

# St. Joseph's National School

Dublin Road, Longford. Tel: 043 3345700 Roll No.: 18178r  
Email: stjosephsnslongford@gmail.com www.stjosephsns.ie



## **Mobile Phones and E. Devices Policy**

### **Introductory Statement**

This policy was drafted by the principal, school staff and BOM input. This policy outlines the appropriate use of mobile phones and electronic devices in our school. The aim of this policy is to give guidance and direction for the acceptable use of mobile phones and communication as appropriate for all members of the school community (i.e. pupils, staff, parents and approved visitors/speakers etc) in St. Joseph's. It is envisaged that the postholder, principal, together with staff, parents and Board of Management will review this policy on a regular basis in response to emerging technologies and issues arising.

### **Rationale**

The possession and use of mobile phones by school pupils is now extensive. Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. The school is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises but only within the parameters of the policy as stated below. This Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviours that pupils, parents, staff and approved visitors/speakers etc are expected to follow when using mobile phones for personal, curricular and any other school related activities.

### **Aims**

The main aims are 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. The school's Board of Management accepts that it is not realistic to have a policy which prohibits pupils from taking phones 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.) However, it is the Board's policy to prohibit the unauthorised use by pupils of mobile phones while on school premises, grounds or off site activities e.g. school swimming.

### **Guidelines for Children**

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, it must be sanitised and placed into a box supervised by the class teacher to be kept until the end of the day. The phone 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.)

- When the mobile phone is returned at the end of the school day and if a child is attending homework club or engaging in extracurricular activities e.g. basketball/football the phone **must remain switched off** until the activity is finished and the child is going home.
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains the first point of contact and can ensure that the child is reached quickly, and helped in any appropriate way.
- **Sanctions:** Any child found to intentionally have a phone in school without having handed it to teacher in the morning on the first occasion of it being found, the pupil will receive one verbal warning. On the second occasion that the mobile phone is found, the phone will be confiscated. The phone will not be returned until a parent/guardian collects it.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> class pupils are **not** allowed to bring mobile phones or electronic devices with them on school tours or outings. **6<sup>th</sup> class pupils are only allowed** to use personal devices while on school tour to Dublin and to be contactable for safety reasons.
- 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/Social Media this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Discipline Policy. The school incorporates this policy into the AUP Policy also. 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.

#### **Guidelines for Staff**

- During teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings, mobile phones will 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.
- Staff personal calls and texts are ordinarily confined to break times (but not while on yard duty).
- In very exceptional circumstances (e.g. child sick) 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.
- S.N.A's may use their phones to make phone calls to each other/office during class times in the case of a child with SEN where extra assistance is needed e.g. for toileting, when child is overwhelmed etc.

**Ratification of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management every two years.

This 'Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Policy' was reviewed and adopted by the Board of Management on 24.3.2021

Signed: Mrs O. Egan  
School Principal

Date: 24.3.2021

Signed: Frank Geary  
Chairperson Board of Management

Date: 24.03.2021