

Fingal Community College



Mobile Phones and Devices Policy

Ratified by BOM	20th November 2025
Review	May 2026

This policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Code of Behaviour.

Introduction

This policy is a review of Fingal Community College previous Mobile Phone and Device Policy, it was drawn up in response to the **DES Circular 0045/2025, Restricting the Use of and access to personal mobile phones by students during the school day**. This policy is intended to support the college with:

- Improving the Learning Environment in schools by reducing distraction.
- Reducing the risk of cyberbullying and access to inappropriate content during hours.
- Increasing traditional social interactions between students at school break times.

This Policy builds on existing school policies, such as The Code of Behaviour, Acceptable Usage Policy, Bí Cineálta Policy, Data Protection Policy, Child Protection Policies and Procedures and Wellbeing Policy.

Aims of the Mobile Phone Policy

Our aim is to provide a safe learning environment for all students in the College, free from distractions to students and teachers. We aim to provide an environment free from threat or an invasion of privacy to members of our school community.

Our aim is to discourage and eliminate cyber bullying among students. We strive to create and encourage social interactions and communication between students, particularly at breaktime.

AS per **Circular 0045/2025** Fingal Community College is promoting the responsible usage and discipline around Mobile Phone use.

Daily School Procedures Regarding Mobile Phones and Associated Devices

Students are requested to switch off their mobile devices and devices linked to a mobile phone, ear buds, smartwatches, headphones while on the College grounds. Use of mobile phones and associated devices is monitored as students arrive to school in the morning. Teachers/ Year Heads on Morning duty, remind and advise students to switch off their devices. Phones are requested to be switched off and placed in the students' bag. Posters to raise awareness are also on display on key locations throughout the school. Student Friendly Rules on the use of mobile phones are also be displayed in classrooms.

'Disconnect to reconnect.'

Students are not permitted to use their phone on the school grounds for the duration of the school day. The restriction on the use of phones does not apply to travel to and from school. The restriction of use also applies to school trips, sporting events. For After School Study, laptops are available for use by all students. Where a student needs to contact home and the school office is closed, with permission from the supervising teacher, the student may then contact their parent/guardian.

Possible Exemptions to the Mobile Phone Policy

Fingal Community College will adapt a compassionate and common-sense approach that is fair and transparent in application to how to apply exemptions to the restriction.

Exemptions based on medical, or specific practical reasons are not exhaustive and consideration will be needed on a case-by case basis.

Communication with Home

Communication home from a student **MUST BE** via the school Office. Urgent communication will always be facilitated through the school office; communication may also be facilitated by the Year Head and Assistant Year Head.

The School Office facilitates calls to parents from 08.30 – 16.30.

Parents are also strongly discouraged from contacting the students directly through their mobile phone/ device. Parents are requested to make contact via the school office, either by a call or email.

Fingal Community College Guidelines and Sanctions.

At Fingal Community College, pupils are not permitted to use their phones or any electronic device to record, photograph any person or thing. The inappropriate use of such devices causes disruption in school and impinges on the privacy of others.

The use of a mobile phone/ device for video/ audio recording is strictly prohibited at all times on the school premises and at all school related activities. If an unauthorised recording takes place, the relevant device will be confiscated. The pupil will be required to delete the unauthorised recording in the presence of school management.

Mobile phones and smartwatches are not permitted during State Examinations, as per Guidelines from the SEC.

Fingal Community College takes **NO** Responsibility for Mobile phones or devices lost, stolen or damaged.

Fingal Community College is embracing a phone free learning environment and implementing a High Trust Model of a Device Free Campus.

Implementing a Mobile Phone Free Learning Environment.

No Use of Mobile Phones, Smartwatches or Devices on School Grounds AT ALL TIMES.

A student will be reminded to turn their phone off and place it in their bag. This rule strictly applies at break time and lunchtime, while the student is on school grounds.

Where there is suspicion of a serious breach of phone usage, the phone will be confiscated. The phone will be placed in the office and may be collected at the end of the day. This will be reported on VSware. If persistent breaches apply the school will contact the parent/guardian and procedures will be followed in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Inappropriate use of Phone during class time interferes with teaching and learning.

For the first offence, the student is reminded of the *Policy of a Mobile Free Learning Environment*.

Whereby a student fails to comply, repeated corrections, the student will be requested to hand over the phone to the staff member. The phone will be returned at the end of the lesson, and the event will be recorded on VSware.

Failure to comply with these procedures and Policy guidelines and/or ongoing breaches will result in more serious sanctions as per the school's Code of Behaviour.

Supports/Further Information

- www.webwise.ie Irelands Safer Internet Awareness Centre.
- www.cybersafekids.ie
- Hotline.ie
- Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children ISPCC
- National Parents Council.
- National Educational Psychological Services NEPS

Policy Review

This Policy is reviewed by School Management, key stakeholders, students, staff, and parents. The policy was trialled initially in September as a Digital Detox programme. Based on a High Trust Model, the rollout was extremely positive and successful. Students embraced the changes; social interactions were evident amongst all. The Policy will be reviewed at the end of the academic year.