



## **Mobile Phone & Electronic Device Policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy was drawn up in response to technological advances, which have seen a significant increase in mobile phone 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 the 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 diminish 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 St. Joseph's NS.

### **Guidelines and Procedures for Children and Parents**

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.
- Exceptions may be made for children who require a device for medical needs. The device will be kept by the relevant SNA or teacher when not in use. It is strictly to be used for its medical purpose. Permission must be sought from the Principal before the device can be brought in to the school. This does not include the need of a child to communicate with his parents. The office phone should be used for this purpose.
- Liability for any loss, damage or theft of any device is NOT under any circumstance the responsibility of the staff or Board of Management.
- Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so through the school secretary or class teacher (using the school landline phone).



- Parents who need to contact their child during school time may do so by calling the school landline. Parents can contact the after school activity teacher by contacting the teacher directly.
- Use of mobile phones/electronic devices is not permitted even during after school activities such as Musicianship/ Piano/ Spanish/ Guitar classes etc.
- If a pupil brings a mobile phone or electronic device to school, it will be 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,

#### **Guidelines and procedures for Staff**

- Classroom supervision is 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.
- The organisation of school events such as sporting games, events etc. should be organised on the school landline or through Aladdin, but calls relating to such school business may also be received and made on teachers' personal phones during the school day.
- The Principal may have her 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).
- As part of the school's response to COVID, all staff have permission to use their phones as appropriate during class time and on the yard. Staff are required to use their phones to share messages with other staff members. This will limit movement around the school.
- It is acknowledged that teachers and SNAs may need to be contactable by their family / their children's schools and calls may need to be answered or returned in cases of emergencies.

#### **Implementation, Review and Communication**

This policy was initially drafted and introduced in 2018. It was ratified by the BOM in May 2018. It was reviewed and amended in September 2020.

The policy will be reviewed, as necessary, in the light of experience.

***Review Date: May 2022***