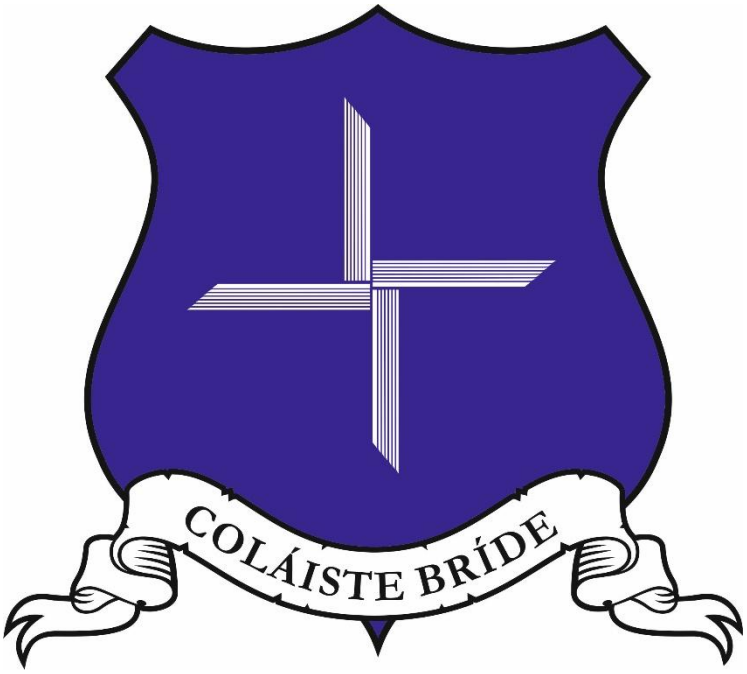
Internet Acceptable Use Policy



Coláiste Bríde, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Signed: _____ **Review Date: June, 2026**
Chairperson,
Board of Management

Signed: _____
Secretary,

Board of Management

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Mission Statement

"We are working to promote a secure and caring environment; Where Respect, Responsibility and Christian commitment grow, Drawing forth the positive of each individual"

Coláiste Bríde is a Catholic School founded by the Mercy Order under the trusteeship of CEIST. It has a long tradition of academic excellence and is committed to the development of the whole student. It offers a curriculum designed to meet fully the needs of the student.

The school wishes to cater for the academic, spiritual, moral, aesthetic, interpersonal and physical needs of the student. The characteristics of the school are the pursuit of tolerance, compassion and a sense of justice and equality for all.

We aim to develop in each student, confidence, self-respect and respect for others.

The school and its staff value its partnership with parents in meeting the personal and educational requirements of students and staff alike.

The core values of CEIST are:

Promoting Spiritual and Human Development

We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning

We are committed to excellence and to continually improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Showing Respect for Every Person

We respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person.

Creating Community

Our schools are faith communities of welcome and hospitality where Gospel values are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

Being Just and Responsible

We seek to act justly and responsibly in all our relationships

General Approach

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students 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.

When using the internet students, 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 include:

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE and other curriculum areas.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in Coláiste Bríde through our Pastoral Care and Digital Learning programmes.
- Coláiste Bríde participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- The use of personal external digital storage media in school, requires school permission.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Coláiste Bríde will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of students or staff under this policy and associated Code of Positive Behaviour and Bí Cineálta anti-bullying procedures. In such cases Coláiste Bríde will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed regularly by the Board of Management, teaching staff, support staff, pupils, and parents

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils, parents, and teaching staff.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the school's Year Heads, Deputy Principals or Principal should be informed.

Content Filtering

Coláiste Bríde has chosen to implement Level 5 content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network.

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 but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites such as TikTok, Facebook and Instagram belonging to the Social Networking category.

Internet Use

- Students should use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will be encouraged to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Students and staff 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.
- Students and staff will 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.
- Students and staff will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information or passwords.
- Students will 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.

Email and Teams Messaging

- Students should not under any circumstances share their email account login details with other pupils.
- Students should not use school email accounts to register for online services such as social networking services, apps, and games.
- Students should be aware that email communications are monitored.
- Students will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

- Students should 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.
- Students should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, pupils should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher
- Students must only use their school email for school related activities and for registering on school-based activities only. The use of personal email addresses is not allowed for school-based work.
- Students should not use school email accounts to register for online services, social networking, apps or games.
- Students should 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.

Social Media and messaging services for Staff and Students

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 Instagram and TikTok), blogs, mircoblogs such as X, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia, social bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us 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.

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.

Students must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Coláiste Bríde community on social media.

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

Staff and students must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Coláiste Bríde into disrepute.

Staff and Students must not represent your personal views as those of bring Coláiste Bríde on any social medium.

Students will be provided with guidance on etiquette regarding social media.

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

Students using their own technology in school should follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if they were using school equipment.

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as phones, tablets, gaming devices, smartwatches, in Coláiste Bríde:

Students are allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices including phones into Coláiste Bríde.

Every student will receive a personally assigned phone pouch to secure their phone for the school day.

Before class begins each morning, students will be expected to place their phone in their Yondr pouch.

Teachers will have access to unlockers to enable phones to be used for classroom-based learning activities.

Our school reception area will be an 'Unlocked Zone'. With permission, a student may briefly access their phone to make a call/ send a message in case of emergency.

At the end of the school day students will unlock their pouches using the phone pouch unlockers placed at student exits.

Students are only allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during lessons with expressed permission from teaching staff.

Students are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices including phones during social time.

Images and Video

Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that students are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.

At Coláiste Bríde students must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.

Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.

Students must not share images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.

Sharing explicit images and in particular explicit images of students and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

School Website

Coláiste Bríde will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips of focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.

The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.

Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Coláiste Bríde web pages.

Cyberbullying

In accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Post-Primary Schools, Coláiste Bríde considers that posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social media, e-mail, messaging, apps, gaming sites, chatrooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyberbullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact, cyberbullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyberbullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.

Access to technology means that cyberbullying can happen around the clock and the student's 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 accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, Coláiste Bríde considers that a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

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 behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

Measures are taken by Coláiste Bríde to ensure that staff and students are aware that bullying is defined as targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can however be seen as bullying behaviour.

The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour of our school.

In accordance with the Department of Education Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools; Coláiste Bríde 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, Coláiste Bríde will deal with it in accordance with our Bí Cineálta policy.

Artificial Intelligence

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

Coláiste Bríde provides 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.

Coláiste Bríde integrates AI into its educational processes to enhance learning, foster innovation, and promote the development of critical skills.

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

Learners 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 learners must not use AI in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame learners, their family members, staff, other members of the Coláiste Bríde community

Staff and learners must not engage in activities involving AI generated material which might bring Coláiste Bríde into disrepute.

Coláiste Bríde 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.

Learners must attribute AI text and images properly when used in assignments/homework.

AI Generated material is allowed for the purpose of research or brainstorming. If used for research learners must factcheck, check other sources and reference sources.

Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- 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

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet and digital technologies should be referred to in the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying Procedures.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

Coláiste Bríde will deal with incidents that take place outside school that impact on the wellbeing of pupils or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases the school will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions.

Pupils should 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.

Coláiste Bríde reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities. Including, an Garda Síochána.