



RAHEEN NATIONAL SCHOOL

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ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

2026/27

1. Rationale

Raheen National School recognises that digital technologies and internet access can enhance teaching, learning, communication and the development of important digital skills. The school is committed to providing pupils with opportunities to use digital technologies in a safe, responsible, respectful and effective manner.

The safety and wellbeing of our pupils is central to this policy. The purpose of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to help protect each child, and the other children and members of the school community with whom they interact, while using the internet and digital technologies in school.

The policy establishes clear, age-appropriate expectations for the safe and responsible use of the internet, school digital systems, online platforms, applications and other digital technologies. It aims to reduce risks including exposure to inappropriate content, inappropriate contact or communication, misuse of personal information, harmful online behaviour and the inappropriate creation or sharing of images, recordings or digital content.

The school recognises that no filtering, supervision or technical system can remove all online risk. For this reason, education is an essential part of our approach. We aim to help pupils develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to use technology safely, responsibly and respectfully, both during their time in Raheen National School and as their independence with digital technology develops.

Access to the school's internet, digital accounts, platforms and online resources is provided for educational purposes. All users are expected to use these resources responsibly and in accordance with this policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Digital Device Policy, Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour, Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, Data Protection Policy and Digital Learning Plan.

The school's use of official social media accounts is governed separately by the Raheen National School Social Media Policy.

2. Aims

- support the appropriate and effective use of digital technologies in teaching and learning;
- promote safe, responsible and respectful online behaviour;
- protect pupils from inappropriate, harmful or upsetting online content;
- develop pupils' digital literacy and their ability to critically evaluate online information;
- promote awareness of privacy, personal information, copyright and digital security;

- provide clear expectations regarding the use of school internet access, accounts, applications and online services;
- provide clear procedures for reporting online safety concerns or inappropriate content;
- support pupils in understanding the opportunities and limitations associated with emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI); and
- support a whole-school approach to online safety involving pupils, staff and parents/guardians.

3. Scope

This policy applies primarily to pupils' use of:

- the school internet and network;
- school-owned computers, tablets and other digital technologies;
- school-approved digital accounts;
- Google Classroom and other digital learning platforms;
- email or other online communication tools where provided or approved by the school;
- educational websites, applications and online services;
- Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI tools where their use has been specifically approved by the school;
- cameras, microphones, audio and video functions when used as part of school activities; and
- any other digital or online technology accessed as part of teaching, learning or a school-related activity.

The possession and use of pupils' personal devices, including mobile phones and smartwatches, is governed by the school's Digital Device Policy.

Staff use of digital technologies is governed by relevant school policies, professional obligations, data protection requirements, child safeguarding requirements and current Department of Education and Youth guidance.

4. School Strategy - Supervision, Filtering and Monitoring

Raheen National School will employ a range of strategies to maximise learning opportunities while reducing the risks associated with internet and digital technology use.

- Internet access by pupils will take place under appropriate teacher direction and age-appropriate supervision.
- Where pupils are using internet-enabled digital devices, the supervising teacher must remain in the classroom or learning area and pupils must not be left unsupervised with access to such devices.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used to minimise the risk of pupils accessing inappropriate online material.
- Pupils will access websites, applications and digital services appropriate to the learning activity and in accordance with teacher instruction.
- Uploading or downloading non-approved software, applications or files will not be permitted.
- Appropriate security and virus protection systems will be maintained on school systems where applicable.

- Pupils and staff will be provided with appropriate opportunities to develop their understanding of internet safety and responsible digital use.
- The school reserves the right, insofar as is lawful, proportionate and technically available, to monitor the use of school devices, accounts, networks and digital platforms for safeguarding, security, educational and network-management purposes.
- Any concerns arising from internet or digital technology use will be addressed in accordance with this policy and other relevant school policies.

No filtering or monitoring system can guarantee that inappropriate material will never be encountered. For this reason, the development of pupils' own safe and responsible online behaviour is an important part of the school's approach to internet safety.

5. Safe and Responsible Internet Use

When using the internet and school digital resources, pupils are expected to:

- use the internet and digital technologies primarily for educational purposes and as directed by their teacher;
- follow teacher instructions regarding websites, applications and online activities;
- treat other people respectfully and courteously;
- respect the privacy of other members of the school community;
- use appropriate language when communicating online;
- avoid deliberately searching for, accessing, creating or sharing material that is inappropriate, harmful, offensive, hateful, threatening, discriminatory, illegal or otherwise unsuitable;
- never attempt to bypass school filtering, security or access restrictions;
- never attempt to interfere with, damage or disrupt school devices, accounts, networks or systems;
- respect copyright and acknowledge sources appropriately when using online content;
- critically consider the reliability and accuracy of information found online; and
- report anything online that causes concern, discomfort or upset to a member of staff.

Pupils must not use school internet access or digital technologies in any manner that could cause deliberate harm to another person or seriously damage the reputation or functioning of the school.

6. Accounts, Passwords and Digital Security

Where pupils are provided with access to school-approved accounts or digital platforms:

- accounts must be used only for authorised educational purposes;
- passwords and login details must be kept private and must not be shared with other pupils;
- pupils must not attempt to discover or use another person's password;
- pupils must not access another person's account, files or work without permission;
- pupils should log out of accounts when directed or when using a shared device;
- pupils must not knowingly open suspicious links, files, attachments or messages;
- suspected security concerns should be reported to a teacher immediately; and
- pupils must not attempt to alter security settings or gain unauthorised access to school systems.

Impersonating another person online or using another person's account without permission is prohibited.

7. Digital Learning Platforms, Applications and Email

Raheen National School may use school-approved digital platforms, applications and online services to support teaching and learning. These may include Google Classroom and other services selected by the school.

When using these services:

- pupils will use only accounts and services approved by the school;
- use will take place with the permission or direction of a teacher;
- pupils will communicate respectfully and appropriately;
- pupils will not send, receive, upload or knowingly download inappropriate, offensive, threatening or illegal material;
- pupils will not reveal their own or another person's private or personal information;
- pupils will not arrange to meet or communicate privately with unknown persons encountered online;
- files and attachments may only be opened, sent or downloaded where appropriate to the learning activity; and
- school accounts must not be used to register independently for unrelated websites, applications or online services.

The school may introduce, change or discontinue particular digital platforms or applications as educational needs and technologies develop. Such changes will not in themselves require amendment of this policy provided that their use remains consistent with the principles contained within it.

8. Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI

Raheen National School recognises that Artificial Intelligence (AI), including Generative AI, is a developing area of digital technology that may provide educational opportunities while also presenting challenges relating to accuracy, privacy, copyright, authorship, age restrictions and responsible use.

The use of AI by pupils in school will therefore be carefully managed.

- Pupils may use AI or Generative AI tools only where the tool and activity have been specifically selected or approved by a teacher.
- AI use by pupils will form part of a planned and age-appropriate learning activity.
- Pupils must not independently create accounts for or register with AI services as part of school activities unless this has been specifically approved and appropriately managed by the school.
- Pupils must never enter personal, sensitive or identifying information about themselves or another person into an AI system.
- Photographs, video, audio or other identifying information relating to pupils, staff or members of the school community must not be uploaded to AI systems unless their use has been specifically authorised by the school and complies with applicable data protection and safeguarding requirements.
- Pupils will be taught that AI-generated information may be inaccurate, incomplete, biased or inappropriate and should not automatically be accepted as fact.
- AI-generated information should be critically evaluated and, where appropriate, checked against reliable sources.

- Pupils must not use AI to impersonate another person or to create harmful, deceptive, inappropriate or manipulated material.
- Pupils must not present work substantially generated by AI as entirely their own.
- Where AI is permitted as part of an activity, pupils will follow their teacher's instructions regarding how its use should be acknowledged.

The school will approach the use of AI in accordance with current Department of Education and Youth guidance. As this is a rapidly developing area, practices relating to AI may be amended in response to updated national guidance without waiting for the next scheduled annual review of this policy.

9. Images, Video, Audio and Personal Information

Pupils must respect the privacy of all members of the school community.

Pupils must not:

- photograph, video or audio-record another pupil, staff member or other person without teacher permission;
- upload, transmit, publish or share photographs, video or audio recorded during school activities without permission;
- reveal or publish personal information about themselves or another person, including home addresses, telephone numbers, passwords or other private information; or
- use images, audio or video to embarrass, intimidate, impersonate or cause harm to another person.

Where photography, video or audio is used as part of a planned school activity, this will take place under teacher direction and in accordance with the school's relevant data protection and safeguarding procedures.

The publication of photographs, videos, pupil work and other material through the school's official online or social media channels is governed by the school's Data Protection and Social Media Policies and applicable parental permissions.

10. Online Communication and Behaviour

The same standards of respect and behaviour expected within the school apply when pupils use digital technologies for school purposes.

Pupils should:

- communicate respectfully;
- consider carefully what they write, upload or share;
- respect the feelings, privacy and reputation of others;
- recognise that online communications can be copied, forwarded, saved or shared; and
- seek help from a trusted adult where an online interaction causes concern.

Pupils should never deliberately use digital technologies to frighten, humiliate, exclude, threaten, harass or otherwise cause harm to another person.

11. Inappropriate or Harmful Content and Reporting Concerns

The school recognises that, despite appropriate filtering and supervision, pupils may occasionally encounter inappropriate, upsetting or harmful online material accidentally.

Where this occurs, pupils should:

- stop viewing or interacting with the material;
- avoid forwarding, sharing or showing the material to other pupils; and
- inform a teacher or other member of staff immediately.

A pupil will not be sanctioned for genuinely accidental access to inappropriate material where the pupil reports the incident promptly and acts appropriately.

Pupils are encouraged to tell a trusted adult whenever something they see, receive or experience online makes them feel worried, frightened, uncomfortable or unsafe.

Where an online safety concern may constitute a child protection concern, it will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment and current Child Protection Procedures for Schools.

Where there is reason to believe that illegal activity may have occurred, the school will take appropriate action and may refer the matter to the relevant authorities.

12. Bullying Behaviour and Bí Cineálta

Bullying behaviour that occurs through digital or online means will be addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and current Department of Education and Youth procedures.

Online behaviour may be relevant to the school where it has an impact on a pupil's participation in, wellbeing at, or experience of school.

Nothing in this AUP replaces or alters the procedures contained in the school's Bí Cineálta Policy.

13. Data Protection, Privacy and Copyright

Raheen National School is committed to protecting personal data and respecting the privacy of pupils, staff and members of the school community.

Use of digital technologies and online services will take account of applicable data protection legislation and the school's Data Protection Policy.

Pupils will be supported in developing an age-appropriate understanding that:

- personal information should be protected;
- information shared online may be difficult or impossible to fully remove;
- another person's personal information should not be shared without permission;

- online information and images belong to their creators and should not simply be copied or presented as one's own work;
- sources should be acknowledged where appropriate; and
- copyright and intellectual property should be respected.

14. Education and Support

Raheen National School recognises that online safety is best supported through education, communication and a shared approach between school and home.

The school will:

- provide pupils with age-appropriate learning opportunities relating to online safety, digital citizenship, privacy, respectful communication and responsible technology use;
- integrate relevant online safety learning through appropriate curricular programmes and activities;
- make use of appropriate national resources and supports, including Webwise and other Department-approved resources;
- provide or facilitate internet safety information and/or educational opportunities for pupils and parents/guardians as appropriate;
- support staff in accessing relevant professional learning relating to digital technologies and online safety; and
- communicate significant online safety concerns or developments to parents/guardians where appropriate.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss safe and responsible internet use with their children and to support the expectations contained in this policy.

15. Misuse and Sanctions

Misuse of school internet access, accounts, digital platforms or digital technologies may result in appropriate action being taken by the school.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the incident, this may include:

- discussion with the pupil;
- restriction or withdrawal of access to particular digital resources or privileges;
- contact with parents/guardians;
- action in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour;
- action in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy where bullying behaviour is involved;
- action under the school's child safeguarding procedures where a safeguarding concern arises; and/or
- referral to the appropriate authorities where required.

Any response will take account of the pupil's age, understanding, individual needs and the nature and seriousness of the incident.

16. Related Policies and Guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant school policies, including:

- Digital Device Policy;
- Social Media Policy;
- Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour;
- Code of Behaviour;
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment;
- Data Protection Policy; and
- Digital Learning Plan.

Raheen National School will operate this policy in accordance with applicable legislation and current guidance and procedures issued by the Department of Education and Youth and other relevant statutory bodies.

Where statutory requirements or Department of Education and Youth guidance issued following the ratification of this policy impose new or amended requirements, those requirements will take precedence where applicable pending the formal review and amendment of this policy.

17. Communication, Implementation and Pupil Understanding

Following ratification by the Board of Management, the Acceptable Use Policy will be communicated to pupils, parents/guardians and staff. The full policy will be provided to parents/guardians through Aladdin and will also be available on the school website, where it can be accessed and viewed at any time.

The school will ensure that the expectations contained within the policy are explained to pupils in an age-appropriate manner.

Two Pupil Acceptable Use Agreements are provided with this policy:

- Appendix 1 - Junior Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement: Junior Infants-2nd Class
- Appendix 2 - Senior Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement: 3rd-6th Class

The agreements reflect the different levels of access to and independence in the use of digital technology experienced by pupils as they progress through the school.

Implementation Process

1. BOARD RATIFICATION

AUP approved by the Board of Management



2. PARENTS/GUARDIANS INFORMED

Full AUP provided through Aladdin and published on the school website. The current AUP remains available on the school website for reference at any time.



3. PUPIL EDUCATION & DISCUSSION

Teachers discuss safe and responsible technology use with pupils in class. The appropriate Junior or Senior Agreement is explained and discussed at an age-appropriate level.



4. AGREEMENT SENT HOME

Each pupil receives a hard copy of the appropriate Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement and is encouraged to discuss it with a parent/guardian.



5. PUPIL & PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The agreement is signed by the pupil, where age appropriate, and a parent/guardian.



6. RETURN & SCHOOL RECORD

The signed agreement is returned to school and retained in the pupil's file.

Ongoing Implementation

The AUP is not intended to be a once-off agreement. Safe, responsible and respectful use of technology will continue to be reinforced through teaching and learning and through pupils' everyday use of digital technologies in school.

The current AUP will remain available to parents/guardians and the wider school community on the school website.

New pupils enrolling during the school year will be provided with access to the AUP and the appropriate Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement as part of the school's enrolment/induction process.

Where significant amendments are subsequently made to the AUP, these will be communicated to parents/guardians and pupils as appropriate.

The school will continue to provide age-appropriate education in relation to online safety, digital citizenship and emerging technologies as part of its wider teaching and learning programme.

18. Ratification and Review

This Acceptable Use Policy was reviewed and updated by Raheen National School in 2026 following consideration of the school's existing policy, current school practice and relevant national guidance.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on:

Date: 21/9/26

Chairperson, Board of Management: Al O'Keefe Sinott

Signature: Al O'Keefe Sinott

Principal: Sarah Browne

Signature: Sarah Browne

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated at least annually, and sooner where necessary due to changes in legislation, Department of Education and Youth guidance, technology, school practice or circumstances.

Where the annual review identifies substantive amendments, the policy will be updated and the revised policy brought to the Board of Management for ratification.

Where an annual review determines that no amendment is necessary, this will be recorded in the Annual Review Record below and the Board of Management will be informed that the review has taken place.

Annual Review Record - Where No Amendment Is Required

Where, following annual review, the Principal and Deputy Principal are satisfied that the policy remains appropriate and consistent with current requirements, the review may be recorded below.

By signing, the Principal and Deputy Principal confirm that the policy has been reviewed with reference to current school practice and relevant Department of Education and Youth guidance and that no amendments were considered necessary.

The policy will be reviewed again during the following school year, or sooner where required by changes in legislation, Department guidance, technology or school circumstances.

Date of Review	Outcome	Principal	Deputy Principal
	No amendment required		
	No amendment required		
	No amendment required		
	No amendment required		

Appendix 1 - Junior Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement (Junior Infants - 2nd Class)

Using Technology Safely in Raheen N.S.

We use iPads, computers, apps and the internet in school to help us learn, create and have fun safely.

My teacher and my family will help me understand these rules.

When I use technology in school:

- I will listen to my teacher and only use the apps, games or websites my teacher tells me to use.
- I will be kind when I use technology and will not use it to upset or be unkind to anyone.
- I will look after our school devices and use them carefully.
- I will ask permission before taking a photograph, video or recording.
- I will keep private information private and will not share information about myself or other people.
- I will tell my teacher straight away if I see something on a screen that worries, frightens or upsets me.
- I know I will not be in trouble if something inappropriate appears by accident and I tell an adult.
- I will ask for help if I am unsure about what to do.

My Technology Promise

I have talked about these rules with my teacher and/or parent/guardian.

I will try my best to be safe, kind and responsible when I use technology in school.

Pupil Signature: _____

Class: _____

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement

The Raheen National School Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) has been made available to me through Aladdin and is available to view at any time on the school website.

I understand that the purpose of this policy and agreement is to support the safe and responsible use of internet and digital technologies in school and, in particular, to help protect my child and other children from potential harm while using these technologies.

I have read the school's Acceptable Use Policy and have discussed the appropriate Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement with my child in a way that is suitable for their age and understanding.

I understand the school's expectations regarding the safe, respectful and responsible use of internet and digital technologies and agree to support my child in following these expectations.

Pupil Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Appendix 2 - Senior Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement

3rd - 6th Class

At Raheen National School, we use the internet and digital technology to help us learn. When I use school technology, I agree that:

- I will use school technology for learning and other activities approved by my teacher.
- I will follow my teacher's instructions when using the internet, apps or digital devices.
- I will be kind and respectful to other people online.
- I will keep my passwords and login details private.
- I will not try to use another person's account.
- I will not share my own or another person's private information online.
- I will only take photographs, video or audio when my teacher gives permission.
- I will not deliberately search for or share inappropriate or harmful content.
- If I see something online that worries, upsets or frightens me, I will tell an adult.
- I understand that I will not be in trouble for accidentally seeing inappropriate content if I tell an adult straight away.
- I will not use technology to hurt, frighten, embarrass or exclude another person.
- I will respect other people's work and will not deliberately copy work and pretend it is my own.
- I will only use AI tools when my teacher has given permission and I will follow my teacher's instructions about how they may be used.
- I will never put personal information or photographs of myself or another person into an AI tool unless my teacher has specifically told me that it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- I understand that information I find online, including information created by AI, may not always be correct.
- I will tell my teacher if I think there is a problem with a school device, account or online service.

I understand that these rules are there to help keep me and other people safe and to ensure that technology is used positively in our school.

Pupil Name: _____

Class: _____

Pupil Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement

The Raheen National School Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) has been made available to me through Aladdin and is available to view at any time on the school website.

I understand that the purpose of this policy and agreement is to support the safe and responsible use of internet and digital technologies in school and, in particular, to help protect my child and other children from potential harm while using these technologies.

I have read the school's Acceptable Use Policy and have discussed the appropriate Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement with my child in a way that is suitable for their age and understanding.

I understand the school's expectations regarding the safe, respectful and responsible use of internet and digital technologies and agree to support my child in following these expectations.

Pupil Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____