



# Hansfield

## Educate Together National School

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## Acceptable Use Policy

No	Content Amendments	Date	Review Date
1.	General approach, content filtering, browsing, email, social media, personal devices, images and videos, cyber bullying, school website, legislation.	March 19	Oct 21
2.	Table of Contents, Introduction, Aims and Objectives, content filtering, internet usage, email and messaging, social media, personal devices, school's digital platforms, Images and Video, Cyberbullying, Sanctions from Code of Positive Behaviour, School Website, Legislation, Ratification	Sep 23	Sep 25
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

**Ratified by the Board of Management**

**Signed by the chairperson  
on behalf of the Board of Management:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Brian Campion**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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## **Mission Statement**

At Hansfield ETNS, we strive to create a safe, happy and warm environment that enhances our learning every day. We cherish difference. We respect ourselves and others, and by living the Educate Together ethos, we support each other to be the best that we can be, always.

In line with our school's mission statement above, this policy was created in collaboration with our school's Board of Management, parents, staff and where appropriate, pupils of Hansfield ETNS.

## **Introduction**

Our school has been open since 2011 and our context has been established sufficiently to embed an Acceptable Use Policy in our school. With the addition of new technology to our school resources, we felt it was imperative to create an 'Acceptable Use Policy' (AUP). Our school's AUP deals with many topics such as setting out guidelines for the proper use of internet searches, downloads and browsing. Other areas which are included are rules in relation to the use of digital devices, school ipads, email, phones, smart watches, tablets, online games and the content of our school's website. The type of sanctions to be imposed in the event of a breach of the AUP also forms a key part of the policy document and will give our school's community clear guidance in any such event.

Note, internet and device usage during *remote learning* is dealt with in the school's 'Remote Learning Policy'.

## **Rationale**

Educating parents, students and school staff about the internet's potential as a learning resource is our AUP's main aim. Defining proper online behaviour, the consequences of breaching it, while providing our school with legal protection from liability, are core elements behind this policy's establishment. While regulation is important, its use should be balanced by educating students to take a

responsible approach. The education of students is an essential part of the school's internet safety provision. Children and young people need help and support to recognise and avoid e-safety risks.

## Aims and Objectives

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

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'digital device(s)' refers to any digital technology such as, but not limited to, iPads, phones, smartphones, tablets, laptops, desktops, gaming devices, smartwatches, headphones etc.

Internet/digital device 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 imposed.

When using internet/digital devices in school, pupils, parents and staff are expected to:

- Treat others with the same respect at all times that we expect from others.
- Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet/digital devices in Hansfield Educate Together National School.

- Misuse of internet/digital devices can be considered a 'minor', 'serious' or 'gross' misbehaviour, as per our behaviour policy. Such behaviour will result in disciplinary action, including verbal/visual warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.
- The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.
- Hansfield Educate Together National School will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of pupils or staff under this policy and associated policies such as the Code of Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. In such cases, Hansfield Educate

Together National School will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, impose the appropriate sanctions and take any further steps to rectify the situation. E.g. Training, deletion of material etc.

- This policy also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and any others who access the digital devices in Hansfield Educate Together National School.

Hansfield ETNS implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet:

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE curriculum and other curricular areas.
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to pupils in Hansfield ETNS through our SPHE programme.
- Teachers will be provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety.
- Hansfield ETNS participates in Safer Internet Day activities to promote safe, responsible and effective use of the internet.

## **Content Filtering**

Hansfield Educate Together National School has chosen to implement the following level of content filtering on the Schools' Broadband Network:

- Level 4 - This level allows access to a broad range of websites including games and YouTube but blocks access to websites belonging to the "personal websites" category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the "Social Networking category".

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

## Internet Usage

- Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will be encouraged to report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school, but outside the classroom, to their class teacher.
- Pupils will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Pupils 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.
- Pupils will use the internet for educational purposes only.
- Pupils 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.
- Pupils will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy, upset or intimidate another person.
- Downloading materials or images not relevant to pupils' studies is in direct breach of the school's AUP.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise 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.
- Use of file sharing and torrent sites is not allowed.

## Email and Messaging

- The use of personal email accounts by pupils is only allowed at Hansfield Educate Together National School with the express permission of members of the teaching staff.
- School management and staff communicate through text messaging, WhatsApp, email, Aladdin, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter).
- Staff should not share photos of children via their own personal social media for school or other purposes.
- School management may contact staff on school business via any of the above means from Monday to Friday (Inc.) during term time between 7.30am and 4.00pm. Outside of these hours staff should only be contacted via teacher email, except in the case of an emergency. E.g. Staff informing principal that they are ill and unable to attend work, principal informing support staff that they have to cover a class the next day, event of critical incidence etc.
- Staff should use classroom cameras to take photos of the children where possible. Should a member of staff photograph a child with their phone, the photo should be deleted as soon as it has been transferred to a school device or school cloud storage platform.
- On occasion, it is understood that staff may wish to send a photo of children to the staff Whatsapp group, for example, in celebration of a special achievement. In such cases, staff must use the 'One Time View' option to adhere to GDPR and/or safeguarding protocols. [See instructional video here.](#)
- Pupils will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils 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.
- Pupils should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, pupils should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.

- Pupils will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.
- Pupils will not forward email messages or screenshots of emails or “reply all” without the permission of the originator.
- Pupils 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.
- Pupils should not use school email accounts to register for online services, social networking, apps or games.
- Pupils should 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. Pupils should report any such communications to a teacher.
- All emails and opinions expressed in email are the responsibility of the author and do not reflect the opinion of the school.

## Social Media

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Hansfield Educate Together National School:

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow us to interact and keep in touch. While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that members of our 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 ( i.e. Twitter), chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias 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 Hansfield ETNS:

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, TikTok etc. is not allowed in Hansfield ETNS .
- Use of blogs such as WordPress, Tumblr etc. is allowed in Hansfield ETNS 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, parents, pupils and visitors must not use social media, messaging services and the internet in any way to harass, impersonate, insult, abuse or defame others.
- Staff, pupils, parents and PTA must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Hansfield ETNS community on social media.

- Staff, pupils, parents and PTA must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- Staff, pupils, parents and PTA must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Hansfield ETNS into disrepute.
- Staff, pupils, parents and PTA must not represent personal views as those of being the school's views 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

Pupils, staff and others using their own technology in school must follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way they would using school equipment.

The following statements apply to the use of pupil-owned digital devices in HETNS, including (but not limited to): tablets, gaming devices, phones, smartphones, smart-watches, digital music players, headphones etc.

- Pupils are only allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into Hansfield Educate Together National School with the express permission of staff.
- Pupils are only allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices during class time with express permission of teaching staff.
- Pupils are not permitted to use personal internet-enabled devices during school time.
- Pupils' devices are the sole responsibility of their owner. The school accepts no responsibility for the misuse, damage or loss of devices.

- Pupils' personal internet enabled devices must be switched off (and not just put on silent-mode) outside the school gates and remain switched off in the child's bag throughout the school day. Devices may only be switched on again when the child is outside the school gates once again.
- Teachers may confiscate pupil devices if they are breaking any of the rules set out in the AUP. The confiscated device should be kept in a locked drawer in the principal's office. The child's parents/guardians will be contacted and informed that they can collect the device from the principal's office at the end of the school day.

### **School's Digital Platforms (including video conferencing)**

- Hansfield ETNS currently uses two digital platforms: Aladdin and Seesaw. Aladdin is used for administrative purposes and communicating solely with parents/guardians. Seesaw is a learning platform which can be used for learning at home.
- All data on these platforms is owned and managed by the school.
- Both platforms should enable two-way communication with school and home.
- The use of digital platforms should be used in line with considerations set out in the school's data protection plan (GDPR).
- Each user of the platform will be provided with their own unique login credentials.
- Passwords for digital platforms and accounts should not be shared.
- Teachers' teacher-email addresses should be used when creating accounts on school digital platforms.
- Remote Learning Policy: In exceptional circumstances, such as emergency school closures, children may have to learn from home. If this scenario arises, parents should consult our Remote Learning Policy.

## Images & Video

- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images, that those being recorded are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- Images of others must not be taken, used, shared, published or distributed in HETNS without their permission.
- Permission from parents or carers will be obtained via Aladdin annually with regards to a child's photographs/video clips being published on the school website and other school-run social media platforms.
- Names and images of the pupils must never be published together in any form of media, including school website, school's social media or digital learning platforms, such as Seesaw.
- Pupils must not share images, videos or other content online with the intention of harming another member of the school community in any way whether this happens on the school grounds or outside.
- Sharing explicit images is illegal and will be reported to the relevant authorities immediately.

## Cyberbullying

When using the internet, pupils, 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 pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable and prohibited behaviour with serious consequences outlined in detail in our Anti-Bullying and Code of Positive Behaviour policies available on our school website; [www.hansfieldetns.com](http://www.hansfieldetns.com).

Bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which occurs continually. Cyberbullying means that the bullying takes place online. Any form of bullying is considered such, even when it happens outside the school or at night. Measures are taken (e.g. CPD for staff and discrete lessons for pupils) to ensure that staff and pupils are aware of what bullying is.

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 Positive Behaviour which is available on our school website [www.hansfieldetns.com](http://www.hansfieldetns.com).

The prevention of cyberbullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school which is reviewed by the BOM annually and monitored by our patron body, Educate Together.

### Sanctions from Code of Positive Behaviour

The below information are the relevant sanctions from Code of Positive Behaviour in relation to the AUP [www.hansfieldetns.com](http://www.hansfieldetns.com)

MINOR	SERIOUS	GROSS
Accidental use of personal devices* in school  *personal devices includes phones, smartphones, smart watches, tablets, laptops or any other digital device	Cyberbullying  Intentional use of a personal device during school time*  *school time includes all school trips and excursions	Cyberbullying  Repeated cyberbullying  By-pass the content filter by using proxy sites  Repeated intentional use of personal devices during school time
Behaviour Tracker on Aladdin	Yellow card home and/or parents invited to school to discuss withdrawal of access/ ICT privileges	Suspension/expulsion Withdrawal of access/ ICT privileges

## School Website

Pupils may be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet in accordance with the clear policies and approval processes already outlined regarding the content that can be uploaded to the school's website and other digital platforms.

Our school's website is regularly monitored by the staff member responsible for maintaining the school website. They will ensure that content doesn't compromise the safety, privacy, or reputation of anybody in our school community or outside.

The Hansfield Educate Together National School website will use digital photographs, audio or video clips that focus on group learning and celebration activities only.

Personal information of any HETNS community including home address or contact details will not be published on the Hansfield Educate Together National School's website.

Hansfield Educate Together National School's website will not publish either the first or family name of pupils in video or photograph captions.

## Legislation

Legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with, is available to view on our school's website [www.hansfieldetns.com](http://www.hansfieldetns.com) .

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988
- GDPR
- Anti- bullying (DES)

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

- Board of Management
  - Teaching and support staff.
  - Parents
  - Pupils
- 
- This policy has been developed by a working group including: Principal, Deputy Principal, assistant principals, teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents and representatives of the Board of Management.
  - Should serious online safety incidents take place, the school Principal should be informed ASAP or in his absence, the Deputy Principal.
  - The implementation of this Acceptable Use Policy will be monitored by our school's "Digital Learning Team"; Stephen, Alison and Lisa.

## Ratification and Communication

This policy has been devised in consultation with the staff and Board of Management of the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies that are in place. Relevant policies can be found on the school website: [hansfieldetns.com](http://hansfieldetns.com)