



Assistive Technology Policy

(1) Introduction and 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 learning needs
- where without such equipment it will not be possible for such children to access the school curriculum

(2) Home Use of Assistive Technology Equipment

In accordance with DES Circular 10/2013 Section 13, 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 Board of Management may, in certain circumstances, allow the use of the equipment in the pupil's home. Such a circumstance might be 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 using technical support or equipment such as a school laptop.

Terms and Conditions are set out in *Appendix 1* of this policy to endeavour to ensure the safe custody and handling of the equipment when in the care of the student and their parents/guardians outside of the school. An application form requesting consent to use the equipment provided is attached to this policy. Please refer to *Appendix 2*.

(3) Procedure to allow Pupil to take Assistive Technology home

3.1 Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be required to read in full and agree to the Terms and Conditions contained in *Appendix 1* of this policy.

(4) Transfer of Equipment

In accordance with DES Circular 10/2013 Section 14, although equipment is sanctioned to support a particular pupil, the equipment is sanctioned to a school and will, as a rule, remain the property of the school and be available for allocation to other or subsequent students with similar disabilities. Where the equipment is of a specialised and individualised nature and may not be suitable for other students in the school it is not efficient that such equipment be retained in the school. Should the student in respect of whom the technology is sanctioned change school, St. Joseph's Community College will consult with the SENO or visiting teacher in consultation with the SENO, regarding its transfer with the student where it is still appropriate for the student's assessed needs. This will ensure there is no gap in support for the student and enable the student to continue to use suitable and familiar resources in their new setting. Retention of technology in the school may be considered in certain circumstances outlined in Circular 10/2013 Section 14. Finally, where the school or the student has no further requirement for the equipment, the SENO may allocate it to another school.

Terms and Conditions are set out in *Appendix 3* of this policy to facilitate the responsibilities of St. Joseph's Community College where transfer of Assistive Technology to another school with a student arises under Circular 10/2013.

(5) Procedure to allow transfer of Assistive Technology with a student to another school

1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be required to read in full and agree to the Terms and Conditions *Appendix 3* of this policy.
2. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be required to complete an application to the Board of Management on behalf of their child for consent to take the assistive technology to another school. *Appendix 4* of this policy.
3. This application will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management and a decision made.

(6) Roles and Responsibilities

The Management Authority of St. Joseph's Community College acknowledges the responsibilities and requirements set out in DES Circular 10/2013 in relation to equipment purchased under the provisions of the scheme of grants towards the purchase of essential Assistive Technology equipment for students with physical or

communicative disabilities. The ICT Team will be designated with responsibility for the management of the equipment and for monitoring its effective use within the school in consultation with the student's class teacher, support teacher and parents.

(7) Approval/Ratification:

This policy will be presented to the Board Of Management on 20/11/2025 for approval and ratification.

Appendix 1: Home Use of School Owned Assistive Technology

Terms and Conditions: (Ref: DES Circular 10/2013 Section 13)

The 'School' in these terms and conditions is St. Joseph's Community College under the directorship of MSLETB.

1. The laptop (or any other approved assistive technology/equipment) remains the property of MSLETB.
2. Should the designated student change school, MSLETB may consult with the SENO (Special Education Needs Officer) or visiting teacher in consultation with the SENO, with regard to the transfer of any approved assistive technology/equipment with the student where it is still appropriate for the student's assessed needs and where the student is transferring to another ETB school. The final decision regarding transfer will rest with the MSLETB.
3. The laptop (or any other approved assistive technology/equipment) will be used solely by the designated student and will not be used by or transferred to a third party.
4. The parent will remind and teach their child to always take due care of the laptop (or any other approved assistive technology/equipment) when handling, transporting and using the laptop/equipment.
 - The laptop/equipment is not to be left unattended in a public place.
 - The laptop/equipment is not to be left unattended in a classroom or other place in the school.
 - All laptop leads must be unplugged from sockets and all accessories are to be stored safely and securely in the laptop case, with the laptop when work is complete.
 - The laptop/equipment should not be left in plain view in an unattended or unsecured vehicle but kept out of sight in the locked boot.
 - The laptop/equipment is not to be interfered with, tampered with or altered by a third party.
 - The laptop/equipment should be used away from food and drinks.
 - The laptop is only to be used during class lessons and not during breaks.

5. The laptop/equipment will be used solely to assist with computer skills, completion of homework assignments and other school related activities. Only school approved software packages/applications may be used.

6. Normally the designated student will have use of the laptop/equipment each week from Monday to Friday during school terms and it is to be returned for safe keeping over holiday time. In certain circumstances MSLETB may extend use of the laptop/equipment to holiday time if it is agreed that this will further facilitate and support the student's learning needs.

7. The laptop/equipment must be returned to the school in good working order at any time when requested by the MSLETB.

8. The laptop/equipment is covered under school insurance; however, the parent must take reasonable care to avoid damage or loss.

9. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide a protective cover for the iPad/laptop and to provide an iPad/laptop case for the device also as these were not listed in the recommendations of the Educational Psychologists report. This is to ensure minimal scratches/breakages to the device.

10. Use of the laptop/equipment, including all internet usage will be supervised by a parent and will be of an appropriate nature to minimise student's exposure to inappropriate material.

11. The ICT Co-ordinator in MSLETB will make regular checks to update the laptop, ensuring that anti-virus software is kept up to date and to check for inappropriate use.

12. The laptop/equipment will be used lawfully and in accordance with the School's Internet Acceptable Use Policy regarding the ethical use of technology, use of legal software, use of the Internet and the protection of personal data. The parent shall agree to review and adhere to the current School Internet Acceptable Use Policy, specifically where this policy relates to the safe and appropriate use of approved IT equipment such as laptops.

13. The following is deemed by the MSLETB as being 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 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

14. The laptop/equipment will be kept in good working order. All laptop faults, defects or malfunctions while in the care of the student are to be reported to the Principal or Class Teacher who will inform the ICT department of MSLETB with responsibility for the servicing and upkeep of the laptop.

15. Any repairs necessary due to damage caused to the laptop/equipment while in the care of the student will be arranged by the school and paid for by the parent of the student.

16. The laptop/equipment will not be sold, assigned, transferred or otherwise disposed of.

17. Any laptop markings, tags or plates or engravings will not be removed, concealed or altered. The laptop must not be marked in any way that might reduce the value of the laptop.

18. If the laptop is lost, stolen or damaged the parent will advise the Principal and the Gardaí as soon as possible orally and in writing including all relevant details, record of events etc.

19. Due to current software licensing arrangements covering home use, the software on the laptop cannot be used for any commercial purpose.

20. If any of these terms or conditions is breached, MSLETB may at any time revoke this arrangement.

21. The laptop/equipment will be put on the school's network. Student's will use their Microsoft 365 account to login to the device.

As the parent/guardian of _____ (name), I agree to abide by the terms and conditions listed above and recognise that any breach of the above conditions may result in the Assistive Technology being removed from the student.

Laptop Make: _____

Laptop Serial Number: _____

Received on (date) _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Appendix 2: Application for home use of School Assistive Technology

As the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____ (Student's Name) We/I wish to apply for home use of the following equipment provided for under the Department of Education and Skills scheme of grants towards the purchase of essential assistive technology equipment for students with physical or communicative disabilities.

Laptop Make and Serial Number: _____

Value of Laptop and Software: _____

This equipment will be used to support my child with homework and computing skills practice.

I confirm that I accept responsibility for this equipment that I am taking into my possession, which is the property of St. Joseph's Community College, (Roll Number: 76334i) while on the way to and from school and while in use by my child for the purposes agreed.

I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept the Terms and Conditions attached to this application and other relevant policies, including the Internet acceptable Use Policy (IAUP) as determined by St. Joseph's Community College.

Name of Student: _____ Class: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

I (Student) understand that this laptop I have been given to bring home from school is to help with homework and typing practice.

Signature of Student: _____

Appendix 3: Transfer of Assistive Technology to Another School with a student

Terms and Conditions: (Ref: DE Circular 10/2013 Section 14)

The 'School' in these terms and conditions is St. Joseph's Community College.

1. The Assistive Technology/Equipment is sanctioned to the school and will, as a rule, remain the property of the school and be available for allocation to other or subsequent students with similar disabilities.
2. Where the equipment is of a specialised and individualised nature and may not be suitable for other students in the school it is not efficient that such equipment be retained in the school.
3. Should the student in respect of whom the technology is sanctioned change school, St. Joseph's Community College will consult with the SENO or visiting teacher in consultation with the SENO, with regard to its transfer with the student where it is still appropriate for the students assessed needs.
4. Retention of technology in the school may be considered in certain circumstances outlined in Circular 10/2013 Section 14.
5. Where the school or the student has no further requirement for the equipment, the SENO or visiting teacher in consultation with the SENO, may allocate it to another school.
6. St. Joseph's Community College may contact the school to which the student is transferring while processing any application for Transfer of Equipment.
7. The Board of Management will consider each application for Transfer of Equipment, in respect of any student to whom the technology is sanctioned who is changing school.
8. Following the Transfer of Equipment with a student to another school, St. Joseph's community College will release the laptop/equipment from its network and will no longer have responsibility for the equipment named in the application.

Appendix 4: Application for Transfer of School Assistive Technology to Another School with a Student

As the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____ (Student's Name) We/I wish to apply for transfer of the following equipment provided for under the Department of Education and Skills scheme of grants towards the purchase of essential Assistive Technology equipment for students with physical or communicative disabilities, to:

_____ (School Name)

_____ (School Address)

_____ (School Contact Number)

Make and Serial Number: _____

Value of Equipment and Software: _____

This equipment will be used to continue to support my child in his/her new school setting. I confirm that I have read, fully understand and accept the Terms and Conditions attached to this application as determined by St. Joseph's Community College.

Name of Student: _____

Class: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Contact Numbers: Home: _____ Mobile: _____

Signature of principal: _____