



An Chroí Ró Naofa Senior National School



Mobile Phone and Device Policy

Introduction

This policy was drawn up in response to technological advances, which have seen a significant increase in use of 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 fact that:

- Teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions.
- Mobile phones, tablets, Game Boys/PSPs, MP3s/iPods etc. can be wonderful, educational resources. However, they are a potential and real source of bullying and abuse through messaging and dissemination of unacceptable and inappropriate images.
- Mobile phones can be valuable items and might render a pupil vulnerable to theft.
- Strategies must be put in place to reduce the use of unauthorised technology in our school environment

Aims:

It is our aim to:

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at our school.
- To outline the procedures and processes in place in relation to this policy.
- To lessen intrusions and distractions to our pupils' learning.
- 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 unauthorised 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 Sacred Heart SNS.

Guidelines and Procedures for Children

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

- **Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones or electronic devices into school.**
- Consequently, children are not allowed to use mobile phones or their own personal electronic games or devices during school hours.
- In **exceptional circumstances** only, an agreement can be made between home and school when a phone/device is required after school. In such cases, pupils should hand their mobile/device to the class teacher or 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 circumstances, 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 / HSCL mobile phone).
- Use of mobile phones/electronic devices are not permitted during after-school activities such as Homework Club etc.
- Any pupil who brings a mobile phone or electronic device to school and does not hand it to the teacher/Principal 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,

Guidelines and procedures for Staff

- Classroom supervision is usually organised if a class teacher has to contact parents, 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 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 by the office / staff (in case of emergency) at all times.

- The Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) teacher may have the school HSCL mobile phone on at all times, so that they are contactable by parents, the Principal, other professionals or outside agencies.
- 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 messages 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.

Implementation, Review and Communication

This policy was initially drafted in 2018 and introduced in 2019. The procedures were agreed in consultation with teachers, parents, pupils and school management. The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy and amend as required.

Next Review Date: March 2022

Signed: *Gerry Diver* (Principal)

Signed: *Donal Brennan* (Chairperson B.o.M.)