

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY POLICY OF



TARBERT COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

Ratified by the Board of Management on February 8th 2022

Introduction

This policy, the terms and conditions and the attached agreement was compiled in line with Department of Education Circular 0010/2013 and our School's Acceptable Use Policy in relation to essential assistive technology equipment for pupils with physical or communicative disabilities.

Rationale:

The purpose of the document is to illustrate clear guidelines for the use of specialist equipment which has been recommended by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) as being essential for pupils who have been diagnosed as:

- having a serious disability;
- and/or sensory or communicative disability to the extent that their ability to communicate through the medium of speech or writing is materially curtailed ;
- where it is clear that existing equipment in the school is insufficient to meet the child's needs;
- where, without such equipment, it will not be possible for such children to access the school curriculum

Any equipment purchased by the school under Department of Education Guidelines remains the property of the school, should normally be kept in the school and is subject to inspection by the Department of Education. However, the School authority may, in certain circumstances allow the use of the equipment in the pupil's home if deemed necessary by the Principal/Deputy in consultation with the teaching staff. Such circumstances are where it is agreed that the pupil could benefit from the use of technical support or equipment such as a school laptop/tablet.

This agreement endeavours to ensure the safe custody and handling of the equipment when in the care of the pupil outside of the school.

Procedure to allow Pupil to take Assistive Technology home

1. Parent/Guardian must write a brief letter outlining the reason why they believe it is necessary for the pupil to bring the assistive technology home.
2. The letter will be brought to the attention of the Principal and a decision made.
3. Should the request not be granted by the Principal then Parents/guardians have a right to appeal the decision to the Board of Management.
4. Parents/Guardians will be required to read in full and agree with a signature to the Terms and Conditions attached to this policy.

Terms and Conditions for the use of Assistive Technology in the home

1. The laptop/tablet remains the property of Tarbert Comprehensive School.
2. Should the designated pupil change school, then the school will consult with the SENO with regard to the transfer of the device with the pupil where it is still appropriate for the pupil's assessed needs. The final decision regarding transfer will rest with the School.
3. The laptop/tablet will be used solely by the designated pupil and will not be used by or transferred to a third party.

4. The parent will remind and teach their child to take due care of the laptop/iPad/tablet/specialist equipment at all times when handling, transporting and using said specialist equipment –
 - It is not to be left unattended in a public place
 - It is not to be left unattended in a classroom or other place in the school
 - All laptop/tablet leads must be unplugged from sockets and all accessories are 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 be interfered with, tampered with or altered by a third party.

5. A laptop/tablet/iPad will be used solely to assist with typing skills and other school related activities. Only school approved programmes, packages/applications and websites may be used.

6. All equipment 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.

7. The equipment must be covered by home insurance if taken off the school premises. Pupils and parents must take reasonable care to avoid damage or loss.

8. Use of the laptop/tablet and including all internet usage will be supervised by a parent/guardian and will be of an appropriate nature to minimise pupil's exposure to inappropriate material.

9. The School will make regular checks to update the laptops/tablets, ensuring that anti-virus software is kept up to date and also to check for inappropriate use.

10. The laptop/tablets will be used lawfully and in accordance with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment as well as its Acceptable Use Policy regarding the ethical use of technology, use of legal software, use of the Internet and the protection of personal data.

11. The following is deemed as completely unacceptable and will result in the equipment being re-claimed:
 - Accessing, transmitting or receiving obscene or pornographic material
 - Engaging in cyber cheating or plagiarism (taking material created 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

12. 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 to be reported to the Deputy Principal who will inform the member of staff with responsibility for the servicing and upkeep of the laptop/tablet.
13. 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 of the pupil.
14. The laptop/tablet will not be sold, assigned, transferred or otherwise disposed of.
15. 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.
16. If the laptop/tablet is lost, stolen or damaged the Parent will advise the Deputy Principal as soon as possible. It may be necessary to report this to an Garda Síochana.
17. Due to current software licensing arrangements covering home use, the laptop/tablet package cannot be used for any commercial purpose.
18. If any of these terms or conditions is breached, the Board of Management may at any time revoke this arrangement and request the return of the School property.

Tarbert Comprehensive Assistive Technology Contract

Parental Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Principal's Signature: _____