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We provide children with a well rounded education in a safe, nurturing, inclusive environment, where everyone feels happy and respected, facilitating all to reach their full potential.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

February 2026

Introduction:

The aim of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils and staff will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

When using the internet, school devices, and personal devices in a school context, 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.

For the avoidance of doubt, this policy applies equally to all staff members (including teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff and volunteers) in their professional role within the school. This AUP applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in St. Comán's Wood.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. Incidents involving the internet fall under minor/serious/gross misdemeanours as outlined in our school's 'Code of Behaviour' policy and any sanctions taken will be in line with the behaviour policy. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

St Comán's Wood may be notified of incidents that take place outside the 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 St. Comán's Wood Primary School will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place outside of school.

Strategies implemented across the school to promote internet safety:

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum and Stay Safe Programme.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in St. Comán's Wood Primary School through recommended programmes as outlined on www.webwise.ie
- This policy has been developed by a working group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, ICT post holders, teachers and representatives of the Board of Management.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually and shared with the following stakeholders: Board of Management, all staff, pupils, and parents.

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents with notes added to pupil's log of actions pages (if necessary)
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils, parents, and teaching staff.

If serious online safety incidents take place, the Principal, Deputy Principal and ICT post holders should be informed.

Content Filtering:

St. Comán's Wood Primary School has chosen to implement a high level of content filtering through the PDST/ Oide content filtering.

This level allows access to millions of websites including education and video streaming sites such as Seesaw and YouTube etc. The best effort is made to create a safe online learning environment for users within the school.

In the case of a child using assistive technology, that may bring their device home and therefore outside of the school's content filtering, 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.

Web Browsing, Digital Learning:

- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom to their teacher.
- Pupils and staff will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content.
- Pupils will use the school's internet connection only for educational activities.
- Pupils will not try to download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory, of a sexual nature or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Downloading by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.
- Uploading by pupils of video either during or after school hours when in school uniform/representing the school/during school time including school tours and activities is not allowed without the knowledge/ permission of their teacher.

- Pupils will not open (or interfere with) the work of other pupils available on the shared student@comanswoodprimary.ie google drive, unless explicitly authorised to do so by a teacher.

Email and Messaging:

1. General Usage

Pupils are not permitted to access personal (non-school) email accounts while on school premises. Generally, pupils will engage with email using approved named school email addresses or the designated student account (student@comanswoodprimary.ie) solely under teacher supervision. Accounts are strictly for educational use and will be deactivated when the student leaves St. Comán's Wood Primary School.

2. Assistive Technology

Pupils utilising assistive technology will use a named school email address. Parents/Guardians will be consulted prior to setup and must agree to monitor usage in tandem with the school. Accounts are strictly for educational use and will be deactivated when the student leaves St. Comán's Wood Primary School.

3. Student Responsibilities & Safety

- **Prohibited Content:** Pupils must not send content that is illegal, obscene, defamatory, harassment, or bullying in nature.
- **Registration:** School email addresses must not be used to register for third-party websites, games, or social networking apps.
- **Cybersecurity:** Pupils must generally avoid opening emails from unknown senders. If an email appears suspicious, the pupil must alert a teacher immediately.
- **Reporting:** Pupils should never respond to offensive or threatening messages; such incidents must be reported to a staff member immediately.

4. Monitoring

All activity on school accounts (including email and Google Drive) is subject to monitoring by school administration to ensure the safety and welfare of all students.

Social Media:

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in St. Comán's Wood Primary School:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Google Chat etc. is not allowed by students in St. Comán's Wood Primary School. Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is permitted with permission from teaching staff.
- Staff and pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, other members of the St. Comán's Wood Primary School community.
- Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the St. Comán's Wood Primary 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 St. Comán's Wood Primary School into disrepute.
- Staff and pupils must not represent their personal views as being those of St. Comán's Wood Primary School on any social medium.

Pupils who engage in the misuse of social media during school or during events where they are representing the school, will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the school's behaviour policy.

Personal Devices:

- Pupils are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices in school. This includes mobile phones and smart watches.
- Pupils whose parents wish them to have their personal device for use before/after school, must hand up their device each morning to their class teacher. They can collect it from their class teacher/or afterschool activity staff member, when they are due to leave the school grounds. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the school's behaviour policy.
- Pupils who have been granted assistive technology will have access to an internet-enabled device for learning purposes only. It should only be used as part of school work as agreed by parents and the class teacher. These devices should be in standby mode/turned off while pupils are eating before break/lunch and if pupils are inside for break/lunch on rainy days. They are expected to follow all rules/guidelines as outlined in this document and the school's behaviour policy.

Staff Use of Digital Devices (Including Mobile Phones and Chromebooks/Laptops)

The use of digital devices by staff plays an important role in communication, organisation and supporting teaching and learning. However, their use must be appropriate, professional and must not interfere with the care, supervision or education of pupils.

1. Professional Use of Devices

- Staff are provided with a school-issued Chromebook (teaching staff) to support teaching, learning, planning and communication.
- SNAs may support pupils using school devices but are not assigned individual school devices.
- School devices and platforms (e.g. Google Drive, school email, Google Chat) must be used primarily for school-related purposes only.

2. Use of Personal Devices by Staff

- Staff may, where necessary, use personal devices to access school communication platforms (e.g. Google Drive, email, Google Chat).
- Such use should be limited, purposeful and professional.
- Personal device use must not interfere with teaching, supervision, or pupil support duties.

3. Specific Expectations of teachers during Teaching and Supervision Time including after-school activities

- Staff must not use personal mobile phones for non-essential purposes during:
 - Teaching time
 - Supervision duties

- Direct support of pupils
- The primary focus at all times must be on pupil care, safety and learning.
- The use of personal devices by teachers must never detract from the care, attention or safety of pupils.

4. Specific Expectations for SNAs during Caring and Supervision time including after-school activities

- SNAs play a critical role in supporting pupils, particularly those with additional needs, and are expected to:
 - Maintain active supervision and engagement with assigned pupils at all times
 - Avoid the use of personal mobile phones while supporting pupils, except in exceptional or authorised circumstances
- The primary focus at all times must be on pupil care, safety and learning.
- The use of personal devices by SNAs must never detract from the care, attention or safety of pupils.

5. Appropriate vs Inappropriate Use

Appropriate use includes:

- Accessing school communication platforms when necessary
- Supporting teaching and learning activities
- Work-related communication outside of direct teaching time

Inappropriate use includes:

- Personal messaging, social media, or browsing during teaching or supervision time.
- Excessive or habitual use of personal devices during the school day.
- Any use that reduces staff attentiveness to pupils.

6. Safeguarding and Professional Responsibility

- Staff must remain fully attentive and responsive to pupils at all times.
- Device use must never compromise:
 - Pupil safety
 - Behaviour management
 - Duty of care obligations

7. Monitoring and Accountability

- The school reserves the right to address concerns regarding inappropriate or excessive device use by staff.
- Misuse may be addressed through:
 - Informal guidance
 - Formal review under staff disciplinary procedures

Images & Video:

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

disrepute. Once images/videos have been shared with relevant teachers involved with school initiatives, or shared with staff who upload images to the website/social media, the images/videos should be deleted off the device they were taken on.

- At St. Comán's Wood Primary School, pupils 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 permission from staff. Pupils should never be taking images or videos of themselves and/or others during school or during school related activities, without direct permission from a teacher. Doing so will result in disciplinary action as outlined in our behaviour policy.
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website and/or official school social media pages. This is done through the school enrolment form.
- Pupils 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 images/content of a sexual nature and in particular images/content of a sexual nature involving pupils and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved, as outlined in our behaviour policy.

Use of Personal Devices by Staff for Images/Video

In general, staff should use school-approved devices to take photographs or videos of pupils. However, recognising practical constraints, the following applies:

- In exceptional circumstances where a school device is not available, staff may use a personal device to capture images/videos for school purposes only.
- Such use must be appropriate, necessary and proportionate.

The following conditions must be strictly adhered to:

- Images/videos must be transferred to a school-approved platform/device (e.g. school Google Drive or school device) as soon as possible
- Images/videos must be permanently deleted from the personal devices as soon as possible and within 24 hours, at the latest unless in exceptional circumstances where permission is given by the principal.
- Images/videos must not be shared, stored, or backed up on personal apps, cloud services, or messaging platforms
- Personal devices must not be used to take images of pupils in vulnerable situations (e.g. personal care, distressed states, or where dignity/privacy may be compromised)

Failure to adhere to these conditions will be considered a serious breach of the AUP and safeguarding procedures.

Cyberbullying:

- When using the internet pupils, 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 pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.
- Measures are taken to ensure that staff and pupils are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted

negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. This definition includes cyber bullying even when it happens outside the school or at night.

- Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.
- The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy in our school.

School Websites:

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.
- Webpages allowing comments or user-generated content will be pre moderated and checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain any inappropriate or offensive content. • The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.
- St. Comán's Wood Primary School will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on St. Comán's Wood Primary School web pages.
- St Cománs' Wood NS will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online, unless parental permission has been granted in advance of publishing.

Artificial Intelligence (AI):

The following statements apply to the use of AI in St. Comán's Wood Primary School:

1. Educational Integration and Support

- The school recognises the potential benefits of AI in education and is committed to its responsible and ethical use within our learning environment.
- The school 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.
- The selection of AI tools and technologies 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.
- The school integrates AI into its educational processes to enhance learning, foster innovation, and promote the development of critical skills.
- The school will make necessary adjustments to our school's adoption and integration of AI based on review and feedback.
- A regular review of the impact of AI on learning outcomes is to be conducted to ensure continuous improvement.

2. Ethical Use and Data Protection

- School staff and learners 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 St. Comán's Wood NS complies with data protection regulations (GDPR).
- 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, or other members of the school community.
- Staff and learners must not engage in activities involving AI generated material which might bring St. Comán's Wood NS into disrepute.

3. Promotion of Digital Literacy and Critical Thinking

- St. Comán's Wood NS 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.
- AI systems used in the school ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability in decision-making processes.
- Teachers will attribute AI text and images when used.

4. Learner use of AI

- AI generated material is not allowed in place of learner work (homework, assignments, examinations).

Ratification: