



Esker Educate Together National School
Assistive Technology Policy

Introduction and Rationale

This policy has been developed in line with Department of Education and Skills Circular 10/2013.

Assistive Technology provided under the Department of Education and Skills Scheme of grants towards the purchase of essential assistive technology equipment is for students who have been diagnosed as:

- (i) having a serious physical disability
- (ii) and/or sensory or communicative disability to the extent that their ability to communicate through the medium of speech or writing is materially curtailed.

Esker Educate Together National School, may apply to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) under the terms of this scheme for essential assistive technology equipment for individual students when required and when recommended by relevant professionals, such as Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists etc.

Sections 13 and 14 from the DES Circular 10/2013 outline the school's responsibility in relation to equipment purchased under this scheme and matters relating to use of and transfer of such equipment between schools as follows:

Home Use of Equipment

In accordance with DES Circular 10/2013 Section 13, equipment purchased 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 student's home. Such circumstances might be where it is agreed that the student 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 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. *Appendix 2*

Procedure to allow a Student to take Assistive Technology home:

1. Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) will be required to read in full and agree to the Terms and Conditions Appendix 1 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 home. Appendix 2 of this policy.
3. This application will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management and a decision made.

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 general 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, including proceeding to post-primary school, Esker Educate Together National School will consult with the SENO/ Visiting Teacher with regard to its transfer with the student where it is still appropriate for the students 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 or visiting teacher in conjunction with 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 Esker Educate Together National School under Circular 10/2013

An application form requesting transfer of equipment provided, when a student is changing school, including proceeding to post-primary school is attached to this policy. *Appendix 4*

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.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Management Authority of Esker Educate Together National School 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 Co-ordinators and the support company GDK will be the 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.

Timeframe for Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner, if required. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management at a properly convened meeting of the Board **on 27th September 2021**

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date

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 Esker Educate Together National School

1. The laptop (or any other approved assistive technology/equipment) remains the property of the 'School'.
2. Should the designated student change school, including to post-primary, the School may consult with the SENO (Special Education Needs Officer) 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. The final decision regarding transfer will rest with the School Board of Management.
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 take due care of the laptop (or any other approved assistive technology/equipment) at all times 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.
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 evening from Monday to Thursday during school terms and it is to be returned to the School on Fridays for safe keeping over weekends and holiday time. In certain circumstances the School may extend use of the laptop/equipment to weekends or 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 School.
8. The laptop/equipment is covered under school insurance; however, the parent must take reasonable care to avoid damage or loss.
9. 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.
10. The ICT Co-ordinators will make regular checks to update the laptop, ensuring that anti-virus software is kept up to date and also to check for inappropriate use.
11. 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.

12. The following is deemed by the School 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

13. 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 teacher with responsibility for the servicing and upkeep of the laptop.

14. 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.

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

16. 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.

17. 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.

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

19. If any of these terms or conditions is breached, the School Board of Management may at any time revoke this arrangement.

Please note: The School's Internet Acceptable Use Policy can be viewed on the school website at: <https://www.eskeretns.ie/policies.html>

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 Esker Educate Together National School, (Roll Number: 20274C) 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 Esker Educate Together National School.

Name of Student: _____ **Class:** _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

Contact Numbers: Home: _____ Mobile: _____

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: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

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

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

The 'School' in these terms and conditions is Esker Educate Together National School

1. The Assistive Technology/Equipment is sanctioned to the School and will, as a general 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, including proceeding to post-primary school, Esker Educate Together National School will consult with the SENO/ Visiting Teacher 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 conjunction with the SENO, may allocate it to another school.
6. Esker Educate Together National School 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, including proceeding to post-primary school separately.
8. Following the Transfer of Equipment with a student to another school, Esker Educate Together National School 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 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 Esker Educate Together National School.

Name of Student: _____ **Class:** _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

Contact Numbers: Home: _____ Mobile: _____

Signature of Principal: _____