

Policy re: School Owned Assistive Technology Equipment used at home by Pupils and Parents

Rationale

This policy, the terms and conditions and the attached agreement was compiled in line with Department of Education and Skills Circular 10/2013 in relation to essential assistive technology equipment for pupils with physical or communicative disabilities.

The purpose of the document is to ensure clear guidelines for home 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

As per Circular 10/2013 “Although equipment is sanctioned to support a particular pupil, the equipment is sanctioned to a school and will, as a general rule, remain the property of the school and be available for allocation to other or subsequent pupils with similar disabilities”.

Therefore any equipment purchased by the school under Department of Education and Skills Guidelines remains the property of the school and should normally be kept in the school.

However, “the pupil in question may, with the consent of the Board of Management and in certain circumstances, use the equipment in the pupil's home”. Such circumstances are where it is agreed that the pupil could potentially benefit from, or achieve a degree of improvement to their academic and educational performance, their learning and their completion of homework through the use of technical support or equipment such as , for example, a laptop or iPad.

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

Procedure to allow Pupil to take Assistive Technology Equipment home:

1. Parents to sign a requisition form requesting the equipment home.
2. The Board has approved the Principal to make a decision.
3. Parent will be required to read in full and agree to the Terms and Conditions attached to this policy.

This Policy, the Terms and Conditions and the Agreement was proposed and ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on Monday 30th May, 2016.

Signature of Chairperson: *Johnny Mee*

Date: 30/5/2016

Terms and Conditions:

1. The assistive technology equipment remains the property of St. Anthony's Special School, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
2. Should the designated pupil change or transfer schools, the school will consult with the SENO with regard to its transfer with the pupil where it is still appropriate for the pupil's assessed needs. The final decision regarding transfer will rest with the Board of Management.
3. The assistive technology equipment 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, teach and support their child to take due care of the assistive technology equipment at all times particularly when handling, transporting and using the assistive technology 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 assistive technology equipment leads must be unplugged from sockets and all accessories are to be stored safely and securely in the assistive technology equipment case, with the assistive technology equipment 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. The assistive technology equipment will be used solely to assist with communication and curriculum skills, completion of homework assignments and other school related activities. Only school approved packages/applications may be used or installed.
6. The designated pupil will have use of the assistive technology equipment each evening from Monday to Thursday during school terms and it is to be returned to the school on Fridays for safe keeping over the weekends.
7. The assistive technology 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.
8. The assistive technology equipment is covered under school insurance, however, the parents must take reasonable care to avoid damage or loss.
9. Use of the assistive technology equipment including all internet usage will be supervised by a parent and will be of an appropriate nature to minimise pupil's exposure to inappropriate material.
10. The school will make regular checks to update the assistive technology equipment, ensuring that anti-virus software is kept up to date and also to check for inappropriate use.
11. The assistive technology equipment will be used lawfully and in accordance with the school's Acceptable Use Policy regarding the 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 re-claimed:
 - Accessing, transmitting or receiving obscene or pornographic material
 - Engaging in cyber bullying
 - Downloading or loading software or applications that are not approved by the school

13. The assistive technology equipment will be kept in good working order. All assistive technology equipment faults, defects or malfunctions while in the care of the pupil are to be reported to the Principal or Class Teacher who will inform the person with responsibility for the servicing and upkeep of the assistive technology equipment.
14. Any repairs necessary due to damage caused to the assistive technology equipment while in the care of the pupil will be arranged by the school and paid for by the parent of the pupil.
15. The assistive technology equipment will not be sold, assigned, transferred or otherwise disposed of.
16. Any assistive technology equipment markings, tags or plates or engravings will not be removed, concealed or altered. The assistive technology equipment must not be marked in any way that will reduce the value of the assistive technology equipment.
17. If the assistive technology equipment is lost, stolen or damaged the parents will advise the Principal and report it to the Gardaí as soon as possible.
18. Due to current software licensing arrangements covering home use, the assistive technology equipment package cannot be used for any commercial purpose.
19. If any of these terms or conditions are breached, the Board of Management may at any time revoke this arrangement.

Requisition & Agreement for Signing by Parent and School
Re: Home Use of School Owned Assistive Technology

I _____ request use of the following equipment for use by my child at home:

Item Model, Make and Serial Number: _____

Value of assistive technology equipment and software: _____

I confirm that I accept responsibility for taking into my possession the assistive technology equipment which is the property of St. Anthony's Special School, Roll Number: 19248R for use at home when my child requires it.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept the Terms and Conditions attached to this agreement and other relevant policies as are determined by St. Anthony's Special School.

Name of Pupil: _____ Class: _____ Teacher: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Contact Numbers: Home: _____ Mobile: _____

Signature of Principal: _____