



MOBILE/SMART PHONE AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY ST. BRIGID'S P.S. THE COOMBE, DUBLIN 8

Introduction and 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 (iPods, iPads, PSPs, MP3s etc.) 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 goes against the provision of a safe and secure school environment, a provision that is central to the mission statement and ethos of St. Brigid's P.S. The Coombe.

Aim of Policy

School Management is introducing a policy that 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 must be handed into the School Office.

- Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so through the school secretary using the school landline phone (01-4547734).
- 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 of a 4th, 5th or 6th class pupil thinks that their child having a phone in school is essential, 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 and explain why it is necessary for their child to bring the mobile phone/device to school. This letter will be kept on file.
- The child's mobile phone/device must be turned off throughout the school day and it will be stored in the school office. The mobile phone/device must be turned off prior to entering the school premises and can not be turned back on until the child has left the school premises. St. Brigid's Primary School, The Coombe accepts *no* liability for phones lost/stolen/damaged while on the school premises.

Sanctions

- Any child found to have a mobile phone/personal electronic devices in school without a parental letter will have the mobile phone/device confiscated until the end of that school week. It will not be returned until a parent/guardian collects it on the Friday afternoon.
- Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to have a mobile phone or other personal device with them during the school day, it will be confiscated from the pupil and returned only to the parent/guardian at the end of the school week.
- The school will not be liable for replacing mobile phones or other devices that are lost, stolen or damaged.
- The school will incorporate this policy into the Code of Behaviour 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 inappropriate behaviour, and disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the School's Code of Behaviour.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone/personal device to menace, harass or offend another person. Therefore the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí should such incidents occur.

School Trips and Outings

Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones and other personal devices with them on school trips and tours. Teachers will have contact details for parents/guardians in the event that it is necessary to make contact with a parent/guardian.

Review

The Policy will be evaluated regularly by representatives from across the school community and changes/amendments will be made as necessary.

Ratification and Communication

This school policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Brigid's Primary School, The Coombe on June 10th 2021. It will be available to view on the school website www.stbrigidsthecoombe.ie