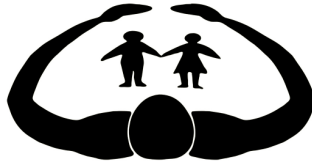


Donabate-Portrane



Educate Together

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Introductory Statement

This policy was drawn up in response to technological advances, which have seen a significant increase in mobile phone and electronic devices amongst the school population over recent years.

Rationale

The following procedures have been put in place to ensure minimal and safe usage of mobile phones and electronic devices in our school, due to the facts that.

- Mobile phones, Tablets (iPads etc), Game Boys/PSPs, MP3s/iPods, Smart watches/Watches/fitbits etc. are intrusive and distracting in a school environment and can reduce constructive socialisation during break times.
- Strategies must be put in place to reduce the intrusiveness of unauthorised technology in a school situation.
- Mobile phones may be used to conduct bullying campaigns.

The use of mobile phones (particularly with the advent of increasingly sophisticated equipment and camera phones) presents a number of problems, including:

- Mobile phones can be valuable items and might render a pupil vulnerable to theft
- Mobile phones (and their cost and level of sophistication – or otherwise) can make pupils objects of envy or disparagement and could have implications with regard to discipline and potential bullying
- Even when apparently silent, the use of mobile phones for texting purposes could be potentially undermining of classroom discipline
- Use of the newer phones with integrated cameras could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images

Relationship to School Ethos

The unauthorized use of mobile phones and other electronic gadgets contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment conducive to learning, a provision which is central to the mission statement and ethos of Donabate Portrane Educate Together National School.

Aims

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at our school. To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.
- To lessen intrusions on and distractions to children's learning

Internal School Procedures

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

Mobile Phone Use by Children

1. Pupils may carry a mobile phone on their person but phone must remain turned off. Children are not allowed the use of mobile phones during school hours. Phones must be stored securely and discreetly by the pupil. The school holds no responsibility for phones lost or stolen on school grounds or on external school visits.
2. Personal electronic gadgets, tablets, ipods, ipads or consoles are not allowed in school, either during school hours or on school tour.
3. Children who need to contact home in an emergency during school hours may do so through their class teacher/Office using the school landline phone.
4. Any pupil who uses a mobile phone in school will have the device confiscated. It will be returned to the pupil's parents on request.
5. If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Code of Behaviour and sanctions such as suspension and expulsion will be considered.

Mobile Phone Use by Staff

1. Staff use of mobile phones will be confined to break times and after school (except in the case of an emergency).
2. In very exceptional circumstances (eg an ill family member) the staff member may, with the permission of the principal, have their phones on for a period. An explanation should be given to the class in this case.
3. Staff are reminded to be careful when using their personal mobile phones to contact parents. For privacy & personal safety, teachers should use the school phone or if personal phone must be used, the personal phone number should be withheld through the phone settings.
4. Personal phones should never be used to take photographs of children, or the school environment, or staff, or to store their personal data. Instead school tablets or school cameras should be used for official school photography. *(Please see our Data Protection Policy for storage of photos)*

Roles and Responsibilities

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

All staff, parents & pupils have a responsibility for appropriately using electronic gadgets & phones. Please read our Acceptable Use Policy and our Bullying Prevention policy in relation to this.

Evaluation

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments added as new technology comes on stream.