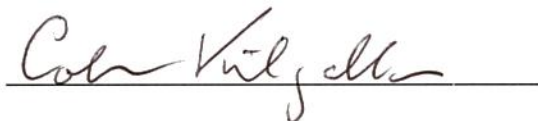


ICT AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USAGE AND E-LEARNING POLICY 2024

Ardgillan College

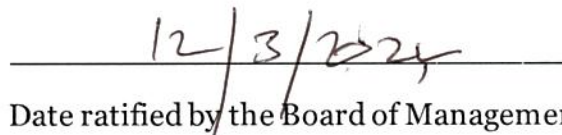
Date for review: March 2026



Colm Kilgallon

Chairperson

Board of Management


Date ratified by the Board of Management

MISSION STATEMENT

Ardgillan Community College promotes a happy and caring community where students are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential. Teamwork, respect and the pursuit of excellence form cornerstones of the college philosophy. The ethos of the college is based on respect, tolerance and understanding while appreciating the diversity of our changing world. The college aims to provide a broad education for all students and to nurture their individual abilities and talents.

Ardgillan College's motto is 'Mol an Óige agus Tíocfaidh Sí' (Praise the young and they will flourish).

INTRODUCTION

ICT and the Internet are rich and valuable sources of information and have a very important part to play in the education of students. The aim of this policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's ICT and Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. ICT and Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege.

SECTION A: STAFF

E-LEARNING

For the purposes of this policy, we are employing the following definition of eLearning:

e-Learning is the process by which teaching and learning is enhanced by the use of computers, Digital Devices, the Internet, Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), Interactive Whiteboards, data projectors, audio equipment, video, visual resources and cameras.

SCHOOL ICT EQUIPMENT

In Ardgillan College we have a teacher PC/Device and a projector in all of the classrooms. We also have 4 computer rooms and all of our TY students have been given access to iPads for the academic year. We have class sets of iPads available for rental and teachers can book class them on VSWare. Our T4 and Computer Science departments have class sets of laptops. We have a number of smart boards in classrooms around the school.

AIMS

- To enable the student to use a range of ICT tools in a relevant curriculum context
- To enable the student to develop and use ICT skills in the attainment of curriculum learning objectives
- To foster the student's confidence in their use of ICT, through enjoyable learning experiences
- To develop the student's understanding and practice of the safe use of ICT
- To enable the student to overcome barriers of access to learning resources caused by geographic location, culture, or language
- To enable the student to use ICT to support their learning effectively and creatively
- To inform the student's attitudes regarding the role of ICT in society, including the benefits and challenges of ICT and promote safe usage of the Internet and ICT

We strive to achieve these aims by:

- Using ICT where possible to enhance students' learning in all areas of the curriculum.
- Introducing the students to a wide range of ICT applications and ICT tools, such as word processing, databases, digital submission portals, graphics and software for control technology and processing sound pictures.
- Helping students acquire the skills to use appropriate ICT tools effectively, with purpose and equipping students with the knowledge of the uses, effects and limitations of ICT enabling them to evaluate the benefits of ICT and its impact on society.
- By closely monitoring the content which is being viewed by the students and to advise students what resources they should be viewing in relation to the work topic.
- Using ICT to develop partnership beyond the school through the use of the Internet and Office 365 Applications in particular Teams & One Note
- Encouraging all teachers to develop an awareness of the ways in which ICT might contribute to the achievement of both their subject-teaching and their wider educational aims.
- Encouraging all teachers to develop their own ICT confidence and competence through in-house training, in-services and peer-to-peer assistance amongst the teaching staff (e.g. Teachmeet/Tech News Letter).
- Allowing opportunities for work to be printed for display, evidence, publishing on the school website etc.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The class teacher is responsible for the e-Learning experiences of individual students. They are expected to employ a range of teaching and learning strategies and to use their professional judgement to decide on the most appropriate. These will include but are not limited to:

- Using the Teacher Device, iPad or the interactive whiteboard to demonstrate to a group of students or to the whole class.
- Using the interactive whiteboard as a tool to benefit learning in all curricular areas
- Individual or paired work using ICT equipment.
- Use of Digital Learning applications e.g. Plickers, Teams Quizzes and Study Clix Assessment tools
- Accessing and uploading schoolwork using the Office 365 suite of Applications

When the students are working in groups, the teacher endeavours to select groupings to ensure that all students are equally involved in the task, with equal access to the devices being used.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies into educational settings offers numerous opportunities for enhancing learning experiences and facilitating innovative teaching methods. However, it is imperative to ensure responsible and ethical use of AI within the school environment.

Acceptable use of AI can be described as follows:

- **Educational Purposes:** AI tools may be used solely for educational purposes, including but not limited to research learning activities, and project work aligned with the curriculum.
- **Responsible Conduct:** Users must engage with AI technologies in a responsible, respectful, and ethical manner, adhering to all relevant laws and school policies.
- **Privacy and Data Protection:** Users must respect the privacy and confidentiality of personal data. Avoid sharing sensitive information with AI applications unless necessary for educational purposes and with appropriate consent.
- **Intellectual Property:** Users must respect intellectual property rights and refrain from plagiarizing or infringing upon the work of others when using AI-generated content or resources.
- **Safety and Security:** Users must not engage in activities that compromise the safety or security of themselves or others while using AI technologies. This includes avoiding interactions with malicious AI applications and refraining from sharing personal information with unknown or untrustworthy sources.

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- **Collaboration and Communication:** AI technologies may be used to facilitate collaboration and communication among students, teachers, and staff, provided that such interactions align with educational objectives and adhere to school guidelines.

Unacceptable Use can be described as but not limited to the following;

- **Inappropriate Content:** Users must not access, create, transmit, or store content that is obscene, offensive, discriminatory, or otherwise inappropriate for an educational environment.
- **Harmful Activities:** Users must not engage in activities that cause harm, harass others, or disrupt the learning environment through the use of AI technologies.
- **Unauthorized Access:** Users must not attempt to access or tamper with AI systems, networks, or data without proper authorization.
- **Commercial Use:** AI technologies may not be used for commercial purposes or personal gain without explicit permission from school authorities.
- **Misrepresentation:** Users must not misrepresent themselves or falsify information while interacting with AI systems or presenting AI-generated content.
- **Plagiarism:** Users must not use AI technologies for written assignments and try to pass the work off as their own.

Misuse of AI will be subject to the Code of Behaviour.

CURRENT USE OF RESOURCES

Computers are used as a medium of teaching and learning. In all of the classrooms there are devices with internet access. Several rooms have interactive whiteboards, and the other rooms have access to data projectors. Also, our TY students have access to iPads. Examples of current use include:

- mathematical application
- development of thinking and problem-solving skills
- word processing
- desktop publishing
- typing skills
- internet and research work
- presentation of project work
- research in all school subjects
- Editing of digital photographs
- developing Junior Cycle key skills
- Completion of CBAs
- Coursework Submissions

This is not an exhaustive list and additions will be made as demands change

NETWORK ACCOUNTS AND INTERNET ACCESS

Each student and teacher are provided with a personal account on the network that is protected by a password. When the students and teachers first log-on their username is their full name, with no spaces, all in lowercase. The password is temporary and they are forced to change it on their first log-on.

In order to use Computer Room PCs, the students must enter a username and password. The students have restricted access to the Internet and the network administrator monitors the activity logs to ensure the students are not accessing questionable sites.

The first-year students are shown how to log-on to Office 365 and Computer Room Devices in the first few weeks of school by the member of staff. The students are advised to keep their passwords private as any activity on their account or the Internet under their username will be attributed to that student.

When a student forgets or misplaces their password, their password is reset by the administrator. Students are encouraged to write their passwords somewhere in their journal to prevent regular password changes.

Students are encouraged to log out of their personal Office 365 profiles at the end of every class session and failure to do so can lead to loss of work and personal data.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The ICT Team are responsible for:

- Giving advice concerning appropriate software to meet the needs of the policy.
- Purchasing and organising ICT resources using procurement procedures where appropriate.
- Identifying what ICT support is needed by individual staff.
- Ensuring the consistent implementation of the ICT and Internet Acceptable Use and e-Learning Policy.
- Ensuring ICT progression.
- Reviewing the ICT and Internet Acceptable Use and e-Learning Policy.

The Class Teacher is responsible for:

- Promoting a digital learning atmosphere through teaching and learning.

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- Endeavouring to utilise the technology available in the school to enhance teaching and learning.
 - Promoting Digital Citizenship where possible.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Food and drink should not be consumed near ICT equipment.
- It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that classroom ICT equipment is stored securely, cleaned regularly and always powered off at the end of each day.
- A teacher should always supervise students when they are accessing information via the internet.
- Students must be familiar with our code of behaviour and the anti-bullying policy and follow the principles of these policies when using school ICT facilities

STAFF

The College is responsible for safeguarding children, and it is important that all staff take all possible and necessary measures to protect children in their ICT usage in school and to encourage them to be safe whilst using the Internet for any college related matters. Staff must endeavour to protect data and information systems from infection, unauthorised access, damage, loss, abuse and theft. All members of staff have a responsibility to use the school's computer system in a professional, lawful, and ethical manner. To ensure that members of staff (teachers, student teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff) are fully aware of their professional responsibilities when using Information Communication Technology (ICT) and the school systems, they are asked to be familiar with this Acceptable Use Policy.

1. Ardgillan College supports and encourages the use by teachers of a wide range of resources in their teaching and learning activities, the conducting of research, and contact with others in the education world. Staff are encouraged to investigate the possibilities provided by access to this electronic information and communication resource, and blend its use, as appropriate, within the curriculum. Reference should be made in Subject Department Plans to the ICT resources and websites that are used in the teaching and learning.
2. When using ICT and the Internet, all school staff (both teachers and support staff) must comply with all copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws. All school staff are expected to communicate in a professional manner consistent with the rules of behaviour governing employees in the Education Sector and with the Teaching Council Code of Conduct.

3. Staff should be aware of the risks of breaking confidentiality and Data Protection laws by giving students or other parties access to their teacher logon accounts. All staff are expected to be professional and lawful in their use of ICT and the Internet.

4. It is an absolute requirement that the school ensures that access to the Internet provided to staff and students is a filtered service. The filtering service is provided by DDLETB and PDST. The school management reserves the right to review such access and revoke Internet access. Staff should note that the ICT system in the school has the capacity to record websites visited.

5. It should be noted that:

- when students are accessing computers, they must be under the supervision of a teacher and that access to the computer room, outside of the timetabled schedule is via room booking on VSWare.
- Booking of School iPads must also be through the VSWare Portal
- if students' work is uploaded to any site/portal/application it must be in an educational context.
- any audio, video or photographic clips uploaded to the College's website will focus on group activities and will, where feasible, avoid the direct identification of students by full name – first and surname.
- All communication between staff and students via email or Teams is respectful and appropriate for an educational setting.

6. Ardgillan College would like staff members to note that the following activities are not permitted:

- visiting or encouraging others to visit or publicise internet sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic or otherwise illegal material;
- downloading text or images which contain material of a pornographic, racist or extreme nature, or which incites violence, hatred or any illegal activity;
- using ICT or the Internet to perpetrate any form of fraud, or software, film or music piracy;
- using ICT or the internet to send offensive or harassing material to other users or links to such sites;
- downloading commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, unless this download is covered or permitted under a commercial agreement or other such licence or agreement;
- hacking or accessing unauthorised areas;
- publishing defamatory and/or knowingly false material about Ardgillan College, our colleagues and/or our students on the school system / network, social networking sites, blogs online journals, 'wikis' and any online publishing format;

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- revealing confidential information about Ardgillan College in a personal online posting, upload or transmission - including personal information and information relating to our students, staff and/or internal discussions and school business;
 - introducing any form of malicious software into the school network;
 - consciously searching, viewing and/or retrieving materials that are not related to the aims of the curriculum, education or careers information that is relevant to students;
 - copying, saving and/or redistributing copyright protected material, without approval;
 - subscribing to any services or ordering any goods or services where the school will be billed unless specifically approved by the Principal;
 - playing computer games or using interactive chat sites that are unrelated to education;
 - publishing, sharing or distributing any personal information about any member of the College community – student or staff member, without their permission (such as: home address; email address; phone number, etc.)

This is not an exhaustive list and all members of staff are reminded that ICT use should be consistent with the school ethos, other appropriate policies and the Law.

SECTION B: STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's ICT and Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. ICT and Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege.

COLLEGE STRATEGY

The college employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

GENERAL

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher. A student may not access the internet without a teacher's permission.
- Every student is provided with an account on the network with a unique username and password which they must keep private. Only the student himself/herself and the network administrator can access the account.

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- Students are provided with an Office 365 account with a unique username and password which they must keep private. Only the student himself/herself and the network administrator can access the account.
 - The network administrator may monitor the students' use of the Internet and the files that are stored in the students' Office 365 account.
 - Filtering software will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
 - Students will be provided with guidance in the area of Internet safety.
 - Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
 - Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
 - The use of personal USB sticks, or other digital storage devices (e.g. portable hard drives) and storage facilities in school requires a teacher's permission.
 - Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.
 - Students work will appear in an educational context on web pages.
 - The college will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities using approved devices. Content focusing on individual students will not be published on the school website without the parental permission.
 - Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from college web pages.
 - The college website will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph where possible.
 - The college will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use students' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
 - Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.
 - Students must not damage computers, ICT Hardware, computer systems or computer networks.
 - Students are not allowed to record the teacher in any way, voice or video, take photographs of the teacher and/or post a teacher's image/voice and/or defamatory content about a teacher online
 - Students are not allowed to record the teacher or any other person on the college premises without his/her prior permission and approval. This includes but is not limited to voice or video recordings, taking photographs and/or posting a person's image/voice and/or defamatory content about a person online. If it is found that a person has filmed/recorded another individual without his/her knowledge or approval, and/or if that material has been shared with other people either from one device to another or on the internet, the case will be dealt with in accordance with this policy & the college Anti-Bullying Policy.
 - Circulating, publishing or distributing (including on the internet) material associated with College activities including but not limited to material in relation to staff and students where such circulation undermines, humiliates or causes

damage to another person, is considered a serious breach of the College Code of Behaviour

- During online/remote events, third parties should not sit in on lessons and observe interactions between students and the teacher

WORLD WIDE WEB

- Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials or attempt to circumvent protective software.
- When using the internet, students must comply with copyright, libel, fraud, discrimination and obscenity laws.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials.
- Students will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement/inappropriate use of AI).
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Downloading materials or images which are not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of this policy.
- Students will be made aware that any usage of ICT facilities, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

EMAIL/INTERNET COMMUNICATION

- Students will use the approved school email address for educational purposes.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene and/or 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 are prohibited from arranging face-to-face meetings with anyone only known through emails or other online communication.
- Internet chat/social networking sites: students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other forms of electronic communication that have been approved by the school.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

- Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on <https://ardgillancc.ie/> in accordance with this policy.
- The website will be moderated to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of students or staff.

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- The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher and authorised by the school.
 - Students' work will appear in an educational context. Students will continue to own the copyright of any work published.
 - Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school pages.

MOBILE PHONES AND PERSONAL DEVICES

This section refers to personal devices such as: phones, iPods, smart watches, cameras, Dictaphones, mobile gaming devices and all other devices which could be used to communicate with, record or film another individual.

- Students' personal devices, unless authorised by a teacher, are not to be used within school hours. Each student must ensure all their devices are switched off in the school building placed in a secure location and not visible at all times. Students should not have their phones / personal electronic equipment on their person at any time. Students using their own technology in college, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in college, sending nuisance text messages, or unauthorised taking pictures or videos with a mobile phone camera or personal device is in direct breach of the ICT acceptable usage agreement.
- Connecting or attempting to connect to the school's network system (wired or wireless) without authorisation is in direct breach of the school's ICT and Internet Acceptable Usage and e-Learning Policy.
- If a student uses a mobile phone or personal device within school hours, it will be confiscated for a week, and it can only be collected from the office by a parent or guardian.
- Students participating in school related activities (e.g. co-curricular, extra-curricular activities, school trips, tours etc.) must abide by the policies governing these activities as outlined and interpreted by the teacher(s) in charge. Students are not allowed to use their mobile phones / personal electronic equipment on trips or extra-curricular activities unless asked to do so by the teacher.
- Inappropriate use of mobile phones/personal electronic equipment to harass an individual will be dealt with in line with the college Anti-Bullying Policy.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

All members of the school community are responsible for their own behaviour when communicating with social media and will be held accountable for the content of their communications that they post on social media platforms.

Examples of Unacceptable Use of Social Media

Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, negative comments, threatening messages or images that may cause harm to any member of the school community.

- Forwarding, 'Liking' or commenting on material that is likely to cause offence or hurt to a third party.
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage the school's image or a person's reputation.
- Creating a fake profile that impersonates any other member of the school community.
- Sending or posting material that is confidential to the school.
- Participating in the viewing or exchanging of inappropriate images or obscene material.

While all cases involving the inappropriate use of social media will be dealt with on an individual basis, the school and its Board of Management considers the above to be serious breaches of our Code of Behaviour. Disciplinary action will be taken in the case of inappropriate use of social media tools. This list is not exhaustive.

Sanctions for Social Media Policy Infringements

Infringements of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including (but not exclusively):

- Suspension of computer privileges in school
- Confiscation of devices if found on school grounds or on school related activities
- Notification to parents
- Suspension from school and school- related activities
- Exclusion
- Legal action and/or prosecution

Infringements of this policy will be referred to the Gardaí or relevant agencies where deemed appropriate by school management/Board of Management.

Please note that some inappropriate behaviour may be the subject of mandatory reporting to TUSLA.

LEGISLATION

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

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography (Amendment) Act 2004
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988
- GDPR Act 2016 (Enacted 2018)

SUPPORT STRUCTURES

The college will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

SANCTIONS

Misuse of the Internet and ICT facilities/devices may result in disciplinary action, including withdrawal of access privileges and in some cases, suspension or expulsion. The college also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Parents must ensure that their children fully understand this Acceptable Usage Policy.

Should users cause damage to the ICT systems, they are required to bear the cost of repair or replacement of said system.



I _____ (Full Name BLOCK CAPITALS)
who is a student in Ardgillan Community College, hereby agree to the following terms and conditions when borrowing equipment from the ICT Department of DDLETB.

Regarding Initial Equipment Condition:

- The equipment must be collected and returned to the ICT point of contact.
- The equipment has been tested prior to loan and has been verified to be functioning properly.
- The equipment will be reset upon return; all content will be erased and no longer be available. I am responsible for reporting any damages or equipment malfunctions immediately.

Regarding Damages:

- I am responsible for all damages due to accident, neglect, abuse, or loss once this item has been checked out to me.
- In the event of damage or loss, I am required to return all equipment to the school and report any equipment malfunctions immediately. I will not attempt to repair the equipment or bring it to a repair centre that is not the school.

I understand the above and will accept any charges incurred.

I certify that I have read and accept my responsibility related to the loan of this equipment. I agree to adhere to the guidelines and policies. I understand that I am personally responsible for this equipment and may not loan it to a third party. I assume responsibility for all risk of loss or damage to the equipment.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

-----Office Use

Name:

Device & Serial Number: