



Inch N.S.
Scoil Náisiúnta Inis
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Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Policy

Introduction & Rationale

This policy was drawn up in response to technological advances, which have seen a significant increase in handheld electronic 'gadgets' amongst the school population over recent years.

The possession and use of mobile phones and/or other electronic devices (e.g. iPod, iPad, tablet, camera, gaming console, devices with recording capabilities etc.) by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector.

Possession and use of mobile phones/electronic devices, particularly with the advent of increasingly sophisticated equipment and cameras, presents a number of problems. These include being a distraction to learning, causing discipline problems or as a method of bullying, to menace, harass or offend another person.

There are serious child protection issues and privacy concerns related to the possession and/or use of phones/electronic devices, such as the ability to take photographs, make video or voice recordings. In order to manage the issue, this policy has been reviewed.

Relationship to School Ethos

The use of mobile phones/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 Inch National School

Aim of Policy

This policy aims to ensure a "technology free" school environment and to lessen intrusions on and distractions to children's learning. This policy prohibits the use of mobile phones and/or any other electronic devices by pupils while on school premises, travelling to/from school premises, or involved in school-related activities (such as tours/trips, extra-curricular activities etc.). This is in order to create a safer environment for every child.

Internal School Procedures

The use of mobile phones and/or any other electronic devices by pupils who attend this school is not permitted, as outlined above. Therefore, pupils should not have phones/electronic devices on the school premises. Neither should pupils have any phones/electronic devices in their possession when engaging in school-related activities and/or travelling to/from school premises.

Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so through with the permission of a teacher, using the school landline phone.

The school will operate this policy in conjunction with the Code of Behaviour, Anti-bullying Policy and Child Protection Policy. A breach of the Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices policy will be treated as a serious breach of the aforementioned policies.

The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged phones/ electronic devices whether on the school premises, travelling to an/ or from school or any school related event.

Assistive learning technology may be used by pupils in school for school-related purposes, in accordance with the recommendations of the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) and in line with the school's Assistive Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Inappropriate Conduct & Sanction Procedures

The use of mobile phones or any recording device, during school hours, or while participating in any school related activities will be treated as a serious breach of school discipline.

In the event of any unsuitable recording occurring all interested parties will be requested to present themselves to the school.

Pupils using phones/electronic devices to bully, harass or take images/recordings of other pupils will face disciplinary actions.

If a pupil uses a phone/electronic device to take any photo or video images or recording of a member of staff, without the staff member's permission, the pupil may be suspended, in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.

Pupils who choose to disregard this policy will be required to hand over the phone/electronic device to a member of staff.

Any pupil whose phone/electronic device is seen or heard by a staff member, whether or not the phone/electronic device is switched on, will have their phone confiscated.

The phone/electronic device should be given to the school office by the member of staff and it will be retained there until it is collected by a parent/guardian. The parent/guardian who collects the phone/electronic device from the office must sign out the device. The parent/guardian will be required to enforce this policy with their child.

The progression of sanctions will follow that outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour.

Failure to relinquish a phone/electronic device for confiscation, when asked by a staff member to do so, will be treated as a serious offence, in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a phone/electronic device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the school in this regard is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí. The school management reserves the right to entrust phones/electronic devices to the Gardaí for further investigation in the following circumstances: If the school has any reason to believe that a phone/electronic device has unacceptable material stored on it. Where there is suspicion that material on a phone/electronic device may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence.

Parents/Guardians will be informed in such circumstances.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians, members of staff and pupils to adhere to this policy. Any pupil who is feeling unwell at school and needs to go home, or who needs to contact their parents/guardians for any reason, must notify their class teacher. The class teacher/ principal will contact parents/guardians or facilitate the pupil in making a call using the school landline.

Evaluation

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments added as new technology comes on stream.

It will be reviewed every two years or sooner if deemed necessary.

Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the board of management at a meeting held on 25th of September 2023

Signed: *Mark Ward*
Chairperson:

Kat Walsh
Principal