

## **School Mobile Phone Policy**

This policy has been drawn up in response to technological advances, which have seen a significant increase in mobile phone and hand held electronic devices amongst the school population over recent years.

Rationale:

The following procedures have been put in place to ensure minimal and safe usage of mobile phones and electronic devices in our school, due to the facts that

- Mobile phones, Tablets (iPads etc), Game Boys/PSPs, MP3s/iPods etc. are intrusive and distracting in a school environment and can reduce constructive socialisation during break times.
- Strategies must be put in place to reduce the intrusiveness of unauthorised technology in a school situation.
- Mobile phones may be used to conduct bullying campaigns.

Aims:

It is our aim to:

- To lessen intrusions on and distractions to children's learning during the school day.
- To ensure children have maximum opportunities to socialise positively during break times.
- To ensure that electronic devices in and owned by the school (iPads, computers etc.) are used under the instruction and supervision of staff only, and are used for educational and learning purposes

Relationship to School Ethos

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment and is not conducive to learning, a provision which is central to the mission statement and ethos of Our Lady of Lourdes N.S.

Guidelines and Procedures for Children

The following are the guidelines for mobile phone/electronic devices usage in the school;

- Children are not allowed to use mobile phones or their own personal electronic games or devices during school hours.
- Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones or electronic devices into school.
- Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so through the school secretary or class teacher (using the school landline phone / school mobile phone).
- Use of mobile phones/electronic devices are not permitted even during after school activities such as Homework Club etc.
- Any pupil who brings a mobile phone or electronic device to school risks having it confiscated and not returned until a Parent/Guardian collects it.
- The use of School owned electronic devices (iPads/ laptops etc.) is strictly under the supervision of staff and in line with our IT Policy and Acceptable Usage Policy.
- Additionally, the school staff and Board of Management will ensure regular educational talks by experts for pupils, parents and staff to endeavour to keep pupils

and parents educated on any risks associated with mobile phones, tablets or internet enabled devices – such as cyber bullying, social media security and content

Regular school activities outside the school premises.

TRIPS DURING REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS: E.G. swimming lessons, Gaelic/soccer matches or any other trips out of the school, mobile phones are not permitted.

SCHOOL TRIPS/TOURS: As outlined already phones are not permitted on school trips or tours. However if a parent feels they urgently need to contact their child after school hours they may again put their request in writing to the principal. If consent is given, the teacher will look after the switched off phone until school hours are finished.

SCHOOL/CLASS CONCERTS/SPECIAL OCCASIONS: In special circumstances, such as those listed above, permission will be given to parents to use their phones/electrical devices in order to take pictures of their child. This should be done discretely and show consideration for others and their privacy.

Parents and Visitors

We ask parents/visitors not to use their mobile phones while in the school building.

However, parents who are attending organised activities in the HSCL room will be permitted to use their phones if necessary.

Photographs or videos of pupils *may not* be taken by parents/visitors with their mobile phones while on the school grounds (see exceptions listed above).

Guidelines and procedures for Staff

- Classroom supervision is usually organised if a class teacher has to contact other professionals or outside agencies in relation to a particular child. This contact is then made using the school landline or school mobile.
- The organisation of school events such as sporting games, events etc. should be organised on the school landline or school mobile, but calls relating to such school business may also be received and made on teacher's personal phones during the school day.
- The Principal may have his mobile phone turned on at all times when in classrooms, so that they are contactable by the office /staff (in case of emergency) at all times.
- Staff personal mobiles may also be used to contact the Principal / office in the case of an emergency in the classroom / yard etc.
- Staff personal calls and texts are ordinarily confined to break times (but not while on yard duty).
- All staff should have their phones on silent during class time.
- It is acknowledged that teachers and SNAs may need to be contactable by their family / their children's school etc. during the day, so phones may be left in view (while on silent) throughout the school day. Staff personal calls on their mobile phones may be answered in cases of such emergencies

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy and amend as required.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018