is 100% accurate. The most effective filtering tool is adult vigilance.

Our Lady of Good Counsel has filtering software provided by NCCA. The access to websites from all school computers is monitored and regularly reviewed by the NCCA. Websites are only allowed through following a verification of their suitability.

Anti-virus

Our Lady of Good Counsel has anti-virus software installed on all its computers.

School Owned Assistive Technology

Please refer to Our Lady of Good Counsel's policy on School Owned Assistive Technology (Appendix 1)

Use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) Resources

Our Lady of Good Counsel's information and technology resources (e.g. e-mail, computers, computer applications, networks, internet, intranet, facsimile, phone and other wireless communications devices, telephone, paging and voice mail systems and the like) are school property and are provided solely for school related activities.

Inappropriate use including hacking, pirating software, using school resources for non-school commercial activities, soliciting, distributing literature for outside entities, disclosing confidential information of the school, sending inappropriate e-mail or accessing inappropriate web sites (such as those advocating hate or violence, containing sexually explicit material promoting illegal activities), or using school resources in a way that violates the letter or spirit of the school's policies or reflects negatively on the school is forbidden.

Users of the school's information and technology resources must not share passwords. If you allow others to use your password or assigned resource, you will be held responsible for their use. Consistent with national laws, the Board of Management reserves the right to monitor the use of its information and technology resources and to take appropriate disciplinary actions, or denying future access privileges in cases of misuse. Staff/pupil use of the school's information and technology resources constitutes consent to such monitoring. All such monitoring will be conducted in accordance with law including, where applicable, the EU's General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR").

Sanctions

If a staff member/pupil deliberately misuses the internet or engages in any activity which is in contravention of this policy, disciplinary action may result. This action may include but is not limited to the withdrawal of access privileges, where appropriate, suspension or expulsion in line with the Code of Behaviour, written warnings and reporting of any illegal activities to the appropriate authority.

Parents/guardians will receive notification of misuse by a pupil.

Success Criteria

Practical indicators of the success of this policy will be the appropriate use of the internet by both teachers and pupils.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Digital Learning Team will monitor and update policy as necessary.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented immediately following ratification by the Board of Management and communication to the Parents' Association.

Ratification and Review

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management in June 2020.

Appendix 1

Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS Policy on the Home Use of Assistive Technology Owned by Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS (Pupils and Parents)

Rationale

This policy, the terms and conditions and the attached agreement was compiled in line with Department of Education and Skills Circular 10/2013 in relation to essential assistive technology equipment for pupils with physical or communicative disabilities, and in the context of the school closure due to Covid-19.

The purpose of the document is to ensure clear guidelines for home use of school owned devices for the purposes of home learning, and for specialist equipment which has been recommended by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) as being essential for pupils who have been diagnosed as:

- having a serious disability
- and/or sensory or communicative disability to the extent that their ability to communicate through the medium of speech or writing is materially curtailed
- where it is clear that existing equipment in the school is insufficient to meet the child's needs
- where without such equipment it will not be possible for such children to access the school curriculum

Any equipment purchased by Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS (referred to in this document as the 'school') under Department of Education and Skills Guidelines remains the property of the school and should normally be kept in the school. However, the Board of Management may, in certain circumstances, allow the use of the equipment in the pupil's home. Such a circumstance might be where it is agreed that the pupil could potentially benefit from, or achieve a degree of improvement to their academic and educational performance, their learning and their completion of homework through the use of technical support or equipment such as a school laptop.

This agreement endeavours to ensure the safe custody and handling of the equipment when in the care of the pupil outside of the school.

Procedure to allow Pupil to take Assistive Technology home

1. Parent must write a brief letter outlining the reason why they believe it is necessary for the pupil to bring the assistive technology home.
2. The letter will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management and a decision made.
3. Parent will be required to read in full and agree to the Terms and Conditions attached to this policy.

This Policy, the Terms and Conditions and the Agreement was proposed and ratified by the Board of Management on _____.

Signature of Chairperson: _____ **Date:** _____

Terms and Conditions:

1. The laptop (or any other approved assistive technology/equipment) remains the property of Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS
2. Should the designated pupil change school, including to post primary, the School will consult with the SENO with regard to the transfer of any approved assistive technology/equipment with the pupil where it is still appropriate for the pupil's assessed needs. The final decision regarding transfer will rest with the School Board of Management.
3. The laptop (or any other approved assistive technology/equipment) will be used solely by the designated pupil and will not be used by or transferred to a third party.
4. The parent will remind and teach their child to take due care of the laptop (or any other approved assistive technology/equipment) at all times when handling, transporting and using the laptop/equipment.
 - It is not to be left unattended in a public place.
 - It is not to be left unattended in a classroom or other place in the school.
 - All laptop leads must be unplugged from sockets and all accessories are to be stored safely and securely in the laptop case, with the laptop when work is complete.
 - It is not to be left in plain view in an unattended or unsecured vehicle but kept out of sight in the locked boot.
 - It is not to be interfered with, tampered with or altered by a third party.
5. The laptop will be used solely to assist with typing skills, completion of homework assignments and other school related activities. Only school approved software packages/applications may be used.
6. The designated pupil will have use of the laptop each evening from Monday to Thursday during school terms and it is to be returned to the school on Fridays for safe keeping over

the weekends. Exceptions to this may be facilitated if the school is closed unexpectedly e.g. during the school closure due to Covid-19.

7. The laptop must be returned to the school in good working order on or before the last day of the school year or earlier if requested by the School.
8. The laptop is covered under school insurance; however, the parent must take reasonable care to avoid damage or loss.
9. Use of the laptop and including all internet usage will be supervised by a parent and will be of an appropriate nature to minimise pupil's exposure to inappropriate material.
10. The School will make regular checks to update the laptops, ensuring that anti-virus software is kept up to date and also to check for inappropriate use.
11. The laptop will be used lawfully and in accordance with the school's Acceptable Use Policy regarding the ethical use of technology, use of legal software, use of the Internet and the protection of personal data. The parent shall agree to review and adhere to the current School Acceptable Use Policy, specifically where this policy relates to the safe and appropriate use of approved IT equipment such as laptops.
12. The following is deemed by the School as being completely unacceptable and will result in the equipment being re-claimed:
 - Accessing, transmitting or receiving obscene or pornographic material
 - Engaging in cyber cheating or plagiarism (taking material created by others and presenting it as if it were one's own)
 - Engaging in cyber bullying
 - Downloading or loading software or applications that are not approved by the school
13. The laptop will be kept in good working order. All laptop faults, defects or malfunctions while in the care of the pupil are to be reported to the Principal or Class Teacher who will inform the teacher with responsibility for the servicing and upkeep of the laptop.
14. Any repairs necessary due to damage caused to the laptop while in the care of the pupil will be arranged by the school and paid for by the parent of the pupil.
15. The laptop will not be sold, assigned, transferred or otherwise disposed of.
16. Any laptop markings, tags or plates or engravings will not be removed, concealed or altered. The laptop must not be marked in any way that might reduce the value of the laptop.
17. If the laptop is lost, stolen or damaged the parent will advise the Principal and the Gardaí as soon as possible orally and in writing including all relevant details, record of events etc.

18. Due to current software licensing arrangements covering home use, the laptop package cannot be used for any commercial purpose.

19. If any of these terms or conditions are breached, the School Board of Management may at any time revoke this arrangement.

Agreement for Signing by Pupil and Parent

Re: Home Use of Assistive Technology Owned by Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS

Laptop Make and Serial Number: _____

Value of laptop and software: _____

I confirm that I accept responsibility for taking into my possession a laptop which is the property Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS after school & on weeknights when my child requires it.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept the Terms and Conditions attached to this agreement and other relevant policies as are determined by Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS.

Name of Pupil: _____ Class: _____ Teacher: _____

Signature of Pupil: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Contact Numbers: Home: _____

Mobile:

Signature of Principal: _____

Etiquette and Protocol for Live Video Meetings/Conferencing Lessons

To help us get the most benefit from our meetings/sessions on line, we must always respect one another and follow our expectations below. When we meet on line we expect you to:

1. Be on Time

Please give yourself at least 10 minutes before the appointment time to be ready to participate and ensure your device is charged up and ready to go.

2. Dress appropriately

Regular clothes. No pyjamas.

3. Be aware of your surroundings

Pick a room that does not have 'Traffic' passing through during the on-line meeting session. Be mindful of noise from other people or even pets. Pets can be a distraction.

4. Pupils/Parents are not permitted to make recordings or take screenshots of any kind during a video meeting/lesson. Recording and or sharing of recordings is strictly prohibited; this includes capturing still images, video recording and audio recording.

5. Mute your microphone when you're not talking

Only turn it on if you are asked to speak. Muting your microphone stops feedback/background noise and allows others to share their thoughts without distraction or frustration.

6. Leave the keyboard alone

The sound of typing is distracting.

7. Be respectful in your words

Teachers and pupils are real people who are affected by words you say and write. Polite and respectful behaviour is expected at all times during meet times.

8. Use Chat only when teacher asks

Do not use 'Chat' when someone is talking. Be respectful at all times when using Chat. Remember that you are in a classroom, even if you are not wearing your uniform.

9. No food/drinks allowed

We don't want you dropping crumbs all over your device.

10. Stay seated and present

Do not leave the room or talk on your phone during our live session.

11. Be patient.

All this is new to everyone and it may take time to learn. You are expected to be a Good Citizen of Good Counsel while you are taking part in online meetings.

Protocol for Participating in a Zoom Meeting

Zoom Calls

Rationale:

- **To provide an opportunity for some online interaction with pupils, their peers and staff members**
- **We have established protocols that we would ask Parents/Guardians to observe so that it can be a safe space for all participants to enjoy**
- **We very much appreciate your co-operation and support.**

- Parents will receive an email/phone invitation with a link to the online session. This link should not be shared with or forwarded to anyone else.
- **[Your child's participation is not compulsory and is at your discretion. If your child does participate, your consent is presumed].**
- Parental supervision of your child's participation is required for child protection reasons (a parent does not have to be on camera, just in the vicinity of where your child is when they are participating).
- We would suggest that all cameras are switched on to facilitate better interaction with the teacher and classmates.
- Please note that five minutes after the scheduled meeting start time, access to the meeting will be locked to new participants for the security of all involved. The person hosting (teacher/Miss O'Reilly) will allow each invitee to join, this will take a moment or so.
- The session must not be recorded or screen shot by any of the participants, for the security of all.
- The usual high standards and expectations of behaviour and appropriate interaction apply. Anyone who behaves inappropriately will be removed from the meeting by the host.
- Children should not have access to mobile phones while participating unless the phone is the device being used to participate in the meeting.
- An appropriate physical background for the session should be chosen by the participants and we request that no virtual backgrounds are used.
- Children should be dressed appropriately while participating.
- If the teacher's/Miss O'Reilly's broadband connection drops and they are no longer present on the Zoom call, all participants must leave the call and the teacher/Miss O'Reilly will reschedule the session.
- Be patient. All this is a totally new learning experience to everyone so your patience is very much appreciated.
- Thank you in advance for your-co-operation.

Appendix 3

Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS Responsible Internet Use - Pupil Undertaking (3rd to 6th Class)

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: _____

**Our Lady of Good Counsel GNS
Parent Internet Permission Form**

Name of Pupil(s): _____

Class(es): _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above child/children, I have read the Internet Acceptable Use Policy on www.goodcounselgns.ie and grant permission for:

_____ (name(s): son/daughter)

to access the Internet. I understand that school internet usage is for educational purposes only and that every reasonable precaution will be taken by the school to provide for online safety.

I accept my own responsibility for the education of my child(ren) on issues of Internet Responsibility and Safety.

I understand that having adhered to all the enclosed precautions the school cannot be held responsible if my child tries to access unsuitable material.

Signature: 1. _____ 2. _____
Parents/Legal Guardians

Date: _____ **Date:** _____



School Website

I understand that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's image or schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the school's website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Usage Policy in relation to publishing pupils' work and photographs of school activities on the website.

Signature: 1. _____ 2. _____
Parents/Legal Guardians

Date: _____ **Date:** _____