

Mobile phone and Devices Policy

Cloghogue N.S.

The possession and use of mobile phones, tablets and other devices by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. 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 programs 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 pupil 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 pupils from bringing devices to school. Not only would it be impractical to forbid pupils 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 children, 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.

Pupils

Unless expressly asked by the class teacher, pupils are discouraged (and asks all parents to discourage) pupils from bringing mobile devices to school. Where a pupil 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 school swimming or sports activities.)

Mobile devices must be kept in the pupil's bag. Cloghogue NS cannot take any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of any device brought into school.

If a pupil 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 pupils 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 pupils or parents/guardians. Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff in working with children, it is vital that staff be engaged with children 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 wish. 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, Facebook page, YouTube Channel, 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 making phone calls while on the premises should ensure that they do not distract any classes. Adults can request to use the school's wifi on their devices. They are asked to disconnect manually after using the wifi.

Adults must ensure that all content that they access 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 children in the school. Visitors must ensure that they

never share any media of children 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 children for their respective organisations. However, if there are children opted out from appearing in the media (see Internet AUP) they cannot be recorded.

Review of policy

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management when the need arises.