Coachford College Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

1.   General

1.1   Scope

This Policy applies to all students of Coachford College, to their parents/guardians, to school staff and to its volunteers and visitors. It pertains to the use of digital devices owned by Coachford College, personal devices, cloud-based platforms, email and/or other online accounts.

1.2   Context

The Policy has been devised in consultation with all members of the school community and in keeping with the school's characteristic spirit. It should be read in conjunction with the school's Safety Statement, Special Educational Needs Policy, Wellbeing Plan, Appropriate Behaviour Policy, School Outings Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement/Risk Assessment, Data Protection Policy (CETB), Dignity in the Workplace Charter, Digital Learning Plan, Blended Learning Policy and Social Media Policy (CETB). The Policy serves to support the school's vision for excellence in teaching and learning as set out in Looking at our School: A Quality Framework 2016-2020, in the vision for Junior Cycle, the Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020, the NCCA's Guidelines for Wellbeing at Junior Cycle and guided by the requirements of C0038/2018. The school's Mission Statement sets out the school's vision for the encouragement of the pursuit of excellence and the creation of an environment conducive to the highest standards of achievement in a community in which mutual respect is shared in a positive environment, with student wellbeing at its core. In order to achieve such goals, it is expected that students and staff of the school participate in the safe use of technology to support learning and promote wellbeing.

1.3   Objectives

This Policy sets out to ensure that students benefit from learning opportunities offered by technology in a safe and effective manner. It aims to guide and support our students to become responsible digital citizens, and in so doing, support them in exploiting the invaluable potential which technology can offer.

1.4.   Rationale

The benefit of technology as an invaluable tool to support learning is recognised at Coachford College. While digital technology is a tremendously positive tool, the risks associated with its misuse, abuse and/or overuse are also recognised. This policy has been

reviewed in consultation with all school partners and in keeping with the requirements of C0038/2018.

2. Strategy

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce the risks associated with the use of technology. These strategies, to which all members of the school community are expected to adhere, include:

- The implementation of the school's Digital Learning Plan as a core element of the Wellbeing Programme.
- The use of filtering software and/or equivalent systems in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material;
- Monitoring of students' use of technology;
- Facilitation of Internet Safety Training;
- The use of virus protection software, and
- The implementation of Procedures for the Safe Use of Technology, as set out in 3 below.

All members of the school community are expected to adhere to the strategies put in place by the school to ensure the safe and beneficial use of technology.

3.   Procedures for the Safe Use of Technology

3.1. General

The use of mobile phones, and/or other non-approved digital devices by students is prohibited in the school and on school outings. Phones and/or other digital devices are confiscated if seen or heard, as set out in the school's Appropriate Behaviour Policy/School Rules. In circumstances in which pre-approval of digital technology is granted by a teacher for a specific purpose, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Appropriate care should be taken of digital devices to avoid breakages or damage.
2. Devices should be clearly marked with the owner's name, and access should be password protected.
3. Devices are solely the responsibility of the owner, and shall be appropriately insured. Coachford College accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, damaged or stolen devices.
4. Devices should be fully charged and in full working order coming to school daily.
5. Devices must not be taken on school outings without the prior consent of the organizing teacher.
6. Prior permission for the use of a device must be granted by the teacher in charge.
7. With the exception of exceptional circumstances in which pre-approval is granted, school-owned devices must not be removed from the school

8. Technology is used at the school and on school activities as a learning tool only, as set out by the relevant teacher. It is a direct infringement of school policy to use it for any other purpose.

9. Students shall not copy material from the internet for tasks without recognising the source (copyright infringement).

10. Sites which contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable material shall not be accessed. Accidental access to material which is offensive, inappropriate, explicit or insulting shall be reported immediately to school authorities. School management will be the final arbiters of what is deemed appropriate.

11. Students shall keep data and passwords private at all times.

12. Students are granted access to Guest Wifi in particular classes at assigned times.

13. Any unauthorized attempt made to access wifi shall be addressed in accordance with the school's Appropriate Behaviour Policy.

14. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to protect their child online when the student is not at school and/or participating in school activities. It is the responsibility of all adult members of the school community to conduct themselves responsibly online.

15. Pictures or recordings should not be taken without prior consent either inside or outside the school. Should a person, or part thereof, enter a picture/recording in error, the picture/recording shall be deleted immediately to remove the person in question.

16. Students should never make public on the internet their own personal information.

17. Coachford College email addresses should be used solely for the purpose of sharing school work. This is the sole method of electronic communication which should be used to share school information.

18. Students shall only access blogs, forums, sites, media, messaging services, etc. which have been approved by the school and are used for educational purposes only.

19. Every effort will be made to avoid sending school-related emails outside of normal office hours. Where this is not possible, responses are not expected outside these hours.

20. Material which is illegal, obscene, or may annoy, hurt, defame or damage another person shall not be posted or sent.

21. Students may have the opportunity to upload images and information in relation to school activities. Material shall be uploaded only with the pre-approval of the relevant teacher, and with the prior permission of school authorities.

22. Digital photographs, audio or video clips may be published online for school promotion purposes, and with the consent of parents/guardians and/or students as relevant.

23. Wellbeing, to include the safe and ethical use of the internet, is addressed through the school's Wellbeing programme.

24. Students shall not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

25. Students must not be given access to any teacher username, password, pin code and/or other access details.

26. Students should be aware that any usage, including the distribution or receipt of information, school-related or personal, may be investigated.
27. Students and their parents/guardians, as relevant, should be familiar with and adhere to all school policies.
28. All data is stored and processed in accordance with the requirements of the CETB Data Protection Policy, the Data Protection Act and GDPR.
29. The school reserves the right to report any activity causing concern to the relevant authorities.

3.2. Publication of school work

1.   Students may be given the opportunity to publish school work online.

2.   The publication of student work must be co-ordinated by the relevant teacher.

3.   Students' work will appear in an educational context on web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.

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

3.3. Legislation

All members of the school community should be familiar with:

•   Child Trafficking and Pornography Bill 1997;

•   1993 Interception Act;

•   Video Recordings Act 1989;

•   The Data Protection Act 1988, and

•   General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

4.   Sanctions

In the case of infringement of this policy, the privilege to use technological devices may be withdrawn.

Disciplinary action will be taken as necessitated, and in keeping with the school's Appropriate Behaviour Policy. In extreme cases, action may be taken in accordance with the school's Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

This Policy was reviewed by the Board of Management of Coachford College on October 20th 2020, having been signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Management and the Principal.

It is available to all members of the school community, and will be reviewed on an annual basis, and/or as deemed necessary.

Signed by

Niamh Lehane

Chairperson of the Board

Date: *October 20th 2020*

Áine-Máire Ní Fhaoláin

Principal

Date: *October 20th 2020*