

St. Joseph's N.S, Leitrim Village, Roll No: 01125B

Mobile Phone and Electronic Games/ Devices Policy

1. Introductory Statement

BOM and staff considered it necessary to review the existing Mobile Phone policy in response to technological advances, which have seen a significant increase in mobile phone and an in hand held electronic 'gadgets' (I-pods, I- pads, tablets, electronic games/ computer games etc) ownership amongst the school population over recent years.

2. Rationale

- I-pods, I-pads, tablets, mobile phones, Game Boys, PSP's, MP3's etc. can be intrusive and distracting in a school environment
- Strategies must be put in place to reduce the intrusiveness of unauthorised technology in a school situation
- Some electronic devices may be harmful due to frequent use
- Mobile phones may be used to conduct bullying campaigns
- The above devices are expensive and the BOM **will not** take responsibility for lost or stolen personal devices or damages to these personal devices while on school ground or on school outings.

3. Relationship to School Ethos

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices/ gadgets/ games 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 St. Joseph's N.S.

4. Aims

- To ensure a safe and secure school environment for all pupils and staff
- To lessen intrusions on and distractions to children's learning

5. Internal School Procedures:

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

- Pupils are **not** allowed to bring mobile phones or electronic games onto school grounds.
- There will be **one exception only** to this rule regarding mobile phones. In the event of pupils participating in school activities, outside of school hours, such as school tour/ scheduled sports events, children *may* be allowed carry a mobile phone to contact parents to arrange collection. Phones *must* be turned off until instructed by the teacher to contact home. *This permission is not a given. The principal must be consulted first and give permission in advance of the event.*
- Under **no** circumstances are children allowed to use a personal mobile phones/ personal electronic games/ devices during school hours.
- Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so through the school secretary using the school landline phone.

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- Likewise parents who need to contact children during the school day are asked to phone the school secretary on the school landline. The secretary will then relay the message to the child.
- Any pupil who brings a mobile phone or electronic game/ device to school risks having it confiscated. The class teacher will pass the device onto the principal and the child's parents will be asked to call into the school to collect the device. Therefore it may not be possible to return the device at the end of that school day.
- The BOM does not accept any responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged devices while on school grounds.
- Staff have access to the school landline if urgent calls need to be made to parents.
- Classroom supervision is organised, in line with our school supervision policy, if a class teacher has to contact other professionals or outside agencies in relation to a particular child during school hours.
- Staff personal calls are normally confined to break times.
- Staff are permitted mobile phone usage only in cases of emergency.
- Teachers may bring personal electronic devices such as tablets/ i-pads etc to school to use with pupils in a supervised setting. Following teachers instruction the pupil(s) would use educational apps, take photographs, make recordings etc under that teachers supervision. The BOM does not accept responsibility for loss or damages to any such device.
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs may need assistive technology to access the curriculum but may not qualify for DES funding for such technology. In this event, if the pupil has assistive technology at home, and if the pupils parents are willing, that pupil may use personal assistive technology in school under the strict supervision of the class teacher, SEN teacher or SNA. This would be pre-arranged with the pupils parents and the BOM informed. The BOM again does not accept responsibility for loss or damages to any such technology.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The BOM, staff, parents and pupils share in the co-ordination and implementation of this policy.

7. Evaluation and Review

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments added as new technology comes on stream. This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner should the need arise.

8. Implementation

A policy on Mobile phones has been in place for a number of years (Pre-2006). Once ratified this policy will have immediate effect.

9. Communication

Once ratified the policy will be communicated to parent via the communication letter. It will be uploaded to the school website and included in the school Information Booklet given to all families on enrolment of a pupil in the school.

10. Ratification

This revised policy was ratified by the BOM on 28th January 2015 and has immediate effect.