

St Canice's Co-Ed Primary School

Granges Road, Kilkenny.



Use of Mobile Telephones and Electronic Devices

Rationale

The possession and use of mobile phones by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Therefore the school strongly discourages the bringing of mobile phones to school by students. Use of mobile phones (particularly with the advent of increasingly sophisticated equipment and camera phones) presents a number of problems, including:

- Mobile phones can be valuable items and might render a pupil vulnerable to theft
- Mobile phones (and their cost and level of sophistication - or otherwise) can make pupils objects of envy or disparagement and could have implications with regard to discipline and potential bullying
- Use of the newer phones with integrated cameras could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images
- Many of the above issues also pertain to I-Pods, Game Boys, PSPs, etc. These devices can also be very intrusive, distracting and anti- social in a school environment.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at our school and to outline the procedures and processes of this policy.

Guidelines for Children

- The unauthorised use by pupils of mobile phones while on school premises, grounds or off site activities during school time or during after school activities is prohibited.
- The Board discourages (and asks all parents to discourage) pupils from bringing mobile phones to schools on the grounds that they are valuable and may be lost or stolen.
- Where a pupil does bring a mobile phone to school, the phone must remain switched off during the school day and may not be used, for any purpose, on school premises/grounds, during after school activities or during off-site school activities such as school swimming or sports activities.
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains the first point of contact and we can ensure you that your child will be reached quickly, and helped in any appropriate way.

- Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone or other electronic device, for any purpose, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil and returned only to the parent or guardian.
- The school will not be liable for the replacement of lost, stolen or damaged devices.

The school incorporates this policy into the Code of Behaviour and will treat breaches as they would treat any other breach of the Code.

- If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers or sharing inappropriate messages via bluetooth this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Discipline Policy.
- If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a teacher.
- Where a child transgresses the mobile phone policy on more than one occasion, their phone will be confiscated and may be held by the principal for up to a week.

School Trips and Outings.

Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones or any electronic devices with them on school trips and tours. A contact number will be provided for parents that may be used by them to contact the teacher accompanying their children on the trip.

Guidelines for Staff

- During teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings, mobile phones should be switched off or put on 'silent' or 'discreet' mode.
- Phones will not be used in sight of children except in the case of emergency. Calls for school business e.g. checking a booking for school tour, making arrangements for sporting events etc. should be done on the school phone.
- In very exceptional circumstances (eg a sick relative in hospital, inclement weather on match day etc.) the teacher may, with the permission of the principal, have their phones on for a period.
- Teachers are reminded to be careful when using their personal mobile phones to contact parents.
- Teachers are not to give their personal mobile phone to pupils under any circumstances. If a child urgently needs to talk to their parent, the teacher is advised to make the call and remain with the child for the duration of the call.

This document has been reviewed by the Board of Management and ratified at a meeting held on 28th February 2017. It will be reviewed in two years time or earlier if deemed necessary.

Chairman: James Murphy Date: 28.2.2017.

Principal: Maria Gmesford Date: 28/2/17.