

**St. Mac Dara's  
Community College  
Templeogue**



## *ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy*

Adopted 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025 for 2025/26

### **Mission Statement**

"We, the community this College, through a caring and collective approach, aspire to provide a broad-based education for all, to foster respect and dignity and to promote a safe and just environment by positively encouraging all to realise their potential."

As part of the DDLETB schools we also proudly endorse our school ethos which is underpinned by the core values of Excellence in Education, Care, Respect, Equality and Community.

## INTRODUCTION

ICT and the Internet are rich and valuable sources of information and have a very important part to play in the education of students. The aim of this policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's ICT and Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. ICT and Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. eLearning is the process by which teaching and learning is enhanced by the use of computers, the Internet, Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), Interactive Whiteboards, data projectors, audio equipment, video, visual resources and cameras.

## AIMS

- ☐ To ensure that pupils and all college internet users will benefit from learning opportunities offered by our college's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner.
- ☐ A smart device policy in respect of usage of devices by pupils.
- ☐ Teachers have been upskilled in Teams and other forms in response to supporting student welfare during online teaching and learning (for e.g., in response to a pandemic)
- ☐ In conjunction with other college policies such as the Code of Positive Behaviour Policy and the Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment Policy, this policy endeavours to provide conditions to ensure safe teaching and learning conditions for the teacher and the learner.
- ☐ Internet use and access via all methods including both LAN (Local Area Networks) and Wi-Fi and from all internet accessible devices is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.
- ☐ To enable the student to use a range of ICT tools in a relevant curriculum context
- ☐ To enable the student to develop and use ICT skills in the attainment of curriculum learning objectives.
- ☐ To foster the student's confidence in his or her use of ICT, through enjoyable learning experiences
- ☐ To develop the student's understanding and practice of the safe use of ICT
- ☐ To enable the student to overcome barriers of access to learning resources caused by geographic
- ☐ location, culture, or language
- ☐ To enable the student to use ICT to support his or her learning effectively and creatively
- ☐ To inform the student's attitudes regarding the role of ICT in society, including the benefits and challenges of ICT

We strive to achieve these aims by:

- ☐ Using ICT in a safe way to enhance students' learning in all areas of the curriculum.
- ☐ Introducing the students to a wide range of ICT applications and about ICT tools, such as word processing, databases, graphics and software for control technology and processing sound pictures.

- Having smart boards and interactive white boards in our classrooms
- Helping students acquire the skills to use appropriate ICT tools effectively, with purpose and equipping students with the knowledge of the uses, effects and limitations of ICT enabling them to evaluate the benefits of ICT and its impact on society.
- By risk assessing and closely monitoring the content which is being viewed by the students and to advise students what pages they should be viewing in relation to the work topic.
- Using ICT to develop partnership beyond the school through the use of the Internet.
- Encouraging all teachers to develop an awareness of the ways in which ICT might contribute to the achievement of both their subject-teaching and their wider educational aims;
- Encouraging all teachers to develop their own ICT confidence and competence through in-house training, in-services and peer-to-peer assistance amongst the teaching staff .
- Allowing opportunities for work to be printed for display, evidence, publishing on the school website etc.

### **College's Strategy**

The college will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities, to risk assess at all times and to reduce risks associated with the Internet.

These strategies are as follows:

### **Risk Assessment for Use of ICT in St. Mac Dara's CC.**

- Internet sessions by students on school grounds 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 college will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.
- 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 storage devices or CD-ROMs in college requires a teacher's permission.
- All college internet users will observe good "netiquette" (i.e., etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the college into disrepute.

### **CURRENT USE OF RESOURCES**

Computers are used as a medium of teaching and learning. In all of the classrooms there are desktop computers with internet access. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards / screens and data projectors. Our students and teachers have access to iPads.

Examples of current use include:

- ☐ mathematical application;
- ☐ development of thinking and problem-solving skills;
- ☐ word processing,
- ☐ desktop publishing;
- ☐ ECDL (TY)
- ☐ typing skills;
- ☐ internet and research work;
- ☐ presentation of project work,
- ☐ research in all school subjects,
- ☐ manipulation of digital photographs
- ☐ developing Junior Cycle key skills.

This is not an exhaustive list.

## **NETWORK ACCOUNTS AND INTERNET ACCESS**

Each student and teacher is provided with a personal account on the network that is protected by a password.

The first year students are shown how to log-on in the first few weeks of school by the member of staff.

The students are advised to keep their passwords private as any activity on their account or the Internet under their username will be attributed to that student.

When a student forgets or misplaces their password, their password is reset by the site administrator.

## **World Wide Web**

- All college internet users will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- All college internet users will use the Internet for educational purposes **only**.
- All college internet users will be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.
- All college internet users will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- All college internet users will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, college-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.
- All college users will adhere to policies and laws relating to respecting others' right to privacy.
- All college internet users will adhere to policies such as Bí Cinéalta, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection and Safeguarding, GDPR, Dignity at Work and represent the core values of Respect, Care, Equality, Community and Excellence in Education at all times.

## **Email**

- Students will use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- All college internet users will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- All college internet users will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.

- All college internet users 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.

### **Internet Chat**

- o All college internet users will adhere to policies such as Bí Cinéalta, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection and Safeguarding, GDPR, Dignity at Work and represent the core values of Respect, Care, Equality, Community and Excellence in Education at all times.
- o All college internet users will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the college.
- o Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised, where possible.
- o Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- o Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat will be forbidden.

1. St Mac Dara's Community College supports and encourages the use by teachers of a wide range of resources in their teaching and learning activities, the conducting of research, and contact with others in the education world. Staff are encouraged to investigate the possibilities provided by access to this electronic information and communication resource, and blend its use, as appropriate, within the curriculum.

Reference should be made in Subject Department Plans to the ICT resources and websites that are used in the teaching and learning.

2. When using ICT and the Internet, all school staff (both teachers and support staff) must comply with all copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws. All school staff are expected to communicate in a professional manner consistent with the rules of behaviour governing employees in the Education Sector and with the Teaching Council Code of Conduct.

3. Staff should be aware of the risks of breaking confidentiality and Data Protection laws by giving students or other parties access to their teacher logon accounts. All staff are expected to be professional and lawful in their use of ICT and the Internet.

4. It is an absolute requirement that the school ensures that access to the Internet provided to staff and students is a filtered service.

5. It should be noted that;

- ☐ when students are accessing computers, they must be under the supervision of a teacher and that access to the computer room, outside of the timetabled schedule is via room booking on VSWare.
- ☐ if students' work is uploaded to any site it must be in an educational context.
- ☐ St Mac Dara's CC has an active Twitter account.
- ☐ Any audio, video or photographic clips uploaded to the College's website and/or Twitter account will focus on group activities and will, where feasible, avoid the direct

identification of students by full name – first and surname.

☐ All communication between staff and students is respectful and appropriate for an educational settings.

6. St Mac Dara's CC would like staff members and students to note that the following activities are not permitted:

- ☐ visiting or encouraging others to visit or publicise internet sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic or otherwise illegal material;
- ☐ downloading text or images which contain material of a pornographic, racist or extreme nature, or which incites violence, hatred or any illegal activity;
- ☐ using ICT or the Internet to perpetrate any form of fraud, or software, film or music piracy;
- ☐ using ICT or the internet to send offensive or harassing material to other users or links to such sites;
- ☐ downloading commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, unless this download is covered or permitted under a commercial agreement or other such licence or agreement;
- ☐ hacking or accessing unauthorised areas;
- ☐ publishing defamatory and/or knowingly false material about St mac Dara's Community College, our colleagues and/or our students on the school system / network, social networking sites, blogs online journals, 'wikis' and any online publishing format;
- ☐ revealing confidential information about St Mac Dara's Community College in a personal online posting, upload or transmission - including personal information and information relating to our students, staff and/or internal discussions and school business;
- ☐ introducing any form of malicious software into the school network;
- ☐ consciously searching, viewing and/or retrieving materials that are not related to the aims of the curriculum, education or careers information that is relevant to students;
- ☐ copying, saving and/or redistributing copyright protected material, without approval;
- ☐ subscribing to any services or ordering any goods or services where the school will be billed unless specifically approved by the Principal;
- ☐ playing computer games or using interactive chat sites that are unrelated to education;
- ☐ publishing, sharing or distributing any personal information about any member of the College community – student or staff member, without their permission (such as: home address; email address; phone number, etc.)

This is not an exhaustive list and all members of staff are reminded that ICT use should be consistent with the school ethos, other appropriate policies and the Law.

#### **College Website -- [www.stmacdaras.ie](http://www.stmacdaras.ie)**

- o Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web.
- o The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- o Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
- o Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website, without prior permission. Photographs, audio

and video clips will try to focus on group activities. Video clips may be password protected.

- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted
- from school web pages.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

### **Wi-Fi Network**

- ☐ Any passwords you are given to use in order to access the college Wi-Fi network **MUST** be kept safe and secure at all times. You **MUST NOT** share these with anyone.
- ☐ The Wi-Fi network provides an HTTP/HTTPS Internet connection **ONLY**. It does not
- ☐ provide any other services.
- ☐ In the interests of network performance, the School may restrict the data bandwidth and user experience to an individual user and electronic device, if it deems necessary.
- ☐ This is a public Wi-Fi network and as such should be subject to the same precautions as any other public network. We advise you to ensure that your electronic device has suitable anti-virus and firewall security software installed, and that you set the network profile as 'public' or similar on your electronic device / firewall security software.
- ☐ The Wi-Fi network and Internet activity is logged and monitored at all times, in order for us to meet with our e-Safety and Child Protection responsibilities.
- ☐ Student use of Wi-Fi enabled devices such as our school iPads is monitored to help ensure compliance with our AUP.
- ☐ The unauthorised capture of images, video or audio is in direct breach of the
- ☐ college's AUP.
- ☐ Your usage of the college Wi-Fi network constitutes your acceptance of this policy.

### **MOBILE PHONES AND PERSONAL DEVICES**

This section refers to personal devices such as: phones, iPods, smart watches, cameras, Dictaphones, game consoles, PSPs, etc.

- ☐ Students' personal devices, unless authorised by a teacher, are not to be used on school premises. Each student must ensure all their devices are switched off in the school building. Students using their own technology in college, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in college, sending nuisance text messages, or unauthorised taking pictures of videos with a mobile phone camera or personal device is in direct breach of the ICT acceptable usage agreement.
- ☐ Connecting or attempting to connect to the school's network system (wired or wireless) without authorisation is in direct breach of the school's ICT and Internet Acceptable Usage and e-Learning Policy.
- ☐ If a student uses a mobile phone or personal device within school hours, it will be confiscated for a 24 hour period and it can only be collected from the office by a parent or guardian.

### **LEGISLATION**

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

- ☐ [Data Protection \(Amendment\) Act 2003<sup>1</sup>](#)
- ☐ [Child Trafficking and Pornography \(Amendment\) Act 2004](#)
- ☐ [Interception Act 1993](#)
- ☐ [Video Recordings Act 1989](#)
- ☐ [The Data Protection Act 1988](#)

## **SUPPORT STRUCTURES**

The college will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

## **SANCTIONS**

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including withdrawal of access privileges and in some cases, suspension or expulsion. The college also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities. Parents must ensure that their children fully understand this Acceptable Usage Policy. Should users cause damage to the ICT systems, they are required to bear the cost of repair or replacement of said system

## **Distance eLearning**


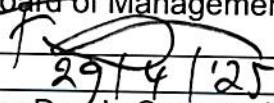
- ☐ Any electronic items, such as iPads, laptops, computers, etc.) on loan from the college must be used solely for the purposes of online education.
- ☐ These devices must be returned to the school at the request of school management.
- ☐ The device(s) on loan remain the property of the college.
- ☐ Person(s) borrowing the college devices are responsible for their proper care and must ensure they have suitable insurance to cover the item(s).
- ☐ Distance eLearning policy guidelines must be adhered to at all times.

## **Insurance**

It is your own responsibility to ensure that any electronic devices you bring on to the school premises are suitably insured. The School's insurance DOES NOT cover these items. Electronic items on loan from the school or off the school premises should be suitably insured by the user.

## **Liability**

Connecting your electronic device to the school network is entirely at your own risk. The school will **NOT** be liable for any (hardware or software) loss, damage, malfunctioning or inconvenience to your electronic device arising either directly or indirectly as a result of its connection to the college Wi-Fi network. It is your own responsibility to ensure that any software installed on your electronic device is correctly licensed.

Signed   
 Date: 29/4/25  
 Chairperson Board of Management.  
 Signed   
 Date: 29/4/25  
 Principal St Mac Dara's Community College

<sup>1</sup> <https://revisedacts.lawreform.ie/eli/1988/act/25/front/revised/en/html>

**This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 29/4/25.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yvonne Collins'.

**Signed:**

***Chairperson Board of Management.***

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'F' followed by a horizontal line.

**Signed:**

***Principal.***

***Date: 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025***

## Permission Form

**Please review the attached college Internet Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this permission form to the Principal.**

**St. Mac Dara's Community College**

Name of College Internet User: \_\_\_\_\_

Class/Year (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the college.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

### **Parent/Guardian (if applicable)**

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my son or daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet. I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the college to provide for online safety but the college cannot be held responsible if pupils access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph ☐ I do not accept the above paragraph ☐  
(Please tick as appropriate)

In relation to the college website, I accept that, if the college considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing children's work on the college website.

I accept the above paragraph ☐ I do not accept the above paragraph ☐  
(Please tick as appropriate)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_