Acceptable Usage (AUP) Policy



2025 – 2026

Principal Tony Riley **February 2026** **Roll Number: 17479D**

Introduction

The use of digital technologies and the Internet is an integral part of teaching, learning, communication, and school life in Scoil Mhuire Lacken. Digital tools are used to enhance learning opportunities, support pupil engagement, and develop digital competence in line with the new Primary School Curriculum Framework, the Digital Learning Framework document, and the school's commitment to pupil wellbeing.

This Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) outlines the expectations for the safe, responsible, and respectful use of digital technologies by pupils, staff, and the wider school community. Internet access and the use of digital devices within the school is regarded as a privilege and a learning resource, which may be withdrawn if misused.

Aims of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all members of the school community benefit from the educational use of digital technologies in a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment. The policy promotes positive online behaviour, protects pupils' wellbeing, and provides clear guidance on acceptable and unacceptable use of digital technologies.

This policy aims to:

- Support safe, responsible, and ethical use of digital technologies
- Protect pupils' wellbeing, dignity, and privacy
- Promote positive online behaviour in line with the Bi Cineálta (Be Kind) Policy
- Reduce exposure to inappropriate content and online risks
- Support teaching and learning in line with the Digital Learning Framework
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of pupils, parents/guardians, and staff

Policy Context and Links

This Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) operates within the wider policy framework of Scoil Mhuire Lacken and supports a consistent, whole-school approach to behaviour, wellbeing, and safeguarding.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Code of Behaviour
- Bi Cineálta (Anti-Bullying) Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- GDPR / Data Protection Policy
- Photograph & Images Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SPHE and Wellbeing Policy
- Stay Safe Programme
- Digital Learning Framework Action Plan

Legislation and National Guidance

This policy is informed by relevant legislation and national guidance relating to child protection, data protection, online safety, and digital learning. These frameworks ensure that Scoil Mhuire Lacken meets its statutory obligations and follows best practice.

Relevant legislation and guidance include:

- Data Protection Acts and GDPR
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act
- Copyright and Related Rights Act
- Interception Act
- DES Anti-Bullying Procedures
- Webwise Internet Safety Guidance
- Digital Learning Framework (DES)

Digital Resources in Scoil Mhuire Lacken

Scoil Mhuire Lacken provides pupils and staff with access to a range of digital technologies to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. These resources are used to enhance educational outcomes while maintaining a strong focus on safety, balance, and wellbeing.

Digital resources include:

- Chromebooks and laptops
- Interactive whiteboards
- Google Workspace for Education (Google Classroom, Drive)
- Approved educational apps and platforms

All digital technologies provided by the school are intended for educational purposes only.

Safe and Responsible Use of Technology

The school is committed to supporting pupils in developing the skills and understanding needed to use digital technologies safely and responsibly. Pupils are taught that the same standards of behaviour and respect apply online as apply in the classroom and playground.

Pupils are expected to:

- Use digital devices only under teacher supervision
- Follow instructions given by staff regarding online activities
- Use technology for educational purposes during school time
- Treat others with respect and kindness in all online communication
- Report any online content or behaviour that causes concern

Staff will:

- Actively supervise pupils when using digital technologies
- Model safe and respectful online behaviour
- Teach digital citizenship and online safety through SPHE and Wellbeing

Cyberbullying and Online Behaviour

(Bi Cineálta Alignment)

Scoil Mhuire Lacken is committed to fostering a positive, inclusive, and respectful school culture both offline and online. Cyberbullying is considered a serious breach of this policy and is addressed in line with the school's Bi Cineálta Policy and the DES Anti-Bullying Procedures.

Cyberbullying includes:

- Sending or sharing hurtful, threatening, or inappropriate messages or images
- Excluding others or spreading rumours online
- Using digital platforms to embarrass, harass, or intimidate others

Any incidents of cyberbullying, whether occurring in or outside of school, will be investigated and addressed in line with:

- Bi Cineálta Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- DES Anti-Bullying Procedures

World Wide Web Use

Access to the World Wide Web is provided to support learning, research, and creativity. Pupils are supported in developing critical thinking skills and an understanding of how to navigate online content safely.

Pupils must:

- Not intentionally visit websites containing inappropriate, offensive, or illegal material
- Report accidental access to inappropriate content immediately
- Use the Internet for educational purposes during class time
- Not disclose personal information online

Filtered broadband is provided through the Schools Broadband Programme; however, pupils are taught that no filtering system is completely risk-free.

Google Classroom and Online Platforms

School-managed online platforms are used to support teaching, learning, and communication in a safe and controlled environment.

- Accounts are for educational use only
- All accounts remain the property of Scoil Mhuire Lacken
- Usage may be monitored in line with GDPR requirements
- Misuse may result in restricted or withdrawn access

School Website, Blog and Digital Media

The school website and blog are used to communicate with parents and the wider school community and to celebrate pupils' learning and achievements. The school is committed to protecting pupils' privacy and personal data.

- Pupils' full names will not be published
- Images and videos will be used only in line with parental consent
- Digital media will be stored securely in accordance with GDPR
- Personal pupil information will not be published online

Web 2.0 such as Google Classroom and Social Media

(Parents and Guardians)

Scoil Mhuire Lacken recognises the benefits of Web 2.0 tools for communication and learning. Responsible and respectful engagement is expected from all members of the school community.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to:

- Monitor their child's online activity and digital footprint
- Support the school's expectations regarding online behaviour
- Avoid tagging pupils or staff in social media posts relating to the school
- Communicate respectfully when engaging online about school matters

Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Acceptable Use

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in Scoil Mhuire Lacken will support teaching and learning in a safe, ethical and age-appropriate manner. AI may only be used by pupils when directed and supervised by a teacher. Pupils must not use AI tools independently to complete schoolwork or present AI-generated content as their own. Any use of AI will prioritise learning, creativity and understanding, rather than replacing pupils' own thinking or effort. Personal data, images or sensitive information must never be entered into AI tools. The school will ensure that any AI tools used are appropriate for educational settings and comply with data protection requirements. The use of AI in the school is further guided by Scoil Mhuire Lacken's AI Policy (to be developed), and any misuse will be addressed in line with the school's Acceptable Usage Policy and Code of Behaviour**.**

Distance and Remote Learning

Where remote or blended learning is required, Scoil Mhuire Lacken may use school-approved online platforms to support teaching and learning. Parents and guardians are expected to support and supervise pupils' engagement during remote learning. All online behaviour during distance learning remains subject to the Code of Behaviour, Bi Cineálta Policy, and this Acceptable Usage Policy.

Personal Devices

To ensure a safe and focused learning environment, pupils are not permitted to bring personal mobile phones or electronic devices to school unless explicit permission has been granted by the school.

Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to online safety, inappropriate content, or misuse of digital technologies will be reported to the Principal and addressed in line with school procedures and relevant policies.

Sanctions

Failure to comply with this Acceptable Usage Policy will be addressed in a fair and consistent manner. Misuse of digital technologies will be dealt with in line with the school's agreed policies and procedures.

Sanctions may include:

- Withdrawal of access to digital technologies
- School-based disciplinary measures
- Involvement of external agencies where required

Ratification and Review

This policy was ratified by the **Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Lacken** on:

Date: 23/02/2026

The policy will be reviewed every **two years**, or earlier if required due to legislative, curricular, or technological changes.

Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal