ST. FLANNAN'S COLLEGE

COLÁISTE FHLANNÁIN

POLICY · B5

Acceptable Use Policy

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT	NEXT REVIEW
29 September 2026	2027

1 Aim

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

When using the internet students, parents and staff are expected:

i. To treat others with respect at all times.

ii. Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

iii. Respect the right to privacy of all other members of the school community.

iv. Respect copyright and acknowledge creators when using online content and resources.

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

2 Scope of Policy

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to students who have access to and are users of the internet in St. Flannan's College, using school technologies or when using personally owned devices on St. Flannan's College campus, or at organised St. Flannan's College activities.

It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, guardians and others who access the internet in St. Flannan's College.

3 General

St. Flannan's College implements the following strategies to promote safer use of the internet:

i. Education on the area of internet safety is covered as part of our implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curriculum for Junior Cycle students, and also during first year Computer Studies.

ii. All students must abide by the terms of this policy, irrespective of whether they have received such an education or not.

iii. Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.

iv. St. Flannan's College participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention, suspension, and in extreme cases, expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

St. Flannan's College may deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of students or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases St. Flannan's College will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention, suspension and in extreme cases, expulsion.

4 Policy Review

This policy has been developed by a working group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, students, parents/guardians, and representatives of the Board of Management. The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the Board of Management. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually by the following stakeholders: Board of Management, teaching staff, Parents' Association and students.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the Principal should be informed.

5 Content Filtering

St. Flannan's College has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Service: Level 5. This level allows access to millions of websites including games, but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites such as Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram belonging to the Social Networking category. Access to Twitter is allowed.

Students taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention, suspension, and in extreme cases, expulsion.

6 Web Browsing and Downloading

i. Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

ii. Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom to their teacher.

iii. Students and staff will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content.

iv. 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.

v. Students will use the school's internet connection only for educational and career development activities.

vi. Students 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.

vii. Students will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, or defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

viii. Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not permitted.

ix. Rooted Android and jailbroken iOS devices are not permitted

7 Email and Messaging

i. The use of personal email accounts is only allowed at St. Flannan's College with expressed permission from members of the teaching staff.

ii. Students should not under any circumstances share their email account login details with other students.

iii. Students should not use school email accounts to register for online services such as social networking services, apps, and games.

iv. Students should use approved school Microsoft accounts for school related activities.

v. Students should be aware that all online school communications may be monitored.

vi. Students will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, or defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

vii. 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.

viii. Students should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, students should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.

8 Social Media

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in St. Flannan's College:

i. Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, Whats Apps, G Chat etc. is allowed in St. Flannan's College with express permission from teaching staff.

ii. Use of blogs such as Word Press, Tumblr etc. is allowed in St. Flannan's College with express permission from teaching staff.

iii. Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is allowed with express permission from teaching staff.

Staff and students must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame students, their family members, staff, or other members of the St. Flannan's College community.

Staff and students must not discuss personal information about students, staff and other members of the St. Flannan's College community on social media.

Staff and 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 St. Flannan's College into disrepute.

Staff and students must not represent their personal views as being those of St. Flannan's College on any social medium.

9 Personal Devices

9.1 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 mobile phones, tablets, gaming devices, smart watches and digital music players in St. Flannan's College:

- Students are only allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during lessons or any school related activities with express permission from teaching staff.

9.2 Student laptops

- From September 2026 St. Flannan's College will introduce laptops for all First Year and Fifth Year students.

  With express permission from their class teacher, students may access e-books or engage in research/ project work in class.
- Each device is configured as an educational tool and has single-user access allowing only the assigned student to log in. For Monitoring Safety purposes, all student devices come pre-installed with SENSO software. This software filters all internet access, including outside the school environment and allows teachers to remotely view student screens to monitor usage in real time.
- Only St. Flannan's College issued laptops are permitted (i.e., no other personal laptop/ device may be used).
- Some students with AEN from any year group may also be using laptops in class. Class teachers are notified of these students, and the SENSO software will be installed on these students' laptops.
- The onus is on the student to have their device charged coming to school. It will not be responsibility of the teacher or school to charge devices/ make charging points available.
- The school accepts no liability for any loss or damage to student laptops or associated equipment.

10 Images & Videos

i. 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.

ii. Students must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.

iii. Taking photos or videos on school grounds when participating in school activities is allowed with express permission from staff. Care should be taken that no harm is done to staff or students of St. Flannan's College.

iv. Written permission from parents/guardians will be obtained before photographs of students are published on the school website and other social media platforms.

v. St. Flannan's College will avoid publishing the full names of students in video or photograph captions published online, unless written permission is obtained from parents/ guardians.

vi. 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.

vii. Sharing explicit images and in particular explicit images of students and/or minors or any member of our school community is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other students and/or any member of our school community automatically incurs suspension and may incur expulsion.

11 Cyberbullying

i. When using the internet students, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times.

ii. 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.

iii. Measures are taken to ensure that staff and students 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.

iv. Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, 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 cyber bullying is an integral part of the Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying policy of our school.

12 School Website

i. The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.

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

iii. St. Flannan's College will use only digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on individual and/or group activities. Content focusing on individual students will only be published on the school website with parental permission.

iv. Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on St. Flannan's College web pages.

13 St. Flannan's College Official Social Media Accounts

The purpose of having school social media accounts is to provide:

i. Communication with parents, students and the wider community regarding specific events and activities

ii. Communication with new or prospective parents

iii. Communication of student news

iv. Communication with the wider audience regarding positive advertisement of the school and enrolment dates

v. Continued advancement of our school communication system.

Those using our social media sites must abide by the following:

i. Users cannot advertise non-school related products or services on our social media accounts.

ii. Users should not post anything on the accounts that could be deemed as offensive – inappropriate or harmful comments/content will be removed immediately

iii. Users cannot tag or post identifiable photographs of students on the accounts

iv. Users should not add comments that can identify students

v. Users should not ask to become "friends" with staff on our Facebook account, as failure to respond may cause offence

vi. To use Facebook, one must be 13 years of age or older.

vii. The sanction for breaking these rules is automatic blockage or removal from our social media accounts

14 Audio and Visual Recordings of Students for Educational Purposes

Any audio or visual recordings of students taken by staff for educational purposes (e.g. Classroom Based Assessments for Junior Certificate) will be securely stored on school equipment. This recorded data will be kept in the individual subject department file and will be password protected.

15 Approval and Review of the policy

This policy was approved by the Board of Management on September 29, 2026.

This policy will be reviewed in 2027

Signed: *Mr. Leonard Cleary*
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
Date: 29/09/2026

Signed: *Mr. Donal Cahir*
PRINCIPAL
Date: 29/09/2026

Permission Form

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school.

Student's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my son or daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet. I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but the school cannot be held responsible if students access unsuitable websites.

In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing students' work on the school website.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

_____

Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, and sign and return this permission form to the Principal.

School Name: Name of Student: _____

Class/Year: _____

Student: _____