

Broombridge Educate Together National School

ICT Acceptable Usage Policy

1. Background

Broombridge Educate Together National School is a developing school under the Educate Together Patronage, opening with one Junior Infant class in September 2016. We currently have classes up to 6th class and will continue to develop until September 2025 with 16 mainstream classes and two classes for children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This is a review of a policy that was first written in 2020 and enacted after consultation between staff, parent representatives, principal and our Board of Management. This policy was reviewed by staff and our PSA (Parents & Staff Association) in November 2024 and submitted to the Board of Management in December 2024.

2. Aims

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet and digital resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access 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 Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in our schools Positive Behaviour Policy will be imposed.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to:

- Students who have access to and are users of the Internet in Broombridge Educate Together National School.
- Members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in Broombridge Educate Together National School

1. Overview

When using the internet, students, parents, staff and internet users of the BBETNS network 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 version was reviewed by our school Board of Management on

This policy is to be read in conjunction with our Anti-bullying policy which also deals with the issue of Cyber bullying and our school Positive Behaviour Policy.

School's Strategy:

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

General:

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher/member of staff.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school has the ability to monitor students' Internet usage in school where needed.
- 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 memory sticks or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will treat others with respect at all times while online.

This policy is also closely linked and made in line with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Statement
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Digital Learning Plan
- SPHE Whole School Plan
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Data Protection Policy

3. Web Browsing and Downloading

- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- 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.

4. Email, Drive and Google Workspace

- Students will only use approved personal/class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher (Please see Guidelines for school devices used by students - Appendix B)
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, and 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 addresses, telephone numbers or pictures
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Parents should only communicate through the school Aladdin connect system and school email address (info@broombridgeetns.ie) unless otherwise specified (see remote learning)
- If a student receives any inappropriate emails, the student should inform the class teacher and a parent/guardian.
- Parental permission will be sought prior to individual student email accounts being set up for children on the schools domain.
- Students should not amend/delete other students' work saved on a shared class Drive, unless permission is granted by the class teacher (working collaboratively with another student).

5. Personal Devices

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, chromebooks, laptops, gaming devices, smart watches and digital music players in Broombridge Educate Together National School:

- Students do not have permission to use their own devices in school unless given permission by the Senior Management Team (e.g: Assistive Technology, contacting a parent/guardian when no other means is available)
- Students are only allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during lessons with expressed permission from teaching staff (e.g: Assistive Technology)
- Students are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during break time or wet play and must be supervised at all times by a teacher/staff member when using these devices.

6. Assistive Technology

At Broombridge Educate Together National School we welcome the use of Assistive Technology to support learning when required. This can have a very positive impact on an individual student's learning and is used as a support to educational needs. The following guidelines apply to the use of Assistive Technology at Broombridge Educate Together National School.

- Children will use assistive technology in line with recommendations outlined in a specific report (Psychological Report, Occupational Therapy etc). Only children who have these recommendations will use assistive technology in the classroom.
- Parents will meet with the class teacher and ICT co-ordinator as part of the application for assistive technology.
- When a student transfers to our school with assistive technology, parents will make the class teacher aware and a meeting will be held between parents, class teacher and ICT co-ordinator.
- Where student devices travel between home and school, the student's device will be used for educational purposes only and in line with our Acceptable Usage Policy. Parents/Carers will meet with class teacher and ICT co-ordinator prior to this occurring and will sign a form in agreement with this. Where needed this will be reviewed.

7. Social Media

- Many social media sites have minimum age requirements. We advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Instagram, etc. until they are the appropriate age.
- Use of instant messaging services and apps including but not limited to Snapchat, Whatsapp etc are not allowed to be used by students while in school.
- Social media sites can be used by individual teachers, for example, Instagram/Facebook. In these cases all interactions and content will be completed by the class teacher/staff member.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to regularly check their child's online activity /digital footprint. Parents are encouraged to check social media apps (e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, Whatsapp, Instagram etc) on mobile phones and electronic devices to ensure they are aware of their child's online interaction with others and approve of the same.
- Do not "tag" photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- Staff and students must never use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, staff or other members of the school community.
- Staff and students must not use their school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- If uploading a photograph, please ensure that it does not identify the child in any way. Consent must have been obtained from parent/guardian prior to uploading a picture on social media platforms (Aladdin Connect/Written permission)
- Please ensure that online messages and comments to the school are respectful. Any messages written on social media are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
- Avoid any negative conversations about children, staff or parents on social media accounts.
- Please do not add advertisements to the school wall without prior permission of the principal.

- Failure to keep the above rules will result in a permanent ban to our social media accounts.

8. Cyber Bullying

- 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. Sanctions include but are not limited to suspension and school expulsion. When using the internet, students, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times. The prevention of Cyberbullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.
- Measures are taken to ensure that staff and students are aware that Cyber bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) which may or may not be repeated. This definition includes cyber-bullying even when it happens outside of school hours.
- Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy. Due to the nature of these incidents, which have the ability/ potential to be shared to multiple people/ sites/ apps, these incidents may be considered as repeated acts of bullying.

9. School Website (broombridgeetns.ie)

Students may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on our school website in accordance with clear policies and approval processes. Please find below the list of guidelines

- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of students or staff.
- When using facilities such as notice boards or web blogs will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain personal details.
- The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.
- Student work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without expressed written permission.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Video clips will be password protected when deemed necessary.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.

- The school website will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named and will not use student names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
- Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

10. Images and Video

- At Broombridge Educate Together National School we advise students that they must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission. This includes but is not limited to social media sites, Whats app groups, Snap Chat, Instagram etc.
- In the event that students share images and the parties involved have not granted permission, the school requests that the parents of the parties involved contact the child's parents directly and request that the photograph be removed.
- Students 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 students and/or minors is an illegal, unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions including suspension and/or expulsion.

11. Remote Learning

- During periods of school closure, class closure or a pod from a class being advised to self-isolate during our school term, the staff at Broombridge Educate Together can support the education of the children remotely (online) for the period of the closure.
- During this time teacher emails may be used at the discretion of Senior Management to support communication with parents of the children in our school.
- Prior to the commencement of remote learning, the staff of our school will decide on the particular platforms (e.g.: See Saw, Padlet, Google Classroom) to be used and the manner in which learning material will be provided.
- Teachers may also use online platforms as a way to assign homework and support home school links.
- During periods of remote learning it is expected that all interactions are respectful and reflective of the values of our school. In the event that communication is not deemed respectful the messages can be forwarded on to Management.
- It is the duty of parents/guardians to supervise children while they are working online and to ensure any content which they are submitting to their teacher is appropriate.
- Under no circumstances can pictures be taken of video calls.
- Parental permission will be acquired before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication forum.

- Broombridge ETNS cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are hacked.
- Communication using a mobile phone to parents will not be frequent, but in the rare exception where it is necessary, staff members will ensure that their caller ID is private.

Guidelines for staff members using online communication methods during remote learning:

1. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Staff members will communicate with pupils and families during the hours of 8.30am – 2.10 pm on school days.
3. Staff members will have high expectations regarding pupil behaviour, with any communication which takes place online.
4. Staff members will seek to become familiar with apps before using them with pupils.
5. Staff will check that consent has been given, before setting up a pupil profile for an online app.
6. Staff members will report any concerns regarding online behaviour or interactions to school management.
7. Staff members will notify parents/guardians of the date, time and password for a video call via email.
8. Staff members will only admit participants to video conferences, if they recognise the email address/username as being connected to a pupil.

Guidelines for parents and guardians:

For learning

1. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.
2. Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate.
3. Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils
4. For matters outside of teaching and learning, parents can contact the school through the usual office email and phone number.

For video calls

1. Under no circumstances can pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Ensure that the school has the correct email address for inviting you to join apps and meetings.
3. The main purpose of a video call if used is to maintain a social connection between the school staff and pupils at this difficult time. Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience.
4. Please note that school staff will only accept users into video call if you can be identified by the display name on your account.
5. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
6. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call.

7. Video calls will only be used for one to one interaction approved by senior management during remote learning.

It is important to note that any breach of the above guidelines will result in a discontinuation of this method of communication. A breach may also result in a person being immediately removed from a meeting or in a meeting being immediately terminated. In this case, the child's parent will receive a report on the incident.

12. Support and Information

Support Structures:

The following is a selection of websites offering support and advice in the area of Internet Safety -

- <http://www.ncte.ie/InternetSafety/>
- Webwise - <http://www.webwise.ie/>
- Childnet- <https://www.childnet.com/>
- Safe Internet - <http://www.saferinternet.org>

The following guides/manuals will also be available in school-

- Be Wise on the Net- Information and Advice for Schools (NCTE)
- Internet Safety Awareness Education Programme Teachers' Handbook SAFT Project (NCTE)

13. Implementation and Review

Implementation:

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the staff of Broombridge Educate Together National School. It is the responsibility of staff members to ensure that this policy is followed and any incidents reported in a timely manner.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Surveys and/or questionnaires of students, parents, and staff.
- Should serious online safety incidents take place, a member of the school management should be informed and a log will be kept of the incident. This log will be stored in the Principal's office and if deemed appropriate it will also be discussed at a BOM meeting and if necessary the policy will be reviewed.
- The policy will be scheduled for review in September 2026, but can be reviewed at an earlier stage and amendments made if deemed necessary.



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14. Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management in _____

Signed: _____ (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: _____

Appendix A

Acceptable Usage Policy

Permission Form

Part 1

Student's Name:
Parent/Guardian :
Date:

1. As the **parent or legal guardian** of the above student, I have read the Internet Acceptable Use Policy and **grant permission** for the named student above to **access the Internet in school**. I understand that Internet access is **intended for educational purposes**.
2. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but the **school cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites**.

Parent/ Guardian Signature:
Date:

Part 2

In relation to the school website/social media accounts I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's image or school work **may be chosen for inclusion on the website/social media account**. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing student images or work on the school website/social media accounts..

Parent/ Guardian Signature:
Date:

Sign and return this permission form to school.

Appendix B

School Devices for Student use

Staff Guidelines (2024)

- 1) Each class has an **individual login** for their class accounts on Google Workspace.
- 2) In line with our Acceptable Usage Policy **students should be supervised at all times by a teacher/staff member** during use of school devices for student use. It is not permitted for these devices to be used during wet play.
- 3) Teachers will provide students **with links to websites/videos/resources** that have been **checked for suitability** beforehand, through the use of school Padlet, Google Drive Folder or Google Classroom.
- 4) **Open searches** for websites or **open browsing** are not permitted from the students. All resources need to be planned and checked before sharing with class.
- 5) If you would to **download an app** on student devices please email our ICT co-ordinator and they will review the app (**if not used before**) prior to downloading.
- 6) Please consult the timetable to see if the trolley needs to be charged at the back of your room after your class session.
- 7) Our **tech buddies** will support moving the trolley throughout the school between classes.