



ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Athboy Community School -91517 D

1. INTRODUCTION

This Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the expectations for how students in Athboy Community School use 1:1 Devices and other digital technologies in a manner that supports learning and reflects the values of our school community.

Athboy Community School is committed to the values of care, inclusion, safety, creativity, and respect. These values guide how members of our school community interact with one another both in the classroom and online. When using laptops and other technologies, students are expected to act responsibly, show care for themselves and others, support an inclusive school environment, use technology creatively for learning, and treat all members of the school community with respect.

The school recognises that digital technologies provide valuable opportunities to enhance teaching and learning. However, their use also carries important responsibilities. This policy aims to promote safe, responsible, and respectful digital behaviour while preventing the misuse of devices or online tools that could harm others or disrupt the learning environment.

This policy supports the school's commitment to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour in line with the **Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools** (Department of Education and Youth, June 2024). Bí Cineálta promotes a whole-school approach to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour, including cyberbullying, and emphasises the importance of kindness, inclusion, and respect in all interactions, including those that take place online. (3.1)

The policy also operates in conjunction with the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2025)** and supports the school's responsibility to safeguard students, including addressing risks that may arise through the use of digital technologies.

Implementation of this policy operates in conjunction with the school's Learning Code, ensuring that digital technologies are used responsibly and in a manner that supports teaching, learning and positive behaviour. (7.1)

2. SCHOOL STRATEGY

The school employs a range of strategies to maximise learning opportunities while reducing risks associated with internet use. These strategies include the use of filtering systems, monitoring software, digital citizenship education and clear expectations regarding the responsible use of school devices.

2.1 GENERAL

- i. Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material while our students/learners are in Athboy Community School. It is expected that parents/guardians have appropriate filtering software in place for students while working away from the school. Parents/Guardians can find a range of advice, support, tools and resources on the Webwise Parents Hub available on [webwise.ie/parents](https://www.webwise.ie/parents). On the hub, parents will find explainer guides to popular apps, talking points, how to guides, expert advice videos and a free Parents' Guide to a Better Internet. [Parents – \(https://www.webwise.ie/Parents/\)](https://www.webwise.ie/Parents/)
- ii. The school will regularly monitor students' internet usage. Monitoring software is used on school devices during school hours for all Junior Cycle devices.
- iii. Students must use 1:1 Devices for schoolwork only. Under no circumstances should school devices be used to download applications that are non-school related, examples include Social Media Apps, Gaming Apps, Online Games, Netflix, Disney or related applications. Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted. Our IT support pushes out Apps relevant to student devices.
- iv. The school provides a short course in Digital Media Literacy to all Junior Cycle students.
- v. During Friendship Week, lessons are facilitated in SPHE and DML in cyberbullying.
- vi. The use of USB keys, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in school require a teacher's permission as all students with Athboy Community School (Office 365) email addresses/accounts have access to a One Drive account.
- vii. Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute or cause hurt or embarrassment to any member of the school community. Any misuse of digital technologies or breaches of this Acceptable Use Policy will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Learning Code.
- viii. Students must not by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites, Virtual Private Networks (VPNs).
- ix. All guidelines provided for in this policy must be adhered to.

2.2 WORLD WIDE WEB

- i. Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- ii. Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- iii. Students will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- iv. Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement)
- v. Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.

- vi. Downloading by students of materials or images or video footage not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- vii. 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.
- viii. Students should only be connected to the Student Wi – Fi while on school premises.

2.3 EMAIL

- i. Students will use the approved student school email account, while using 1:1 Devices, which includes @athboycs.ie at the end of the email address. Students should not use any other email address other than the one provided by the school. Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- ii. Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- iii. Students will not under any circumstances share their email account login details with other students. Students must not access another student's or staff 365 accounts email accounts passwords with or without the consent of the owner.
- iv. Email attachments must be appropriate to school's ethos and Learning Code.
- v. Students should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious to avoid fraud. If in doubt, students should seek advice before opening emails from unknown senders.

2.4 MOBILE PHONE POLICY

The Acceptable Use Policy works in conjunction with the school's Mobile Phone Policy. Refer to the Mobile Phone Policy and the Learning Code in relation the use of mobile phones on the school campus. The school Mobile Phone Policy and Learning Code can be found on our school website: www.athboycs.ie.

2.5 INTERNET CHAT

- i. The only access to internet chat or messaging will be through Microsoft Teams or the collaboration space in Microsoft OneNote or shared documents including Power Point. Internet Chat using Teams may be restricted in some year groups.
- ii. The chat function or collaboration space within Microsoft Teams/OneNote/Power Point or other Office 365 Applications will only be used for educational purposes. Only ACS profiles/accounts will be used within the Teams chat function.
- iii. Students will not send or receive any material through these forums that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- iv. Video calls via internet chat are not allowed.
- v. Students should be aware that staff may not answer chats outside of office hours (8.50 a.m. – 4 p.m.) or holidays.

2.6 SCHOOL WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- i. School email addresses should not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- ii. Students must not represent their personal views as those of the school on any social media service or message services.

- iii. Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the World Wide Web in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be uploaded to the school's website and social media channels. Our school online presence includes our school website www.athboycs.ie, social media channels, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and YouTube are platforms, used as a means to promote student success and achievements while also giving up date information on the school.
- iv. The website and social media channels will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of students or staff. Website and social media channels using facilities such as guestbooks, noticeboards, comments or weblogs where applicable will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain personal details. Records will be kept regarding same.
- v. The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher. Students' work will appear in an educational context on web pages and social media channels with permission from the student.
- vi. The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will not be published on the school website without the parental permission. Photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities. Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- vii. The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use students' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
- viii. Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published. Where comments are enabled on the schools social media channels they will be monitored to ensure any comment made by the general public is appropriate. Any material through these forum that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person will be removed.
- ix. Request for the removal of any student related content from the school website or Tyro App or social media should be made in writing and sent to the school principal, office@athboycs.ie. The content, if possible, will be removed.

2.7 MICROSOFT(MS) TEAMS

- i. MS Teams is an online learning and teaching platform that teachers and students may use in this school. It provides teachers with a method of managing lessons, setting/sharing content with teachers and students and facilitating live classes remotely.
- ii. All content shared through MS Teams should be appropriate. Students will not send or receive any material through this forum that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- iii. Students will use the approved student school email accounts which includes @athboycs.ie at the end of the email address when participating in MS Teams.
- iv. Students may use the platform to check for homework, see online demonstrations or elements of lessons, engage with live classes, get help and support from teachers and for the purposes of sending work to teachers.
- v. Students should be aware that any links received for MS Teams meetings and/or classes are for their private use only and they are not authorised to forward any links to other parties either within or outside the school.

- vi. This platform is for education and schoolwork only and it must not be used by students and teachers for any purposes other than this.

For the purpose of remote live classes, the following procedures should be adhered to:

- Use the appropriate link to the online class and be on time
- When accessing the online class, the camera should be switched off and microphone should be muted
- Set up in a quiet space and dress appropriately
- Never take a photo, video or screenshot of the online class. Recording and photographing are forbidden. Screenshots can only be taken with the teacher's permission and should only be of displayed classwork, not of teacher or student.
- One person to speak at a time, any questions the hand symbol should be pressed/raised to notify the teacher.
- Interactions through MS Teams should be of the same standard as they would be in the classroom; respectful and polite. The normal school Learning Code applies.
- Teachers reserve the right to remove a student from a live MS Teams class should any issues arise.
- As with all MS products extensive user logs are maintained and can be accessed when required for the purposes of an investigation by a school, TUSLA, Garda Siochana etc where necessary.

2.8 MICROSOFT(MS) ONENOTE

- i. Is an online learning and teaching platform that teachers and students may use in this school.
- ii. It provides teachers with a method of managing lessons, setting/sharing content with teachers and students and the storage of class notes and student work in one location.
- iii. All content shared through MS OneNote should be appropriate. Students will not upload or receive any material through this forum that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person
- iv. Students will use the approved student school email accounts which includes @athboys.ie at the end of the email address when participating in MS Teams.
- v. Students may use the platform to check for homework, see class notes or elements of lessons, get help and support from teachers and for the purposes of sending work to teachers.
- vi. This platform is for education and schoolwork only and it must not be used by students and teachers for any purposes other than this.
- vii. If using the collaboration space in MS OneNote, content posted should always be respectful.
- viii. The recording, photographing and taking of screenshots are forbidden, unless permission is received from a teacher to do so for educational purposes only.
- ix. As with all MS products extensive user logs are maintained and can be accessed when required for the purposes of an investigation by a school, TUSLA, Garda Siochana etc., where necessary.

2.9 1:1 DEVICES

- i. The school acknowledges that as a high technology 21st century school, students may use 1:1 Devices to engage in learning. The use of such appropriate digital devices is permitted for learning purposes only in the classroom with the permission of the teacher.
- ii. 1:1 Devices are deployed in mid-September through the school to new students. A unique, confidential password is distributed to parents which must be kept secure and not shared. Students are required to retain packaging at home.
- iii. All 1:1 Devices in Junior Cycle are supported by software which is linked to individual student ID's, which monitors, manages and safeguards their use. This service is provided by our IT management company.
- iv. 1:1 Devices must be managed by our IT Management Company to safeguard students.
- v. Management profiles must not be removed from 1:1 Devices except in the case of a student leaving the school. In that event a parent must contact the IT management company and subject to verification by the school the management profile may be removed. Parents should seek advice from the school as to the procedure to be followed.
- vi. 1:1 Devices are only to be used in the classroom when instructed to by the Teacher.
- vii. At the start of class 1:1 Devices should be placed on the desk.
- viii. Access to the App Store is prohibited. All educational apps have been pushed out to student devices by our IT Management Company. 1:1 Devices within the school are an educational device and should only be used for same.
- ix. Teachers will endeavour to monitor students' 1:1 Devices throughout the class using classroom management software or other appropriate strategies.
- x. Devices must be charged coming to school each day. Students charging a device in school do so at their own risk.
- xi. 1:1 Device inspections will be carried out by school management and Year Heads / Tutors or designated staff member on a random basis. Any unauthorised Apps/ VPNs or other inappropriate content found on the device may be removed.
- xii. Students are not permitted to use the USB drive for storage i.e. USB pens, sticks etc. In some circumstances the IT management company, on instruction from management will allow student access USB ports to be used for educational purposes e.g. students using BBC Microbits.
- xiii. Restrictions can be imposed on students who are inappropriately using 1:1 Devices. This may include but is not limited to chat function/ camera being switched off or the 1:1 Device being confiscated for a duration of time. This may also include the device being kept on school premises at all times.
- xiv. Students are forbidden to take photographs, videos or screenshots on their personal device unless given permission to by the teacher. The recording or photographing of teachers or students without permission is strictly forbidden.
- xv. All content shared through personal devices i.e. One Drive, Teams including Chat, PowerPoint or any application with the ability to share should be appropriate. Students will not share or receive any material through their 1: 1 Device that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- xvi. Students are prohibited from viewing or allowing others to view on a digital device, material which is obscene, defamatory or inappropriate.

- xvii. The use of 1:1 Devices in the GPA and corridors at breaktimes is not allowed as spillages may cause damage to the device and this will also help to reduce screentime, for health & safety reasons and to encourage students to socialise.
- xviii. Where classes take place in the GPA outside of break times, devices may be used with the permission of the supervising teacher.
- xix. The playing of games on personal devices is strictly prohibited.
 - xx. Students must not take photographs or record teachers on their device.
- xxi. Should students wish to contact home they may do so through the school office and not via their 1:1 Device.
- xxii. Any breakages/issues with devices are reported directly to the IT management company by scanning the QR code in the student journal and on the student device. Details will be forward to parents at regular intervals through TYRO also. It is strongly advised that a cover is purchased with the 1:1 Device.

2.10 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Athboy Community School recognises the potential benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and is committed to its responsible and ethical use within our learning environment. AI tools used must always support learning but must not replace a student’s own work.

Athboy Community School shares details of training and professional development opportunities for teachers to effectively utilise AI tools in their teaching practices, ensuring they stay up to date with technological advancements.

The selection of AI tools and technologies in Athboy Community School aligns with educational goals, including supporting learner agency and promoting critical thinking.

AI technologies are integrated into the curriculum to enhance learner outcomes and experiences. Athboy Community School integrates AI into its educational processes to enhance learning, foster innovation, and promote the development of critical skills.

Athboy Community School will make necessary adjustments to our AUP and integration of AI based on review and feedback going forward.

A regular review of the impact of AI on learning outcomes is to be conducted to ensure continuous improvement.

All AI tools used in Athboy Community School should comply with data protection regulations (GDPR).

Entering personal, sensitive, or confidential data into any AI system without proper authorisation is strictly prohibited.

- i. Students will not create, share or send any AI generated material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

- ii. Students must not use AI in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, staff, and other members of the Athboy Community School community.
- iii. Students must not engage in activities involving AI generated material which might bring Athboy Community School into disrepute.
- iv. Athboy Community School promotes digital literacy and critical thinking skills to help learners understand AI, its implications, and responsible usage. This includes data literacy, verification of AI-generated information, and recognising potential biases in AI tools.
- v. AI systems used in Athboy Community School ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability in decision-making processes.
- vi. Students must attribute / reference AI text and images properly when used in assignments/homework.
- vii. AI generated material is allowed for the purpose of research, brainstorming, and revising text.
- viii. If used for research, learners must fact-check, check other sources and reference sources.

State Exams Commission Coursework and AI

Students must familiarise themselves with Appendix 2 – Rules for the Use of AI in SEC Examination Coursework. AI tools may assist in generating ideas, conducting research, or enhancing clarity, provided its use is clearly documented, in the same manner that all research sources are treated in coursework. Coursework Rules and Procedures 2025-2026 can be found at this link ; <https://oide.ie/post-primary-news/coursework-rules-procedures-2025-2026/>. The SEC will update the Coursework Rules and Procedures annually.

2.11 ONLINE VIDEO CONFERENCING EG: 6TH YEAR INFORMATION SESSION, SENIOR OPTIONS.

- i. It is expected that students and staff will use this platform in a professional and ethical manner for the purpose of imparting information to students and parents/guardians.
- ii. It is expected that students, when engaging in remote sessions, will follow the instruction of the presenter regarding the use of camera and/or mic. It is also expected that students will locate themselves in an appropriate setting for such sessions.
- iii. Students should never post, stream or transmit any content, including live video, that violates this policy in such a way that is offensive to students/staff.
- iv. Students should not do anything illegal, facilitate any illegal activity, or promote violence.
- v. Students should not do anything that threatens, exploits or otherwise harms children or fellow students.

- vi. Students should not engage in any activity that is harmful, obscene or indecent. This includes offensive gestures, displays of nudity, violence, pornography, sexually explicit material or criminal activity.
- vii. Students should not engage in any activity that is defamatory, harassing, threatening, obscene, indecent or otherwise inappropriate.
- viii. Students should not send unauthorised messages or irrelevant material.
- ix. Students should not share any links for meetings with anyone else, either inside the school or to external users.
- x. Students should not misrepresent a user's identity or affiliation with any entity or organisation or impersonate any other person.
- xi. Students should not harvest, collect or gather user data without consent.
- xii. Students should not violate or infringe any intellectual property or proprietary rights of others, including copyrights.
- xiii. Students should not violate the privacy of others or distribute confidential or personal information of others.
- xiv. Students should not engage in any activity that is harmful or disruptive to the operation of online session. This includes transmitting viruses, malware or other malicious or destructive code or using tools that mask IP address location or to otherwise circumvent restrictions on use due to regulations or account closures.
- xv. Students should report any concerns or suspicious activity immediately to a member of staff.

3. CYBERBULLYING

3.1 BÍ CINEÁLTA ANTI – BULLYING POLICY

- i. Athboy Community School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment for all students. Cyberbullying is considered a serious breach of the school's values and will not be tolerated. This section of the Acceptable Use Policy supports the school's **Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying Policy** and promotes responsible and respectful behaviour when using digital technologies.
- ii. Cyberbullying refers to bullying behaviour carried out through digital devices or online platforms. This may include mobile phones, social media, messaging services, gaming platforms, email, online forums or any other digital communication tool. Examples of cyberbullying may include but are not limited to:
 - Sending or posting hurtful, threatening, or offensive messages.
 - Sharing embarrassing or inappropriate photos, videos or information about another person.
 - Creating fake accounts or impersonating another person online.
 - Excluding someone from online groups or deliberately targeting them in online discussions.
 - Posting rumours, false information or defamatory comments about another person.
 - Repeated unwanted contact or harassment through digital platforms.

3.2 GUIDELINES

- i. Students must not use digital technologies to harass, intimidate, embarrass or harm any member of the school community. Students should always consider the impact their online behaviour may have on others and must demonstrate the school values of **care, inclusion, safety, creativity and respect** when communicating online.
- ii. Students who experience cyberbullying or who become aware of cyberbullying are encouraged to report the matter immediately to a **Teacher, Year Head, Tutor, Guidance Counsellor, Deputy Principal or Principal**. Students should also retain any evidence (such as screenshots or messages) where possible to assist in addressing the issue.
- iii. All reports of cyberbullying will be investigated and addressed in accordance with the school's **Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying Policy** and **Learning Code**. In serious cases, incidents may also be dealt with under the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2025)** and relevant legislation including the **Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 (Coco's Law)**.
- iv. Students should be aware that cyberbullying behaviour, whether it occurs in school or outside of school hours, may be addressed by the school where it impacts on the wellbeing, safety or learning of members of the school community.

4. LEGISLATION

This policy takes into account the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- Data Protection Acts 1988–2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000.
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998.
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017.
- Children First Act 2015.
- Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 (Coco's Law).
- Criminal Damage Act 1991.
- Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022.
- Online Safety Framework – Coimisiún na Meán.

5. EDUCATION & TRAINING ON INTERNET SAFETY

- i. Students are provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of implementation of the SPHE programme and Junior Cycle short course, Digital Media Literacy.
- ii. Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to students through Induction Programmes, Transfer and Transition Programmes, Wellbeing Programmes and ICT Classes.
- iii. The school holds an annual Internet Safety Week.
- iv. The school holds an annual Wellbeing Week.
- v. Students participate in Safer Internet Day activities that promote safer and more effective use of the internet

- vi. The school support the development and training of Digital Champions/Microsoft Ambassadors/Webwise Ambassadors in the school.
- vii. Teachers are provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- viii. Talks are scheduled for parents in Internet Safety. This includes a Digital Evening for 1st year parents and students as well as the Incoming First Year meeting. Parent Teacher Meetings may also showcase awareness for parents and give direction to resources and other related supports.
- ix. The school website has a tab that links directly to www.webwise.ie, www.education.ie, www.scoilnet.ie, www.ncse.ie and www.pdst.ie which include a range of resources for students, teachers, parents and guardians.
- x. The school may have visiting speakers who meet with students in class groups and/or year groups to discuss the area of Internet Use and Online Safety.
- xi. An Garda Siochana may present various programmes in school to groups of students.

6. CONTENT FILTERING

Content filtering is an essential and integrated element of the broadband service that is provided to schools by the Schools Broadband Programme. The purpose of content filtering is to ensure (in so far as possible) that inappropriate websites and content are not accessible from within schools.

Within the content filtering service provided, schools are given a choice of six different levels of content filtering so that they can choose a level that best meets their particular situation, age group of students etc. Schools can choose from these six levels, and the chosen level of content filtering is implemented by the Schools Broadband team for the school. If schools subsequently want to change the level that is applied, they can do so by a formal written communication from the school to the Schools Broadband Service Desk, which is the single point of contact for all schools in relation to school's broadband.

Content filtering systems classify websites into different 'categories', and these categories are used to control which category of website is allowed for schools on the different filtering levels. Level one is the most restrictive (as outlined below), while level six is the 'widest' level available as it allows access to websites such as YouTube, personal blogging and social networking. We have Level 2.

7. COMPLIANCE WITH LEARNING CODE

The Acceptable Use Policy works in conjunction with the schools Learning Code Policy. The school Learning Code Policy can be found on our school website: www.athboys.ie.

All students are encouraged to demonstrate positive behaviour and staff are committed to recognising and commending such behaviour including Digital Skills. Positive Behaviour Targets

are shared with the students weekly and Digital Skills are one of the regular targets set out by the Positive Behaviour Coordinator.

Sanctions

1. Not having device charged and not being on task with the device, eg, not following instructions in relation to the device. These issues, when repeated, will result in an Amber Note being recorded on Tyro.
2. Harmful use of device (to bring the school into disrepute or cause hurt or embarrassment to any member of the school community or to deliberate disrupt learning, etc..) will result in a **Red Note** being recorded on Tyro.

Misuse of the Internet and abuse or infringement of the rules outlined in this Acceptable Use Policy may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of device access, privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities including TUSLA and/or the Gardaí. This could include unacceptable use of the internet, inappropriate use of any app which includes the camera, inappropriate, inaccurate, defamatory, obscene or illegal material found on devices. This also includes the distribution, publication and sharing of any inappropriate images and/or links to private and confidential data

AUP ANNUAL ACCEPTANCE

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP annually.

This Acceptable Use Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of

Athboy Community School on: _____

This policy will be reviewed on: _____

