Acceptable Use Policy

1. **General Approach**

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. 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 If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

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.

This AUP applies to students who have access to and are users of an internet enabled devices in St. Francis College Rochestown. It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers, and others who access the internet through a device in St. Francis College Rochestown. This includes both the use of school owned and personal devices.

St. Francis College Rochestown implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Students will be provided with education in internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE, CSPE and Computer curriculum.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in internet safety.
- St. Francis College Rochestown participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safer more effective use of the internet.
- Guest speakers and presentations in the area of safe use of I.T. and internet safety.

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

- Board of Management, teaching staff, parents and students.

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 school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.
- Monitoring logs of internet activity (including sites visited).
- Internal monitoring data for network activity.
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of students.

Should serious online safeguarding incidents take place the Principal as Designated Liaison Officer should be informed.

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the school.

2. <u>Personal Devices</u>

St. Francis College Rochestown recognises that personal devices, particularly phones, are part of young people's culture and way of life and can have considerable value when used appropriately. However, we are also cognisant that these devices can be a distraction, can hinder communication and socialisation and can add to anxiety and stress levels among the boys.

St. Francis College is a mobile/smartphone free zone during the school day

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St. Francis College Rochestown uses a YONDR pouch system to create phone free spaces for students, enhancing the educational experience and encourages students to develop the skills to interact positively with their peers and teachers. It also significantly reduces the possibility of smart phone misuse in the school setting. This system allows the student to retain the device on their person while also preventing unnecessary distraction during class-time.

Expectations

Each student will be allocated a uniquely numbered pouch and expected to have their phone SWITCHED OFF and secured in the pouch for the duration of the school day. The pouch then becomes the responsibility of the student. Any lost or damaged YONDR pouches should be reported to the school office as soon as possible and a replacement pouch can be purchased. In the event that a pouch has been damaged intentionally, sanctions up to and including suspension will be considered. Pouches are not to be marked in any way so they can be re-allocated in the future. Students are not permitted to have headphones, airpods or earbuds that connect to their device via Bluetooth. Gaming devices are not permitted for use whilst at school. For students who attempt to communicate via the use of a smart watch, these will be managed by staff in the same way as an unpouched device.

How YONDR Works

POUCH
As a student enters school, they place their phone in their assigned Yondr pouch.

SECURE
The pouch is closed and secured. Each student keeps their pouch throughout the day.

EXIT
When leaving school, the student taps their pouch to an unlocking base to release their phone.

The expectation is that students follow the process below when entering and exiting the school:

1. At the beginning of the school day, students will be required to switch off their phone and lock their phone and associated technology (e.g. earphones) into their pouch. As students enter the school premises, they are required to place their phones in a YONDR pouch which is then secured by magnetic lock, by the student. The phone remains in the YONDR pouch until the end of the school day. Students without a phone must still bring their pouch to school.
2. Students who arrive to school after the start of the school day MUST pouch their phone at the entrance to the school premises and report directly to the front office to sign in. They are then to show their pouched phone upon arrival to class. Teachers will not admit students late to class without a pouched phone. Students who leave early report to the office to sign out and unpouch their phone. The pouch can be opened by a staff member only.
3. At the end of the school day, students will be able to unlock their YONDR pouch using the unlocking stations situated at exits and strategic locations around the school. Students are then to secure their YONDR pouch in their bag for the following day. Students are reminded that even when their phones are released, they are still representing St. Francis College Rochestown and responsible use of devices still applies.

Staff will regularly check that students have their phones locked in their YONDR pouch and random spot checks will be conducted during lessons throughout the day. For students who choose not to bring a phone to school, they must still bring their YONDR pouch. If requested, students are to present their pouch to staff at any stage throughout the day.

In some circumstances, subject teachers may allow students to unlock their phone pouches for teaching and learning purposes only.

School trips/Extra-Curricular activities
Whilst off-site or on school-based activities, the YONDR system still applies and students must keep their phone in their YONDR pouch, unless explicitly stated for a specific purpose. Where students may not return to school at the conclusion of an event, the supervising teacher will bring a mobile unlocking station for students to release their phones prior to departure. This is the same system utilised at many venues worldwide, including concerts, restaurants, social functions and industries and is designed to increase engagement in the activity or event.

Damaged or Lost Pouches
Students who have lost or damaged their pouch are not to bring their phone to school until they have organised a replacement pouch. If the students' phone is seen then the school will apply the appropriate sanction. Students are required to pay a fee for the replacement of the damaged or lost pouch. Students who need their phone before or after school but have damaged or lost pouches can hand the phone to the DP each morning where it will be kept until a new pouch is issued.

Sanctions
1. If a student is using a mobile phone or any personal device without permission of staff, the first sanction is a detention, followed by a suspension.
2. If a student places any other device, other than a mobile phone in to the Yondr pouch, this is an immediate suspension.

3. If a pouch is damaged intentionally or shows signs of misuse, the sanction is a suspension.

3. <u>School App</u>

St. Francis College Rochestown uses a school app provided by Unique Schools. Every member of the school community is encouraged to download the app which is available on Google Play Store (Android users) and the App Store (Apple users).

The app will be the main vehicle for communication for our school.

The purpose of the school app is to:
- Communicate with parents regarding school related news, specific events and activities
- Communicate with parents around their son's attendance, absence, late arrivals, early leave and more
- Provide parents with real time information on their son in our school
- Provide a communication platform for parents to contact the school
- Provide resources to students
- Provide advice and guidance to students

4. <u>Content Filtering</u>

St. Francis College Rochestown has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

- **Level 4** - This level allows access to millions of websites including games and YouTube but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal website's category such as Facebook belonging to the Social Networking category.
- Students taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites, turning off the internal Net Support system or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

5. <u>Web Browsing and Downloading</u>

- Students will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom to their teacher.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school but outside the classroom to the Principal as Designated Liaison Person.
- Students and staff will not copy information from the internet without acknowledging the creator and referencing the source of the content.
- 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 school's internet connection only for educational and career development activities.
- 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.

Note: Use of file sharing and torrent sites is not allowed.

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

6. Email and Messaging

- Each student will receive a free Microsoft Office 365 account. This includes an *@stfranciscollege.ie* email address. The use of this school email account is only allowed at St. Francis College Rochestown with expressed permission from members of the teaching staff.
- Students should not under any circumstances share their email account login details with other students.
- Students should not use school email accounts to register for online services such as social networking services, apps, and games.
- Students will use approved class email accounts only under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- 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. This applies across all platforms.
- 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, students should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.
- Any staff email accounts (@stfranciscollege.ie account) are to be used for class purposes only and will not be used for non-class means by teachers, students and parents.
- St. Francis College uses a school app to inform the wider St. Francis College community about important or unforeseen events such as a school closure. In order to facilitate this, the users' contact information must match the school information on VSWare to grant access.
- Students and teachers should be aware of email etiquette when communicating with each other.
- On registering with the school, parents are asked to provide an email address. This is to facilitate communication at times of closure, remote learning or for the purposes of emailing a group of parents such as the parents of a school tour group.

7. Social Media

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

- The school uses the following social media apps/sites for communication purposes: YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tik Tok. The school also operates a School App which is an extension of the school website. The school may also have Twitter accounts associated with certain activities in the school e.g. TY, GAA, etc.
- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, G Chat etc. is allowed with express permission from teaching staff and will be for educational purposes only.
- Use of blogs such as Word Press, Tumblr etc. is allowed in St. Francis College Rochestown with express permission from teaching staff.
- 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, other members of the St. Francis College Rochestown community. This will be treated as a breach of our school policies and appropriate sanctions will be put in place.
- Staff and students must not discuss personal information about students, staff and other members of the St. Francis College Rochestown 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. Francis College Rochestown into disrepute.
- Staff and students must not represent their personal views as those of St. Francis College Rochestown on any social medium.

8. Images & Video

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.

- At St. Francis College Rochestown students 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 by students with expressed permission from staff.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is allowed by staff members of St. Francis College once care is taken that no harm is done to any members of the St. Francis College community.
- Photographs and videos of students may be taken by teachers during curricular or extracurricular activities for the school website, school app and school social media sites. Parents or carers who wish content to be taken down must contact the school and the content will be taken down immediately.

- 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.
- Sharing explicit images and in particular, explicit images of students and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other students automatically incurs suspension or more serious sanction.

9. <u>Cyberbullying</u>

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 and another student 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 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.

Measures are taken by St. Francis College Rochestown 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.

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 anti-bullying policy of our school.

10. <u>School Websites</u>

- 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 and App.
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or repudiation of students or staff.
- St. Francis College Rochestown will use digital photographs, audio or video clips focusing on group activities primarily. Content focusing on individual students will also be published on the school website with a view to affirmation of a particular student.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on St. Francis College Rochestown website.

11.   Remote Learning

Remote learning provides an opportunity for students and teachers to remain connected and engaged with the content while working from their homes.

It is important to note that remote learning is not just used for emergency situations such as closure. Remote learning is nowadays used worldwide as an extra platform for learning that is often blended with regular classroom learning.

When engaged in remote learning, the following is important to note:

Microsoft Teams

- As part of remote learning, *Microsoft Teams* is the main platform teachers will use to communicate, allocate and correct work from. Students receive training in *Microsoft Teams* as part of their computer classes and should be familiar with it's use and how it functions.
- Communication on Microsoft Teams is in a group setting only. Teachers can post work for an entire class and address the class, as a whole. Students can post questions on Microsoft Teams but should be aware that their question (post) can be seen by everybody in the Team.
- Any one-to-one communication with teachers will be done via email using the school accounts. This is especially important if there are questions or issues meeting deadlines. Teachers will communicate regularly, often a few times per week, with students in the event of closure.
- Teachers that allocate work on Microsoft Teams will often issue a deadline for work to be complete. This deadline keeps in mind any difficulties some students may have in accessing or completing the work at home.

Online classes

- As part of its delivery of remote learning, the school may organise a series of virtual classroom events to allow teachers and students to interact in real time using the Microsoft Teams or Zoom videoconferencing platform.
- Teachers will communicate the details and scheduled times to students by email, and their school email account will also be used to control access to each virtual lesson. Care is needed to ensure the online security of everyone involved.
- Students are reminded that all of the school's policies, notably the Code of Behaviour and the Acceptable Use Policy, apply during these online lessons.
- When students join a virtual lesson their device cameras and microphones are off by default (this setting is controlled by the teacher). However, as the virtual classroom provides an opportunity for participation, teachers may encourage some audio and/or video interaction with students.
- Students are being advised of best practice around this participation e.g. quiet location, proper attire, no personal information visible in background (bedrooms etc best avoided) etc.
- No live recording will be done. This is to respect the personal data of all, both teachers and students, who participate in each virtual lesson.

- All are reminded that no recording (or screen photograph) of any part of the video lesson should be made by any other means. The recording and onwards sharing of personal data would be unlawful as well as a contravention of the school's policies.

The school appreciates parental/guardian and student support to ensure that best learning outcomes are achieved while also respecting everybody's privacy at home. If at any stage you have any concerns or wish to provide any feedback then please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Sanctions

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

St. Francis College Rochestown will 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. Francis College Rochestown will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and impose the appropriate sanctions.

Policy adopted by the Board of Management on 20th June, 2023

This policy will be reviewed in June 2024.