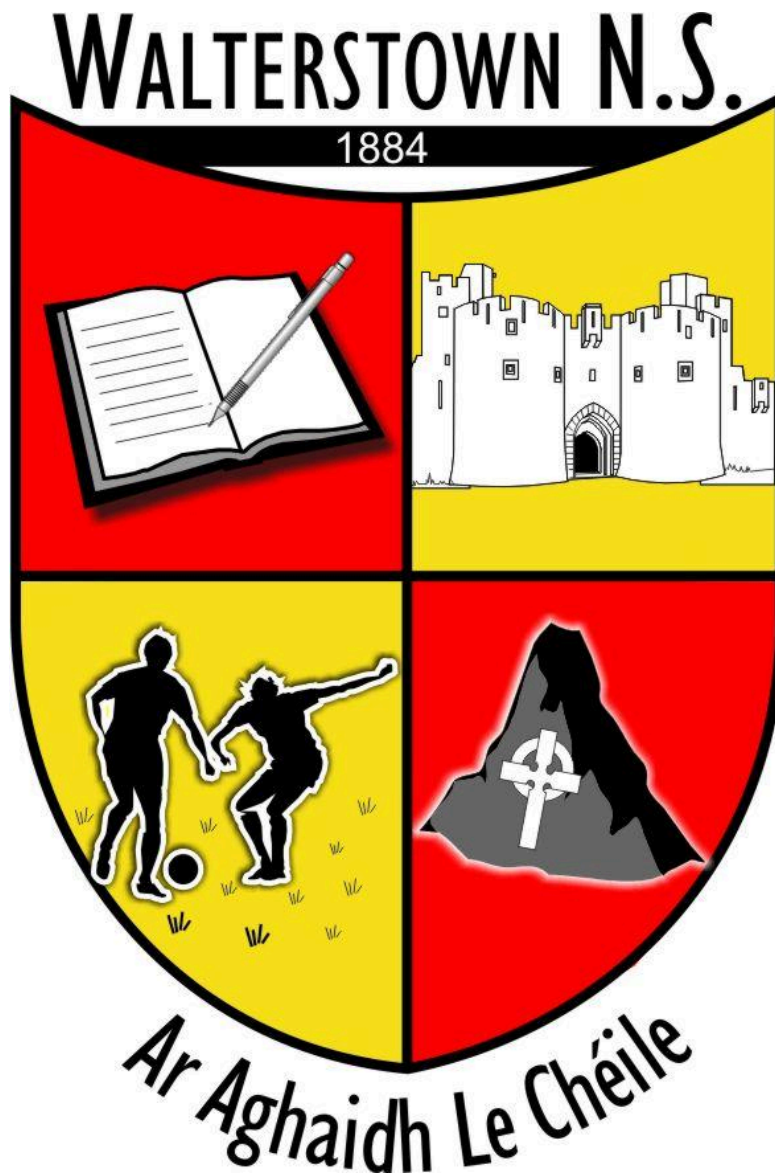


Acceptable Usage Policy





This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of Walterstown National School. It is intended to help the school community to understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

Version	Description	Authors
January 2025	Updated version of policy	Board of Management
April 2022	Updated version of policy	Board of Management
March 2021	First version of policy	Board of Management

School Contact Details

Principal: Mr. Rory O' Sullivan

Board of Management Chairperson: Mr. Damian Ahern

School Roll No: 12281D

School Phone Number: 021-4812625

School Email Address: office@walterstownns.ie

Address: Walterstown N.S., Walterstown, Cobh, Co. Cork.



Introductory Statement

Walterstown N.S. is a Roman Catholic School, under the patronage of the Bishop of Cloyne. We aim to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of our pupils: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. Our school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Vision

Our school also strives to accommodate individuality, while acknowledging the right of each pupil to education in a disruption free environment. We also promote a sense of responsibility towards the wider community. Parents are recognised as the primary educators of their children. Teachers are recognised as professionals in education and work in partnership with parents.

Rationale

This Policy should be read carefully to ensure that the content is accepted and understood. The aim of the Acceptable Use Policy ("AUP" or "the Policy") is to ensure that students benefit from the learning opportunities offered by internet access in a safe and positive manner.

Aims of Policy

This Policy also aims to establish minimum standards for, and let the students, parents/guardians know of the school's administration and monitoring of, the schools devices, equipment and networks.

Acceptable Use

This Policy applies to all of the school's "Devices", which means all Chromebooks, iPads, laptops, smart phones, and other IT resources that connect to the school's network. This Policy applies to staff and students of Walterstown N.S. ("The School"). The School reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time entirely at its discretion.

Strategies

The School employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies include, but are not limited to the following:

- A firewall is used on school Devices to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material and to block unsuitable sites. This is regularly updated.
- Online safety training will be provided to teachers and will be taught to all students.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software on school Devices will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software is used on school Devices and updated regularly.
- A teacher will always supervise Internet sessions which are conducted on school Devices.



- Websites will be previewed/ evaluated by a teacher using a filtering system, before being integrated into lessons conducted on school Devices.
- The School's internet provider has a built-in 'safe search' features. The 'safe search' feature will be enabled on all search engines on school Devices.
- It is important to note that the school's Anti-Bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with this Policy. Parents/guardians and students should be aware that placing a once-off, offensive or hurtful internet 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.

Use of The Internet

- Students will be taught specific lessons on online safety by teachers using resources such as [Webwise](#) and [Barnardos](#) online safety resources.
- Students will not knowingly attempt to visit Internet sites on school Devices that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials and the school will not be responsible for any attempts taken in this regard.
- In the event of accidentally accessing any of the above sites, the student will be expected to immediately turn off the monitor and report the incident to a teacher or supervisor.
- The internet will be used to enhance learning and will be used for educational purposes. All websites used by the teacher will be vetted in advance by the teacher.
- Students will not upload, download or otherwise transmit material that is copyrighted on school Devices.
- Students will not disclose or publicise personal or confidential information to others online. Examples of this are, but not limited to, their own or classmates' home addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, online profile information or name and location of their school.
- Students will not examine, change or use another person's files, username or passwords.
- Students will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving any information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security, and/or network management reasons.
- The school takes every reasonable precaution to provide for online safety, but it cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites either deliberately or inadvertently.

Email / Google Drive

- When using Google Classroom and the G Suite Apps, students will use approved class email accounts under supervision of a teacher or parent/guardian.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory, or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- 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.

Distance Learning

- In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, the main platform used is Seesaw. Teachers may also use Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom, Padlet or other platforms approved by the Principal as platforms (the "Online Platforms") to assist with remote teaching where necessary.
- The school has signed up to the terms of service of the Online Platforms in use by the school.
- The School has enabled the most up to date security and privacy features which these Online Platforms provide. Parents/ guardians will be provided with the password/ home learning code and will be expected to monitor their child's use of the Gmail address and Online Platforms
- If teachers are using Zoom, parents/ guardians must consent to their child having a school email address as above to allow their child access to the lessons. Where the child does not have a school email address, parents can consent by submitting their own email address for their child to access lessons on Zoom.
- Parents/ guardians must also agree to monitor their child's participation in any such lessons conducted on the Online Platforms.

Internet Chat

- Discussion forums on Google Classroom will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the Internet and this is forbidden.

School Website and Affiliated Sites/Apps

- The school's website address is www.walterstownns.ie
- The school uses the Aladdin App which is known as Aladdin Connect.
- The school uses the following Social Media pages- Facebook and Instagram.
- Students will be given the opportunity to have photos, projects, artwork and other work relating to curricular and extra-curricular school activities published on the school website and school social media pages as per the consent form. Teachers will coordinate the publication of this material.
- Personal information relating to the student including their name, home address and contact details will not be included on school social media or the school's website.
- Digital photographs and audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website and/or affiliated pages, without prior parental/guardian permission. Instead, photographs etc. will focus on group activities, where children will



not be named.

- Photos/Videos may be used for the production of the Homework Journal or specific school events e.g. Communion etc. These photos/videos and the photos/videos on our website/social media should not be copied or posted to any other social media/ website/ messaging service or published in any way.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested not to 'tag' photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested to ensure that online messages and/or comments to the school's social media sites are respectful. Any messages written on social media are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
- The Principal will review the content of the website and the social media sites regularly. The Principal and the Board welcome any suggestions about how the content may be improved.
- If any parent or guardian has any concern about the appropriateness of the content of the website or social media sites, then the Board asks that the matter be brought to the attention of the Principal as a matter of urgency.
- This Policy should be read in conjunction with our Data Protection Policy.

Social Media

The safety of our children on the web is of utmost importance so the following rules apply to the school and parents. The Internet is open to potential dangers when used inappropriately.

The schools asks:

- Many social media sites/ messaging services have minimum age requirements. While the school will not monitor this, we would advise parents to not allow their children to have personal accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok, Whatsapp etc. until they are the appropriate age.
- Some social media sites will be used by teachers in class for specific purposes, for example, Twitter for VEX Robotics. However, all interactions will be under the supervision of the teacher. Children will not be allowed to use their own personal accounts for social media.
- Please do not "tag" photographs or any other content which would identify any children or staff in the school.
- Please ensure that online messages and comments to the school are respectful. Any messages written on social media are treated in the same way as written messages to the school.
- Avoid any negative conversations about children, staff or parents on any social media/messaging groups. If you have an issue with something in the school, social media/ messaging groups are not the place to raise it. Comments of this nature will be deleted.
- Please do not request to "friend" a member of staff in the school. Most staff would like to keep their personal lives personal. It may be awkward for a staff member to be asked to ignore a social network request.
- Please do not add advertisements to our social media accounts without prior permission of the principal.



- Failure to keep the above rules will result in a permanent ban to our social media accounts.

Personal Devices

- Students may not use any personal device with recording or image taking capability while in school or on a school outing. This includes smart watches or glasses with recording or image taking functions. Any such breach of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will be sanctioned accordingly.
- Any images or recordings taken by class teachers on smartphones or other personal devices must be downloaded onto the school server and/or on to the school App/relevant school affiliated website and then immediately deleted from source.
- The use of E-readers may be permitted, under the supervision of the teacher. All personal devices are to be turned off during school hours.

Legislation and Regulation

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

- EU General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Anti-Bullying Guidelines for Primary Schools 2013
- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Video Recording Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988
- Interception Act 1963

Support Structures and Education

- The school will inform students and parents/guardians of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.
- On an annual basis, the school will run a programme on acceptable internet usage, for students and parents/guardians. This will cover several topics including cyber-bullying.
- Staff will regularly partake in Continuous Professional Development in relation to the development of AUPs, internet safety and cyber-bullying.
- [Webwise Online Safety in the Classroom](#)
- [Barnardos Online Safety Resources for Teachers](#)
- [Webwise Supports for Parents](#)
- [Barnardos Online Safety Resources for Parents](#)

Use of Information Communication Technologies (ICT)

- Walterstown N.S. information and technology resources (e.g. e-mail, computers, computer applications, networks, internet, intranet, facsimile, phone and other wireless communications devices, telephone, paging and voice mail systems and



the like) are school property and are provided solely for school related activities.

- Inappropriate use including hacking, pirating software, using school resources for non-school commercial activities, soliciting, distributing literature for outside entities, disclosing confidential information of the school, sending inappropriate e-mail or accessing inappropriate websites (such as those advocating hate or violence, containing sexually explicit material promoting illegal activities), or using school resources in a way that violates the letter or spirit of the school's policies or reflects negatively on the school is forbidden.
- Users of the school's information and technology resources must not share passwords. If you allow others to use your password or assigned resource, you will be held responsible for their use.
- Consistent with national laws, the Board of Management reserves the right to monitor the use of its information and technology resources and to take appropriate disciplinary actions, or denying future access privileges in cases of misuse. Staff/student use of the school's information and technology resources constitutes consent to such monitoring. All such monitoring will be conducted in accordance with law including, where applicable, the EU's General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR").

Sanctions

- Misuse of the Internet or any activity which is in contravention with this Policy, may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, and, where appropriate, suspension or expulsion in line with the Code of Behaviour.
- The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.
- Access to the Internet will be withdrawn from students who fail to maintain acceptable standards of use.

Roles and Responsibility

All members of the school community, under the positive and supportive leadership of the Board of Management and Principal, have both a role and a responsibility in successfully implementing this policy. The policy will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis by the policy committee through feedback from members of the school community.

Implementation Date

This policy was implemented 12/02/2025. Amendments will be implemented immediately.

Timetable for Review

This policy is to be reviewed during the school year 2027/28.



Ratification and Communication

The amended policy will be communicated to members of the Board of Management prior to the meeting of the BOM on 11/02/2025. Parents will be made aware in the next school communication that the policy is available for viewing on the school website.

Date of ratification: 11/02/2025

Signed: Damien Ahern.

Date: 11/02/2025

Signed: Rory O'Sullivan.

Date: 11/02/2025