

Monaghan Model School Policy on Mobile Phones & Digital Media

Last Updated Nov.16 2022

Introduction and Rationale

This policy has been revised and updated in response to technological advances which have seen a significant increase in hand held electronic ‘gadgets’ amongst the school population over recent years.

- ☞ I Pods, mobile phones, tablets, hand held games consuls, and 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 campaign
- ☞ There are also privacy concerns mainly related to the ability of many phones to take photographs, make video or voice recordings.

In order to manage the issue of mobile phones and other electronic devices it has become necessary to review and update our policy.

Relationship to Our School Ethos

The use of mobile phones and other electronic 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 Monaghan Model School.

Aim of Policy

School Management is updating this policy in order to create a safer environment for our entire school community and to lessen intrusions on and distractions to children’s learning. The policy prohibits the use by students of mobile phones and other personal electronic devices **while on school premises, involved in school related activities or activities organised by the Parents Association.**

School Procedures

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains the first point of contact to ensure your child is reached quickly, and helped in any appropriate way.

Children who need to contact home during school hours should do so through the school secretary using the school landline phone.

A child may bring a mobile phone to school **if parents consider that it is absolutely essential** that a child have access to that phone immediately after school.

📱 The use of mobile phones or other personal electronic devices by children is not allowed while the children are in the care of the school staff, while at school or on trips from the school.

📱 The school accepts no responsibility for phones which are lost, broken or stolen on the premises or while travelling to or from school.

📱 Mobile phones must be turned **off before** entering the school grounds.

📱 Mobile phones may not be used **in school** or anywhere on school grounds.

📱 A child who brings a mobile phone to school must hand it to the class teacher at the start of the day **immediately**, after entering the school.

📱 Each phone must be clearly labelled with the child’s name.

- 📱 All phones can be collected by pupils at home time.
- 📱 A child may **not** switch on his/her phone until he/she is **outside** the school gate.
- 📱 Rules for the use of mobile phones must be displayed in the relevant classrooms.
- 📱 Mobile phones which are found in the school should be handed to the front office.

📱 Phone or electronic device will be confiscated for the first instance of non-compliance; this will be returned to pupil before close of school with a note to parent/guardian explaining what happened. This note needs to be signed by a parent and returned to school. A second breach of rules will result in the confiscation of the phone for 3 school days and parents being informed. Phone will only be returned to parent. Any subsequent non compliance will result in a total ban on that pupil being allowed to bring a phone or any other electronic device to school under any circumstance.

- If a pupil is found taking any photographs, video or audio footage of either other pupils or teachers and/or sharing these via any device this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Discipline Policy. Parents of the offending child will be contacted to discuss the matter.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone or any other device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action sanctioned by the Principal is deemed ineffective, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí. Hence, students with mobile phones must not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person, via SMS messages/chat rooms/social network sites, taking/sending/uploading photos, phone calls. Circulating objectionable images will also be treated as a serious disciplinary issue. Infringements of any of the above may result in the matter being referred to the Gardaí. In any such case the parent will be informed.

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 for personal reasons during class time except in the case of emergency. A digital camera will be used of taking photographs of class related activities.

Responsibility:

It is the responsibility of Parents, Staff and Children to adhere to this policy.

Evaluation:

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments added as deemed necessary.

Implementation:

To be approved by Board following consultation for implementation from April 2016 onward

Reviewed and Ratified by the Board of Management 24th October 2022

Signed by Chairperson of BOM _____

Breach of Mobile Phone & Digital Media Rules in school

Pupil Name: _____ Date: _____

Dear Parent

As stated in our school policy on Mobile Phones & Electronic Devices, pupils are required each morning to hand mobile phones and any other electronic devices they may bring to school to the class teacher. Unfortunately today _____ failed to comply with this rule and was found to be in possession of _____.

This was confiscated for the duration of the day and returned before going home. In making you aware of this situation we are fulfilling our duties as stated in the policy.

Please sign this note and return to school for our records.

Yours sincerely

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

Date: _____

Please note the relevant sanctions for non-compliance as stated in our policy:

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