



# Mobile Phone Policy

## Use of Mobile Telephones and Electronic Devices

This policy outlines the appropriate use of mobile phones and electronic devices in our school.

### Rationale

The possession and use of mobile phones by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Therefore the school strongly discourages the bringing of mobile phones to school by students.

The school is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises but only within the parameters of the policy as stated below.

Use of mobile phones (particularly with the advent of increasingly sophisticated equipment and camera phones) presents a number of problems, including:

- Mobile phones can be valuable items and might render a pupil vulnerable to theft
- Mobile phones (and their cost and level of sophistication - or otherwise) can make pupils objects of envy or disparagement and could have implications with regard to discipline and potential bullying
- Even when apparently silent, the use of mobiles phones for texting purposes could be potentially undermining of classroom discipline
- Use of the newer phones with integrated cameras could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images
- Many of the above issues also pertain to I-Pods, Game Boys, PSPs, etc. They can be very intrusive, distracting and antisocial in a school environment.

### Aims

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at our school.
- To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.
- It is the Board's policy to prohibit the unauthorised use by pupils of mobile phones while on school premises, grounds or off site activities e.g. school swimming,

### **Guidelines for Children**

- The Board discourages (and asks all parents to discourage) pupils from bringing mobile phones to schools on the grounds that they are valuable and may be lost or stolen.
- Where a pupil does bring a mobile phone to school, the phone must be handed to the class teacher in the morning. The class teacher will keep the mobile phone in her/his filing cabinet until school ends. The mobile phone must remain switched off during the school day and may not be used, for any purpose, on school premises, grounds or during off-site school activities (such as school swimming or sports activities.)
- If pupils are asked to bring in tablets/iPads/ laptops for research purposes or a 'technology day' they will be kept in the pupils bag at all times until given permission to take them out. If space allows the teacher will keep all devices in her filing cabinet or in a safe location.
- Pupils will only be allowed to connect to the school WiFi network and the class teacher will enter the code for all pupils.
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains the first point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly, and helped in any appropriate way.
- The school will not be liable for the replacement of lost, stolen or damaged devices.

The school incorporates this policy into the Code of Behaviour and will treat breaches as they would treat any other breach of the Code.

- If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers or sharing inappropriate messages via bluetooth this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Discipline Policy.
- If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a teacher.

### **School Trips and Outings**

- Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones with them on school trips and tours.
- If a pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone or any digital device, it will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Discipline Policy. Parents will be notified.

### **Guidelines for Staff**

- Teachers should not have mobile phones on while on playground duty.
- Phones may be used in the classroom for educational purposes – (eg. to connect to a website if it cannot be accessed due to the schools filtering system)
- Phones needs to be used for MFA
- Calls for school business e.g. checking a booking for school tour, making arrangements for sporting events etc. should be done on the school phone.

- Teachers are reminded to be careful when using their personal mobile phones to contact parents. This should be avoided when possible.
- Mobile phones should not be used for personal reasons during class teaching time.

**This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021.**

**Signed:**

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**Patrick Sullivan**

*(Chairperson)*