



# St. Colman's National School

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## POLICY REGARDING THE USE OF ICT/ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

### INTRODUCTION

Information communication technology (ICT) can have an exponential impact on education for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). It enhances their access to the curriculum, enables them to improve the presentation of their work and heightens motivation levels, ensuring significantly higher achievements.

It is therefore important that teachers and pupils in St. Colman's NS gain the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding of ICT in order to optimise learning potential for pupils with SEN. The assistive technology provided to pupils is in the form of a laptop computer/tablet.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF USE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY.

1. As per the Department of Education and Skills (DES) Circular (No 0010/2013 Scheme of grants towards the purchase of essential assistive technology equipment for pupils with physical or communicative disabilities, available on [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)), assistive technology issued by the DES is the property of the school and will remain in the school's possession once the student no longer requires the technology or leaves the school.
2. Should the designated pupil change school, including post- primary, the school will consult with the SENO with regards to its transfer with the pupil where it is still appropriate for the pupils accessed needs. The final decision regarding transfer will rest with the Board of Management.
3. The laptop/tablet will be used solely by the designated pupil and not to be used by or transferred to a third party.
4. Parents/Guardians of each student who is granted access to assistive technology must sign a copy of the Assistive Technology Use Parental/Guardian Agreement Form (Appendix A) and agree to the school's terms and conditions of use.
5. Written notification will be issued to the parents/guardians of each student who is granted access to assistive technology. Permission to bring assistive technology off the school campus for the purpose of completing homework will be reviewed by the Class teacher and Support Teacher on an individual basis.

6. The pupil who is allocated the assistive technology gets first priority use of the equipment. However, when that pupil is not using the technology it is at the discretion of the SEN Department to use it for the benefit of other students.
7. The parent will remind and teach their child to take care of laptop/tablet at all times when handling, transporting and using the laptop/tablet
  - It is not to be left unattended in a public place.
  - It not to be left unattended in classroom or other place in the school.
  - All laptop/tablet leads must be unplugged from sockets and all accessories to be stored safely and securely in the laptop/tablet case with the laptop/tablet when work is complete.
  - It is not to be left in plain view in an unattended or unsecured vehicle but kept out of sight in the locked boot.
  - It is not to interfered with, tampered with or altered by a third party.
8. The laptop/tablet is covered under school insurance, however, the parent must take reasonable care to avoid damage or loss.
9. There is a limit to how much printing the school can provide for pupils using assistive technology and this is at the discretion of the Class teacher and Support Teacher. Homework can be printed in school in the mornings if the pupil has been assigned a printer, otherwise printing is to be completed at home.
10. Use of laptop/tablet and including the internet usage will be supervised by the parent and will be of an appropriate nature to minimize pupil's exposure to inappropriate material.
11. The laptop/tablet will be use lawfully and in accordance with the school's Acceptable Usage Policy regarding ethical use of technology, use of legal software, use of the internet and the protection of personal data.
12. The following is deemed as completely unacceptable and will result in the equipment being reclaimed
  - Accessing, transmitting or receiving obscene or pornographic material
  - Engaging in cyber cheating or plagiarism (taking material by others and presenting it as if it were one's own)
  - Engaging in cyber bullying
  - Downloading or loading software or applications that are not approved by the school.
13. The school will make regular checks to update the laptop/tablets, ensuring that anti-virus software is kept up to date and also check for inappropriate use.
14. Class teachers will be notified by the Principal of all pupils using assistive technology so they can determine, in conjunction with the pupils, Special Needs Assistant (where applicable) and the Support Teacher, how the technology can be used within their class.
15. The laptop/tablet will be kept in good working order. All laptop/tablet faults, defects or malfunctions while in the care of the pupil are reported to the Principal or Class teacher who will inform the member of staff with responsibility for the servicing and upkeep of the laptop/tablet.
16. Any repairs necessary due to damage caused to the laptop/tablet while in the care of the pupil will be arranged by the school and paid for by the parent/guardian.

17. The laptop/tablet must be returned to the school in good working order on or before the last day of the school year or earlier if requested by the school.
18. The laptop will not be sold, assigned, transferred or otherwise disposed of.
19. Any laptop/tablet markings/tags or plates or engravings will not be removed, concealed or altered. The laptop/tablet must not be marked in any way that will reduce the value of the laptop/tablet.
20. If the laptop is lost, stolen or damaged the parent/guardian will advise the principal and the Gardaí as soon as possible.
21. Due to current software licensing arrangements covering home use the laptop/tablet package cannot be used for any commercial purpose.
22. If any of the terms or conditions are breached, the Board of Management may at any time revoke this arrangement.

#### HOW LAPTOPS (ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY) ARE TO BE USED

1. Permission for the pupil to use assistive technology will only be granted by the Principal on receipt of a signed copy of the Parental/Guardian Procedure for Use of Assistive Technology Form.
2. St. Colman's NS has installed anti-virus software on all laptops. The school will undertake to update the anti-virus software when required. The students must not tamper with this, or any other, software installed by St. Colman's NS.
3. The pupil must endeavor to do no untoward damage to the assistive technology. They should treat it safely and respectfully. No food or drink should be consumed when using the equipment. Similarly, the identifying labels for each piece of technology must not be removed.
4. It is the responsibility of the pupil to ensure that their laptop is charged at home and has a full battery while in school.
5. All assistive technology must be carried between school and home by the pupil in a suitable protective carry case. It is the responsibility of the pupil or their parents/guardians to fund the cost of a carry case if one was not granted with the technology by the DES.
6. If pupils have access to a computer or laptop at home they should practise their ICT skills on [www.typing.com](http://www.typing.com), our recommended free online typing tutorial. To open a typing.com account, an email address is needed. We ask parents to set up an email address for their child for this purpose.
7. Laptop users must print at home any typed homework if they have not been assigned a printer by the Department of Education. If assigned a printer, printing can be completed when pupil comes to school in the mornings. This should then be stapled into the relevant copy.

Signed:   
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 13/11/18

Signed:   
Principal

Date: 13/11/18

## Assistive Technology.

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

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Your child has been granted the following assistive technology by the Department of Education and Skills:

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Your child has

(a) been given access to assistive technology for use at school and at home. ☐

(b) Been given access to assistive technology for school use only ☐

Assistive technology is expensive and there can be significant costs relating to the upkeep, repair or replacement. Please read the following and if agreeing to it sign and return to your child's Support teacher. Access to technology will be granted to your child on receipt of completed forms.

1. The assistive technology is the property of the school and remains so for the duration that your child is in the school. Should your child leave the school, the technology is returned to the possession of St. Colman's N. S. When the technology, specifically laptops/tablets are returned to the school at the end of use, there should be no personal information stored on it. The school will take no responsibility for deleting personal files.
2. The cost of rectifying any damage or loss of the technology must be borne by Parent/Guardian. Please inform the school immediately if the technology is lost or damaged.
3. Repairs to assistive technology must be undertaken by the school's IT provider. Parents/Guardians must not engage with any other IT service provider.
4. The technology should be solely used by the student and for the purposes of school work. No other individuals in the home should have cause to use it.
5. St. Colman's NS has installed anti-virus software on all laptops. The school will undertake to update the anti-virus software when required. The students must not tamper with this, or any other, software installed by St. Colman's N. S.
6. The identifier labels on the equipment should never be removed.
7. Parents and pupils are responsible for developing and maintaining typing skills. We recommend [www.typing.com](http://www.typing.com), a free online typing tutorial. UCC run workshops in assistive technology for students and parents. More information can be found on [www.ucc.ie/en/dss/assistivetech/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/dss/assistivetech/)
8. We ask that parents/guardians monitor carefully the use of laptops/tablets while in the home. They should be used mainly to enhance typing skills and assist with

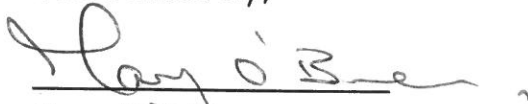
homework. Internet usage should be kept to a minimum and directly related to school activities.

9. Laptops/tablets are to be charged every evening at home to ensure laptops/tablets can be used throughout the school day and avoid a student being without a laptop/tablet should it have to be charged.
10. If you need to supplement technology funded by the DES, you may be entitled to claim tax (VAT currently approx. 23%) back on assistive technology devices/software and the hardware required to use it. More information on the process is available at [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)
11. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for the purchase of ink used in printers assigned to pupils in school.

Please feel free to contact the school if you wish to discuss the use of assistive technology.

Please complete the agreement attached and return it to the Principal/Support Teacher. Once the completed agreement is returned to the school, your son/ daughter will be granted access to the technology.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mary O'Brien', written over a horizontal line.

Mary O'Brien  
Principal



USE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY  
PARENTAL/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT FORM

Laptop Make/Model	
Laptop Serial Number	
Value of laptop	
List of software installed	
Value of software installed	
List of accessories e.g. laptop case, mouse, headphones, etc.	
Value of accessories (please list in full)	

I confirm that I accept responsibility for taking into my position a laptop/tablet which is the property of St. Colman's National School, Cloyne, Co. Cork. Roll Number 02452V after school when my child requires it.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept the Terms and Conditions outlined in this policy and letter and other relevant policies regarding the use of laptops/tablets and other assistive technology by pupils of St. Colman's National School, Cloyne, Co. Cork.

Name of pupil (BLOCK CAPITALS)		
Pupils class when this agreement was signed		
Pupil's teacher when this agreement was signed		
Signature of pupil		
Name of Parent/ Guardian (BLOCK CAPITALS)		
Date		
Address of parent/guardian		
Contact numbers	Home	Mobile
Signature of Principal		