

Wesley College Dublin

Policy on the Appropriate Use of Technology

(Electronic Devices and ICT Acceptable Use Policy)

1. Introduction

Wesley College accepts that the use of technology and electronic equipment is increasingly part of a modern lifestyle. With teacher permission, such equipment may be used as part of classwork, or when engaging in homework or study.

Other uses are not deemed to be necessary, often prove to be a distraction from work and can damage normal social interaction while at school.

Equipment referred to in this policy may be the property of the College or may belong to individuals. The purpose of this policy is to define the acceptable use of technology and such electronic equipment.

2. Electronic Equipment

Electronic equipment is defined as any device which may be used to access the internet or record, store and or transmit digital or electronic files, pictures or sound. Such equipment includes but is not limited to: personal computers, tablets, laptops, computer peripherals, cameras or mobile phones

3. Acceptable Use

At no time is it acceptable to use any technology for the purposes of bullying, intimidation or hurting others.

Subject to the specific rules below, the possession and/or use of technology within the College, on College trips, or which in any way affects life in the College, is acceptable only when the general health and welfare of others is not put at risk. The use of technology in Wesley College, or use of technology by students which in any way affects life in the College should be in accordance with the ethos of Wesley College.

In particular, attention is drawn to the College Code of Behaviour which outlines the standards expected of all students.¹

The purpose of facilitating any use of electronic equipment in Wesley College is to enhance teaching and learning. All other use of such equipment is deemed non-essential or inappropriate.

Pupils need to be very clear that non-essential or inappropriate use of electronic equipment undermines teaching and learning and is, at best, an unnecessary distraction. At worst, such use is offensive and will result in sanctions.

4 Inappropriate Use

In-appropriate use of electronic equipment is defined as use which undermines teaching and learning, undermines good relationships within the community, causes offence or is unwelcome or intimidating to others.

Access to mobile phones during school time (ie from 8.55am to 4pm including all teaching time, break time and lunch time) is not permitted without specific permission from a member of the teaching staff.

5 Risk

Students bring privately owned technology/electronic equipment to the College or on trips entirely at their own risk. The College will not take responsibility for and is not liable for the misuse of, the loss of, damage to, or theft of any privately owned equipment or devices.

6 Use of Mobile Phones or related equipment in school time

The College does not allow the use of mobile phones (or related equipment) between the hours of 8.55pm and 4pm (in either class time or break/lunch times).

Pupils may bring a phone to the College if deemed necessary. It should be kept in the pupil's locker at all times and switched off for the school day.

¹ Reference should be made to the College Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy, acceptance of which is a condition of entry to Wesley College.

The College does not accept any responsibility for the security of such devices.

Use of electronic equipment between 8.55am and 4pm may result in confiscation of this equipment. Items confiscated will not be returned until collected by the pupil's parent/guardian.

7 Bullying and Intimidation

Electronic Equipment must never be used to bully, intimidate or hurt others. This principle applies (but is not limited) to telephone calling, voice mailing, texting, recording, posting online or sending of, images or comments.

Photographs, videos or recordings may not be taken without the prior consent of the person who is being photographed, videoed or recorded. The posting online of such an image or any recording relating to, or involving, Wesley College in any way must have the permission of the College.

Use of electronic equipment to download, store, record or transmit unacceptable images, video, sound, texts or other files is entirely unacceptable and will lead to the confiscation of such equipment.

The sending or posting online of unwelcome comments or images is regarded as a serious offence. Students who, in the opinion of the College, engage in such unsociable behaviour may be banned from using an electronic device or bringing one to the College.

Students who engage in such behaviour may also be suspended or expelled where, in the opinion of the College, this is deemed appropriate. This may be for repeated behaviour or where a single serious offence has occurred.²

9 Inspection of Electronic Equipment

The College reserves the right to request a student to submit his/her electronic equipment for inspection if, in the opinion of the College, a student is suspected of inappropriate use.

² Section 11 of this Policy details the circumstances under which suspension and/or expulsion will be likely. The Code of Behaviour also deals with such circumstances.

Where equipment is believed to have been used in the possible abuse of others, or where possible legal issues may arise in the future, the College reserve the right to hold the privately owned electronic equipment until legal advice has been received.

10. Sanctions for the inappropriate use of Electronic Equipment

Misuse of the computer facilities, the internet and/or email facilities will result in disciplinary action, 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.

The College reserves the right to confiscate any privately owned electronic equipment which, in the reasonable opinion of the College, may have been used to intimidate, hurt or offend another person.

The College also reserves the right to confiscate any privately owned electronic equipment which has been used to undermine teaching and learning.

Such equipment may be collected by a parent/guardian, but only when investigations by the College have been complete, or where content deemed to be important for the purposes of an investigation has been recorded or copied by the College.

Individual pupils may be banned from using, or bringing onto the College Campus, electronic equipment following such inappropriate use.

The College also reserves the right to prohibit the use of certain equipment in the College where the health, safety or welfare of any person, including the owner of the equipment, is judged to be at risk.

11 Suspension/ Expulsion from the College

In the case of repeated misuse of electronic equipment or where a serious offence has occurred, a student may be suspended from the College. The College reserves the right to remove from the school register any student who continues to intimidate others with the use of such equipment, despite warnings, or where a serious offence is judged to merit removal from the school.

The Code of Behaviour states the following:

Circulating, publishing or distributing (including on the internet) material associated with school activities including, but not limited to, material in relation to staff or students where such circulation undermines, humiliates or causes damage to another person is considered a serious breach of school discipline and may result in disciplinary action. As part of such disciplinary action the Board of Management reserves the right to suspend or expel a student or students where it considers the actions to warrant such sanctions.

12 Wireless Network (Wifi) in Wesley College

A wireless network is available in the College for educational use. This network is part of the Department of Education and Skills broadband network and is controlled and vetted outside Wesley College.

13 The College Network (fixed)

The fixed College network is controlled by Wesley College. This is for educational and administrative use.

Access to the Internet by students is monitored by the Network Manager. The College uses software to monitor all use of the College computer facilities.

14 The Cyber Library

The Cyber Library is part of the College Library facility and is available for pupil use when the Library is open, at the discretion of a teacher or the Librarian on duty. Students must have a Wesley College Library Card in order to use the cyber library. Pupils wishing to use the Cyber Library must sign in with the Librarian or the member of staff on duty. No more than six persons are allowed in the Cyber Library at any one time.

15 Wesley College Email

All pupils have a College email account. Pupils should use the College email with care, ensuring that at no time this facility is used to bring the College into disrepute.

Pupils who access their College email outside of the College must abide by the AUP rules for use of the College email facilities. Pupils shall not send or forward chain email. Students will not reveal their own or another pupil's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures and will never arrange to meet someone outside school via school email, internet or computer facilities.

16 Use of the internet - General

As with any access to the internet, pupils may encounter information that is inaccurate, controversial, and potentially harmful.

Ultimately, parents and guardians are responsible for setting and conveying the attitudes and standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources.

During school, teachers may guide pupils toward materials suited to their courses. Outside school, families bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, magazines and other potentially offensive media.

September 2017