

Oatlands College  
A94hx38

Telephone: 012888533  
Email:  
admin@oatlands.net  
Web: <https://oatlands.ie/>

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# Oatlands College

## Internet Acceptable Use Policy

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**Author: David Kelly, ICT coordinator, Oatlands College in consultation with students, staff, parents and Board of Management.**

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## 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.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP at least annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

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 are as follows:

- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimize the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- The use of personal external digital storage media in school requires school permission.

- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- Internet use within school will always be supervised by a teacher.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to students who have access to and are users of the internet in Oatlands College.

- It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in Oatlands College.

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.

Oatlands College implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils will be provided with education on 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 Oatlands College through our Induction, Pastoral Care and SPHE programs.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Oatlands College participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually by the following stakeholders:

**Board of Management, teaching staff and support staff.**

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).
- Internal monitoring data for network activity.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the relevant Year Head and/or Principal/Deputy Principal should be informed.

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by class teachers, Year Heads and Senior school Management team.

## Content Filtering

Online content while using the schools Broadband Network is filtered through the Schools Broadband Service.

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

## Internet Use

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

Students will be encouraged to report accidental accessing 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 will use the Internet for educational purposes only.

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.

Students 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 publicize 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 Messaging

**Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is not allowed.**

**The use of personal email accounts is only allowed at Oatlands College with expressed permission from members of the teaching staff.**

- Students will use approved school email accounts.
- 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 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.

All emails and opinions expressed in email are the responsibility of the author and do not reflect the opinion of the school.



# 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 recognizing 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, microblogs such as X, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopedias 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.

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Oatlands College:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc. is not allowed in Oatlands College.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is allowed at certain times in Oatlands College.

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.

Staff and students must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Oatlands 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 Oatlands College into disrepute.

Staff and Students must not represent your personal views as those of bring Oatlands College 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 and iPad usage

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 tablets, gaming devices, smartwatches, in Oatlands College:

- Students are not allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices (smart phones etc.) into Oatlands College.
- Students are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during social time.
- **Educational Use Only:** iPads are to be used solely for school-related tasks; personal or non-educational use during school hours is not permitted.
- **Approved Apps and Sites:** Only school-approved apps and websites may be accessed on iPads. Unauthorized downloads or browsing are strictly prohibited.
- **Device Support and Book Purchases:** All setup, security, and technical support for iPads are managed by Wriggle, the school's designated iPad service provider. Any issues related to the operation of the iPad or book purchases must be resolved directly with Wriggle or the book publishers, as Oatlands College is not responsible for these services.
- **Respectful and Responsible Behavior:** Students must act responsibly online, avoiding any form of cyberbullying, harassment, or sharing of sensitive information.
- **Privacy and Permissions:** No photos or videos of others should be taken without permission, and students must respect the privacy of others at all times.
- **Device Care and Reporting:** iPads should be handled carefully, kept fully charged, and any damages or issues reported to the appropriate service providers immediately.
- **Digital Footprint Awareness:** Students should be aware that their online actions create a permanent digital footprint, so respectful and responsible online behavior is expected.

- **☒ Compliance and Consequences:** The school reserves the right to monitor iPad usage to ensure policy adherence. Misuse or failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action, including restricted access or confiscation.

# School Equipment

## **Respect and Care for Equipment:**

- Students must handle all school computers, devices, and equipment with care. This includes avoiding physical damage, keeping equipment clean, and ensuring devices are not exposed to food or drinks.
- **Responsible and Educational Use:**

Students must use classroom and computer room equipment solely for educational purposes as instructed by teachers, and must not alter, misuse, or tamper with hardware, software, or network settings.

- **Accountability for Misuse:**

Any misuse of school computers or equipment, including intentional damage or inappropriate use, will be dealt with according to the sanctions outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour.

## Images and Video

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.

## Inappropriate Activities

- Promotion or conduct of illegal acts, e.g. under the child protection, obscenity, computer misuse and fraud legislation.
- Misuse and fraud legislation.
- Racist material
- Pornography
- Promotion of racial or religious hatred
- Harmful content or threatening behavior, including promotion of physical violence or mental harm.
- Any other information which may be offensive to colleagues or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the school or brings the school into disrepute.
- Using school systems to run a private business
- Use systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards employed by the school.
- Uploading, downloading or transmitting commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, without the necessary licensing permissions
- Creating or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files
- Carrying out sustained or instantaneous high volume network traffic (downloading / uploading files) that causes network congestion and hinders others in their use of the internet.
- Online gaming, Online gambling
- Use of social networking sites, instant messaging and online forums
- Any other activity considered questionable.

## School Websites

Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.

Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

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.

Oatlands College 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 Oatlands College web pages.

The Oatlands College will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.



## Cyberbullying

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, Oatlands College 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 behavior.

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 behavior 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 Anti-Bullying Procedures for Schools, Oatlands College 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 behavior.

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 behavior, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

Measures are taken by Oatlands College to ensure that staff and students are aware that bullying is defined as targeted behavior, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behavior 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 behavior.

The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

In accordance with the Department of Education B'í Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and address bullying behaviour for schools; Oatlands College considers that a school is not expected to deal with bullying behavior that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behavior has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. When bullying behavior continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their B'í Cineálta policy.

# Artificial Intelligence

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

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

AI Generated material is allowed for assignments/homework if that use is properly documented and credited with an explanation of how the AI tool is used and the extent of its contribution.

AI Generated material is allowed for the purpose of research, brainstorming, revising text.

Note: If used for research students must factcheck, check other sources and reference sources.

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

Students 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 pupils must not use AI in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, other members of the Oatlands College community.

Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving AI generated material which might bring Oatlands College into disrepute.

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Oatlands College 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.

Oatlands College promotes digital literacy and critical thinking skills to help students understand AI, its implications, and responsible usage. This includes data literacy, verification of AI-generated information, and recognising potential biases in AI tools.

# Permission Form

## 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

The school 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 digital technologies should be referred to in the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy and related sanctions regarding misuse as appropriate should be outlined therein. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities, including An Garda Síochána.

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the internet and digital technologies. I will use the internet and digital technologies in a responsible way and obey all the procedures outlined in the policy.

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy, and 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.

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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