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Holy Family Junior School

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Date of Commencement: October 2026

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General Approach

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's digital resources in a safe and effective manner. The responsible use of internet and digital technologies, both online and offline and access, is considered an integral part of teaching and learning. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to agreed, sanctions will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP at least annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

When using the internet pupils, parents and staff 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.

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:

- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Internet use within school will always be supervised by a teacher.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in Holy Family Junior School. It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in Holy Family Junior School.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Holy Family Junior School implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE and other curriculum areas.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Holy Family Junior School will participate in Safer Internet Day activities where appropriate to promote safer more effective use of the internet.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually by the following stakeholders:

Board of Management, teaching staff, support staff, pupils and parents

This policy has been developed by a working group including Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, pupils, parents/carers, and representatives of the Board of Management.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the principal should be informed.

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The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored
by The Board of Management of Holy Family Junior School.

Content Filtering

Holy Family Junior School has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

Level 6: this is the widest level of content filtering available. This level allows access to millions of websites including games and YouTube and allows access to personal websites category, and other similar types of websites, such as blogs. It allows access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the Social Networking category.

Pupils taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

Internet Use - Searching, Downloading & Browsing Websites

All internet users will:

- Not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Be encouraged to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school but outside the classroom to their class teacher.
- 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.
- Use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Not engage in online activities such as uploading or downloading large files that result in heavy network traffic which impairs the service for other internet users.
- Not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory, or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Never disclose or publicise personal information or passwords.
- Be aware that any usage of the internet and school's digital platform, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, will be monitored.

All pupils will:

- Be aware that downloading materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

Email and Messaging

The use of personal email accounts is not allowed at Holy Family Junior School.

All internet users will:

- Not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication.
- Report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication. Pupils should report any such communications to a teacher.

Pupils will:

- Not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through email or the internet.

Staff will:

- Communicate with parents through Aladdin Connect

Social Media and Messaging Services for Staff and Pupils

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow us to interact and keep in touch. While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that members of your school community are expected to follow when using social media.

The principles set out in this policy are designed to help ensure that social media is used responsibly so that the confidentiality of pupils and other staff and the reputation of the school is protected.

This policy applies to personal websites such as social networking sites (for example Facebook, Instagram and TikTok), blogs, microblogs such as chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites and content sharing sites such as flickr and YouTube. The internet is a fast-moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media.

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Holy Family Junior School:

- The use of personal social media and messaging services, including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, TikTok, Instagram and similar platforms, is not permitted by pupils during the school day or while using school-owned devices, unless explicitly authorised by a teacher for an educational purpose
- Access to video-sharing and streaming platforms, such as YouTube or Vimeo, may be permitted under teacher supervision for educational purposes only.

All members of the school community must not use social media, messaging services and the internet in any way to harass, impersonate, insult, abuse or defame others.

Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Holy Family Junior School community on social media.

Staff and pupils must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Holy Family Junior School into disrepute.

Staff and Pupils must not represent their personal views as those of being Holy Family Junior School on any social medium.

Teachers can read further information about the use of Social Media and Electronic Communication here: <https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/2021/guidance-for-registered-teachers-about-the-use-of-social-media-and-electronic-communication.html>

Personal Devices

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, smartwatches in Holy Family Junior School:

- Pupils are not allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into Holy Family Junior School.

School Owned Devices

- Pupils should follow teacher's instructions accessing only the applications to which the teacher has agreed
- Camera and audio recording functions may only be used under the teacher's direction.
- Devices must be handled with care at all times

Assistive Technology

- Pupils who have been granted assistive technology by the NCSE and Department of Education are expected to engage with it responsibly and for its intended educational purposes.
- Devices or software must not be altered, copied or used to access non-educational content unless otherwise approved.
- In the case of assistive technology which may be brought home and therefore outside the school's content filtering level, parents must take responsibility for the monitoring of the use of the internet at home and

ensuring that the device has not accessed any inappropriate material
that could be brought back into the school.

Digital Learning Platforms (including video conferencing)

Holy Family Junior School's digital learning platform is Microsoft Teams which is owned and managed by the school. Pupils do not currently have access to this platform. Pupils will only ever access the school's digital learning platform under the supervision of a teacher.

Prior consent from parents will be sought for pupil usage of the schools' digital learning platform.

Audio, images and video

In relation to the taking and recording of audio, video and images the following is asked of pupils, staff, parents and the school community:

Pupils:

- Must not share audio, images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community.

Staff:

- Will only take photos, videos or audio recordings for school-related purposes. These files will be deleted from the relevant device before the end of the school day.
- Will ensure care is taken when capturing photos, videos or audio recordings that pupils are not compromised or the school brought into disrepute.
- Will check that written permission from parents or carers is on file (enrolment form) before video, audio or photographs of pupils are published on the school website and social media platforms.

Parents/Guardians and the wider school community:

- Are reminded not to post photos, videos or audio recordings taken at school events to social media if other children are identifiable.

- Please do not 'tag' photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- Will be asked to provide consent upon enrolment for their child's photo/video or work to be used in digital media for school purposes such as school website or social media platforms etc.
- Must not share audio, images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm a member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.

Inappropriate Activities

Inappropriate activities such as the examples mentioned below are forbidden use of digital technology in Holy Family Junior School. This is not an exhaustive list:

- Promotion or conduct of illegal acts, e.g. under the child protection, obscenity, computer misuse and fraud legislation
- Misuse and fraud legislation
- Racist material
- Pornography
- Promotion of any kind of discrimination
- Promotion of racial or religious hatred
- Harmful content or threatening behaviour, including promotion of physical violence or mental harm
- Any other information which may be offensive to colleagues or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the school or brings the school into disrepute
- Using school systems to run a private business

- Use systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards employed by the school
- Uploading, downloading or transmitting commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, without the necessary licensing permissions
- Revealing or publicising confidential or proprietary information (e.g. financial / personal information, databases, computer / network access codes and passwords)
- Creating or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files
- Carrying out sustained or instantaneous high volume network traffic (downloading / uploading files) that causes network congestion and hinders others in their use of the internet
- Online gaming
- Online gambling
- Online shopping
- Unauthorised use of social networking sites, personal messaging services, online forums or chat platforms during school hours or through school-owned devices. Educational use approved and supervised by a teacher is permitted.

- Child sexual abuse material
- Any other activity considered questionable
- Creating fake accounts, impersonating another person, misrepresenting identity online or using another person's account without permission is strictly prohibited

School Websites

Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet. The publication of pupil work will be coordinated by a teacher.

The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy or reputation of pupils or staff.

Webpages allowing comments or user-generated content will be moderated and checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain any inappropriate or offensive content.

Holy Family Junior School will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual pupils will only be published on the school website with parental permission.

Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will not be published on Holy Family Junior School web pages.

Holy Family Junior School will avoid publishing the name(s) of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

Cyberbullying

When using the internet students, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times. Engaging in online activities with the intention to harm, harass, or embarrass another student or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behavior with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

Online bullying behaviour (cyberbullying) is defined in the Department of Education's publication 'Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools' as behaviour that is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chat rooms and other online technologies. This form of bullying behaviour can include:

- sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
- posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent
- making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students
- excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game

In accordance with the Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools a message may be posted online just once by a student can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.

Access to technology means that cyberbullying can happen around the clock and the pupils' home may not even be a safe haven from such bullying. Students are increasingly communicating in ways that are often unknown to adults and free from supervision. The nature of these technologies means digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and is almost impossible to delete permanently. While cyberbullying often takes place at home and at night, the impact can also be felt in school.

In line with the Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools, Holy Family Junior School considers that a school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bi Cineálta policy.

Artificial Intelligence

Holy Family Junior School recognises the potential benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and is committed to its responsible and ethical use within our learning environment.

Holy Family Junior School promotes 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 Holy Family Junior 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.

Holy Family Junior School integrates AI into its educational processes to enhance learning, foster innovation, and promote the development of critical skills.

Holy Family Junior School will make necessary adjustments to our school's adoption and integration of AI based on review and feedback.

School staff are encouraged to receive training on the ethical use of AI technologies, including understanding data privacy, identifying biases, and verifying AI-generated information.

All AI tools authorised for use in Holy Family Junior School comply with data protection regulations (GDPR).

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

Pupils 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.

Staff and pupils must not use AI in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, other members of the Holy Family Junior School community

Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving AI generated material which might bring Holy Family Junior School into disrepute.

Holy Family Junior School promotes digital literacy and critical thinking skills so that our young pupils develop an understanding of responsible digital usage, including usage of AI.

AI systems used in Holy Family Junior School should ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability in decision-making processes.

AI Generated material is allowed for the purpose of research, brainstorming, revising text.

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AI Generated images, audio or videos that impersonate another member of the school community are prohibited

Permission Form

Legislation

Holy Family Junior School recommends that teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with the following pieces of legislation relating to the use of the internet:

- Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 and 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

Support Structures

The school will inform pupils and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet e.g. webwise.ie is a useful resource to access various resources related to online safety.

Misuse and Sanctions

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action and appropriate sanctions. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities, including An Garda Síochána.

Acceptable Use Policy Permission Form

Please review your most recent Internet Acceptable Use Policy on our school website by clicking here: <https://holyfamilyjuniorschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/10/HFJS-Acceptable-Use-Policy-October-2026.pdf>

After reading our Acceptable Use Policy please sign and return this permission form to your child's class teacher.

Pupil's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. 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 pupils access unsuitable websites.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Ratification and Implementation

The policy was discussed and ratified by the BOM on 1st October 2026.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Allen Flynn, Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Miriam Lowe, Principal