

St. Fiacc's Mobile/Smart Phone and Personal Electronic Device Policy

Rationale

The possession and use of mobile/smart phones by school students is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. The use of mobile phones and personal devices presents a number of problems that can prove intrusive and distracting in a school environment. They can be used to cause discipline problems or as a means of bullying others. The capacity of many devices to take photographs, make video or sound recordings could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images. In order to manage the issue of mobile phones, and other personal devices, this policy has been developed.

Relationship to Our School Ethos

The use of personal mobile/smart phones and other electronic devices contravenes the provision of a caring school environment, a provision that is central to the mission statement of St. Fiacc's NS.

St. Fiacc's NS prohibits the use by students of personal mobile/smart phones, and other personal devices, while on school premises or involved in school activities such as tours, trips or extra-curricular activities. This is in order to create a safer environment and to lessen intrusions on, and distractions to, children's learning.

School Procedures

- The use of personal mobile/smart phones and other personal devices by children who attend the school is not allowed while the children are in the care of the school staff, while at school, on trips from the school or involved in extra-curricular activities. The children should, therefore, not bring mobile phones and other personal devices to school or when engaging in school-related activities.
- Mobile/Smart phones and other personal devices that are found in the school should be handed into the School Office or the class teacher.
- Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so through the School Secretary using the School landline phone 0599132444
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the School Office remains the first point of contact and can ensure that your child is reached quickly and a message passed onto them.
- Staff are permitted to use their phones for school-related business only or for emergencies. Staff should not use their phones for personal reasons during teacher-pupil contact time.
- In the event that a parent thinks that their child having a phone in school is essential for medical or other reasons, the following will apply:
- Parents must send the Principal a letter requesting that their child be permitted to bring his mobile phone/device to school. The letter should be addressed to the Principal. This letter will be kept on file. The final decision rests with the Principal.

Sanctions

- Any child found to have a phone/ personal devices in school without parental letter will have the phone/device confiscated. The phone will not be returned until a parent/guardian/carer collects it. Similarly, the use of all personal electronic devices is not permitted during the school day - this includes arrival, class time, breaks and dismissal.
- Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone or other personal device for any purpose, it will be confiscated from the pupil and returned only to the parent/guardian/carer.
- The School will not be liable for replacing mobile phones or other devices that are lost, stolen or damaged. The School incorporates this policy into the Code of Behaviour and Discipline and Acceptable Use Policy, and will treat breaches in the same manner as any other breach of these Policies.
- If a pupil uses a mobile phone or personal device to take photographs, video footage or recording of other pupils or staff members, or shares inappropriate messages this will be regarded as a breach of the code of behaviour and disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the School's Code of Behaviour
- Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones and other personal devices with them on school trips and tours. Teachers will have a contact number in the event that it is necessary to make contact with a parent/guardian.

A copy of the Mobile phone and Devices Policy is made available to school personnel and to the Parents' Association. The policy is readily accessible to parents on request and will be published on the school website

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of St. Fiacc's on 06/03/2024

Signed: Lillian Fitzgerald
Chairperson