St. Patrick's Boys' N.S.
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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 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 St. Patrick's Boys' 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.
- In exceptional circumstances, when a mobile/device is required after school pupils should hand their mobile and/or device to the class teacher/ Principal for safe keeping. It will be kept in a locked drawer/ filing cabinet throughout the school day. The device should be powered off and may be collected at the end of the school day.
- 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)
- Use of mobile phones/electronic devices are not permitted even during after school activities.
- Any pupil who brings a mobile phone or electronic device to school without pre-authorisation will have it confiscated and not returned until a Parent/Guardian collects it **the following day**. Should this happen on a second occasion, the device will be retained for one week by the school.
- 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 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.
- The organisation of school events such as sporting games, events etc. should be organised on the school landline 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 his/her mobile phone turned on at all times when in classrooms, so that they are contactable 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.
- The use of mobile phones by staff for essential calls should be kept to a minimum. However, it is acknowledged that teachers and SNAs may need to be contactable by their family / their children's school etc. during the day. Staff personal calls on their mobile phones may be answered in cases of such emergencies. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that all possessions, including mobile phones are safely stored during the school day.
- Where staff members use their personal devices for photographing / videoing pupils, these should be immediately deleted once shared with social media administrators.

Implementation, Review and Communication

This policy was initially drafted and introduced in 2008. It was revised in October 2009, May 2017 and again in May of 2024. The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy and amend as required.

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

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: _____