

2022/23

# Mobile Phone & Digital Device Policy



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## **Introduction**

Mobile phones and digital devices are now an integral part of young peoples' lives and can have considerable value, particularly in relation to individual safety. But as with all forms of digital technology mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately.

Ó Fiaich College has a duty of care to the students attending our school and therefore the purpose of this policy is to ensure that the welfare and wellbeing of all students is not affected in any way by the inappropriate use of mobile phones and other digital devices.

This Policy will operate in parallel with the Student Internet Safety & Acceptable Use Policy.

## **Aim of this Policy**

The aim of our mobile phone/digital device Policy is to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all members of the school community is respected. The school policy on mobile phones/digital devices is therefore devised with the intention of ensuring that teaching and learning can take place without interruption and with the intention of protecting all students and staff from the potential of harassment or bullying.

The school aims to educate pupils in the responsible use of technology. Note: The term 'phone' in this policy denotes mobile phones/smartphones and other such similar portable electronic devices, including, laptops, tablets and iPads.

Mobile phones can present a number of problems:

- They are valuable items that can be stolen.
- Their use can render pupils subject to potential cyber-bullying or inappropriate contacts.
- They can disrupt the learning environment.
- Camera functions can lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images.

## **Parent/Guardian Expectations**

- I will discuss & reinforce the school's mobile phone policy with my child/ward.
  - I will encourage my child/ward to speak to school staff about school issues and concerns and explain to them that they cannot text or call home during school hours. All communication to home must come through the school office/Year Head.
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- I will ensure my child/ward understands the potential dangers associated with online activity and issues around posting & sharing pictures, videos and comments on social media platforms.
- It is my responsibility as a Parent/Guardian to be contactable at all times during the school day. I will provide the school with up to date contact details (current mobile phone number).
- I understand and agree that the school is not responsible for the theft, loss, or damage to my child/ward's mobile phone.
- I will sign the school's Mobile Phone Contract.
- I will ensure that my child/ward understands and signs the school's Mobile Phone Contract.
- All contact with my child/ward during the school day will be through the school office only.

**In an emergency Parents/Guardians must phone the school office and a message will be taken immediately to the student. This ensures that a student is given support and privacy in dealing with a potentially difficult situation.**

### **School Staff/Teacher Expectations**

- All school staff are expected to be familiar with and have an awareness of the Mobile Phone & Digital Device Policy.
- Teachers & the School Leadership Team have a responsibility to ensure that students are not using phones during the school day.
- All Teachers, both PLC & Post Primary, are expected to support Year Heads and School Management in monitoring Mobile Phone usage outside of the classroom also.
- Teachers must ensure that this policy is integral to their classroom management strategies.

### **Student Expectations**

Students are required to use phones and digital devices responsibly at all times.

- Students must ensure that images stored on their phones are not of a violent, degrading or offensive nature. The transmission of such images/information will be deemed a serious breach of the school's Code of behaviour.
  - Cyber-bullying is completely unacceptable and will be followed up by the school as gross misbehaviour and the school, in turn, will invoke the necessary sanctions as laid out in the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy.
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- Phones must be switched off and kept in bags during the course of the school day, including break-time and lunchtime, so as to avoid disrupting teaching and learning.
- Headphones/Air Pods must not be worn during or between lessons, for reasons of safety and courtesy.
- If there is an emergency which requires communication with home, pupils must speak to a member of staff who will deal with the matter. A message will be communicated to the Parent/Guardian using the contact details provided by the Parent/Guardian.
- Students who feel unwell must report to their Year Head who will contact home. Students are not permitted to use their mobile phones to make such calls or send text messages. This allows support and supervision, and also avoids students leaving the school grounds without permission from the school.

## **Consequences**

In the event of a student failing to comply with the above student expectations, the following sanctions will apply:

### **First Offence**

- The mobile phone (including sim card) or digital device will be confiscated from the student and given to the Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head.
- Failure to hand over a phone when requested by a teacher, will be considered a serious breach of the school Code of Behaviour.
- The teacher will inform the Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal and the offence will be recorded appropriately.
- The student may collect the phone at the end of the school day.
- The device will be stored in the main office until it is collected.

*A log will be kept in the office of all devices confiscated and collected*

### **Second Offence and Subsequent Offences**

- The mobile phone (including sim card) or digital device is confiscated and must be collected by the Parent/Guardian.
- The teacher will inform the student's Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal and the offence will be recorded appropriately. Failure to hand over a phone when requested by a teacher, will be considered a serious breach of the school Code of Behaviour.
- The Parent/Guardian will be informed to come in, collect and personally sign out the mobile phone/digital device.

*A log will be kept in the office of all devices confiscated and collected*

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## **Persistent Disregard for the School's Mobile Phone Policy**

If a student persists in breaching the rules as laid out in this policy, then the procedure will be as follows:

**Stage 1:** The parents/guardians and student will be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal/Deputy Principal to discuss the issue. If the student continues to disregard the Mobile Phone Policy, we then move to stage two.

**Stage 2:** The Parent/Guardian and the student will attend a Disciplinary Committee meeting to resolve the issue where a new contract will be signed by both Parent/Guardian and student. If the student continues to disregard the Mobile Phone Policy, we then move to stage three.

**Stage 3:** If no resolution to the breach of policy can be found, the Parent/Guardian will be requested to attend a Board of Management Meeting.

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## Mobile Phone Contract

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### Parent/Guardian Expectations

- I will discuss and reinforce the school's mobile phone policy with my child/ward.
- I will encourage my child/ward to speak to school staff about school issues and concerns and explain to them that they cannot text or call home during school hours. All communication to home must come through the school office/Year Head.
- I will ensure my child/ward understands the potential dangers associated with online activity and issues around posting and sharing pictures, videos and comments on social media platforms.
- It is my responsibility as a Parent/Guardian to be contactable at all times during the school day. I will provide the school with up to date contact details (current mobile phone number).
- I understand and agree that the school is not responsible for the theft, loss or damage to my child's mobile phone.
- I will sign the school's Mobile Phone Contract
- I will ensure that my child/ward understands and signs the school's Mobile Phone Contract.
- All contact with my child/ward during the school day will be through the school office only.

**In an emergency Parents/Guardians must phone the school office and a message will be taken immediately to the student. This ensures that a student is given support and privacy in dealing with a potentially difficult situation.**

### Student Expectations

Students are required to use phones and devices responsibly at all times.

- Students must ensure that images stored on their phones are not of a violent, degrading or offensive nature. The transmission of such images/information will be deemed a serious breach of the school's Code of behaviour.
  - Cyber-bullying is completely unacceptable and will be followed up by the school as gross misbehaviour and the school, in turn, will invoke the necessary sanctions as laid out in the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.
  - Phones must be switched off and kept in bags during the course of the school day, including break-time and lunchtime, so as to avoid disrupting teaching and learning.
  - Headphones/Air Pods must not be worn during or between lessons, for reasons of safety and courtesy.
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- If there is an emergency which requires communication with home, pupils must speak to a member of staff who will deal with the matter. A message will be communicated to the Parent/Guardian using the contact details provided by the Parent/Guardian.
- Students who feel unwell must report to their Year Head who will contact home. Students are not permitted to use their mobile phones to make such calls or send text messages. This allows support and supervision, and also avoids students leaving the school grounds without permission from the school.

## Consequences

In the event of a student failing to comply with the mobile phone policy the following sanctions will apply:

### First Offence

- The mobile phone (including sim card) or digital device will be confiscated from the student and given to the Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head. The student may collect the phone at the end of the school day. The teacher will inform the Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal and the offence will be recorded appropriately.
- Failure to hand over a phone when requested by a teacher, will be considered a serious breach of the school Code of Behaviour.
- If the device is not collected it will be stored in the main office until it is collected.

### Second Offence and Subsequent Offences

- The mobile phone (including sim card) or digital device is confiscated and must be collected by the Parent/Guardian.
- The teacher will inform the students Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal and the offence will be recorded appropriately. Failure to hand over a phone when requested by a teacher, will be considered a serious breach of the school Code of Behaviour.
- The Parent/Guardian will be informed to come in, collect and personally sign out the mobile phone/digital device in person.

## Persistent Disregard for the School's Mobile Phone Policy

If a student persists in breaching the rules as laid out in this policy, then the procedure will be as follows:

**Stage 1:** The parents/guardians and student will be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal/Deputy Principal to discuss the issue. If the student continues to disregard the Mobile Phone Policy, we then move to stage two.

**Stage 2:** The Parent/Guardian and the student will attend a Disciplinary Committee meeting to resolve the issue where a new contract will be signed by both Parent/Guardian and student.

If the student continues to disregard the Mobile Phone Policy, we then move to stage three.

**Stage 3:** If no resolution to the breach of policy can be found, the Parent/Guardian will be requested to attend a Board of Management Meeting.

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<b>Student Name</b>	<b>Student Signature</b>	<b>Parent/Guardian Name</b>	<b>Parent/Guardian Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>