

Mobile phone and Devices Policy

Policy Summary Details:

Policy Title:	Mobile Phone and Devices Policy
Version Number:	1
Written/Adopted Date:	
Written by:	Template from Department of Education & Skills/Diocesan Office
Date Shared with Staff:	
Date Ratified by BOM:	25 th November 2020
Review Date:	September 2021 Or sooner if necessitated by alteration to terms or conditions issued by Circular Letter from DES.
Policy Implementation Date:	1 st September 2020

Mobile phone and Devices Policy

School of the Holy Spirit

The possession and use of mobile phones, tablets and other devices by students is now extensive. Use of mobile devices presents a number of opportunities as well as challenges, including:

1. Mobile Devices can provide interesting and effective learning opportunities as more and more individualised educational programmes come on stream. The ability to share work to a wider audience also brings great value.
2. Mobile Devices can be valuable items and might render a student vulnerable to theft
3. The use of mobiles devices could be potentially undermining of classroom management, e.g. videoing staff, etc.
4. Use of devices with integrated cameras could lead to cyberbullying, child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of content

The school's Board of Management accepts that it is not realistic to have a policy which prohibits students from bringing devices to school. Not only would it be impractical to forbid students from carrying them, but it is believed that a number of parents would be concerned for health and safety reasons if their child were not allowed to carry a phone at all (and might therefore be unable to contact their parents in respect of any situation that might arise after school.) However, a sensible and flexible policy which balances the opportunities and challenges gives schools the ability to ensure that all students, staff and families using the school are kept happy and safe, as well as providing important opportunities for learning.

Policy

There are a number of different users of the school building, including students, staff, families and tenants (groups that rent the building). The following information outlines the policy regarding each of these groups.

Students

Unless expressly asked by the class teacher, students are discouraged (and asks all parents to discourage) from bringing mobile devices to school. Where a student does bring a mobile device to school, it 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 curricular walks, school swimming or sports activities.)

Mobile devices must be handed up to the class teacher in the morning in the Senior School and the teacher will keep phones in the "Phone Box" until the end of the school day. School of the Holy Spirit cannot take any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of any device brought into school and not handed up.

There has been an increase in the number of mobile devices, being used on school transport for listening to music or supporting the student on their journey to school. However, if a mobile device is used on school transport for this purpose, it must only be used on the bus. Students must never take photographs or video on their personal mobile device. Any footage that is taken must be surrendered on request. This footage will either be deleted or, if applicable, be brought to the attention of the relevant authorities.

If a student is found to have an unauthorised device or is using a device at an inappropriate time, **the device will be confiscated and kept until a parent/guardian comes and collects the phone.** Permission to have the device in school may also be withdrawn. The school will accept no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged devices and the safety and security of devices is a matter for students and their families. The school incorporates this policy into the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy and will treat breaches as they would treat any other breach of the code.

Staff

Staff members do not give out their phone number or that of any other staff member to students or parents/guardians. Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff in working with students, it is vital that staff be engaged with students at all working times. Staff are trusted to use their phones accordingly.

In terms of data, staff are also advised to use any mobile devices responsibly. Staff may use their devices to record any school-related work if they are requested to do so by the class teacher. However, the school cannot take any responsibility for these recordings. Staff are trusted that they will use these recordings responsibly for school-related activities, e.g. on the school blog, Website, Facebook account etc.

Staff should also note that no unauthorised recordings of school business must take place. This includes all meetings and events. If a meeting needs to be recorded for any reason, all participants must agree to the recording before it can take place. Any unauthorised recordings of meetings will be dealt with as a breach of disciplinary procedures.

Work Calls

Calls to parents/guardians should be kept as short as possible. Where a lengthy conversation with parents/guardians is required, appointments should be made to meet parents. Calls to other professionals and organisations should be made in consultation with the Principal and classroom supervision will be arranged where appropriate.

Personal Calls

In general, personal calls should be carried out outside of teaching time. In cases of urgency, a staff member should use discretion in making calls and ensure that their classroom is supervised during the call. Incoming personal calls should be reserved for urgent matters

Parents, Guardians, Visitors and Others

Adults using the school are reminded that the school has poor phone reception. Making phone calls while on the premises should ensure that they do not distract any classes.

Adults must ensure that all content that they access on school premises is appropriate and in line with the ethos of our school. All internet data is logged and, if necessary, it may be used to report to relevant authorities.

Adults are also reminded that they must not use devices to record audio, images or video unless specifically permitted by the school. Any meetings with staff should not be recorded without the permission of the staff member. Visitors must also be vigilant in terms of Child Protection with regards to recording students in the school. Visitors must ensure that they never share any media of students in school online, including their own social media profiles unless expressly permitted by the school and anyone appearing in the media.

Newspapers and media organisations are permitted to take photographs, audio and video of students for their respective organisations. However, if there are student opted out from appearing in the media (see Internet AUP) they cannot be recorded.

This policy was written in 2020 and reviewed in 2024.

Ratified at the BoM meeting on 25th November 2020 and signed by Chairperson. Secretary recorded the ratification in the Minutes of the meeting.

Monitoring the implementation of the policy

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the Principal, staff and the Board of Management

Reviewing and evaluating the policy

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated after 2 years. On-going review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines (e.g. from the Data Protection Commissioner, Department of Education and Skills or TUSLA), legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, students, school staff and others. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning

Signed: _____

Chairman

Signed: _____

Principal

Date: Ratified 25th November 2020.