Coláiste na Sceilge

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Chiarraí
Kerry Education and Training Board

Mobile Phone Restriction Policy

17 June 2026

(Aligned to Circular 0045/2025)

Policy Statement

Coláiste na Sceilge implements a whole-school restriction on the use of and access to personal mobile phones by students for the duration of the school day, including break and lunchtime.

The chosen implementation mechanism is a lockable, school issued pouch.

Rationale

This policy supports schools:

- Improve the learning environment by reducing distraction
- Reduce the risk of cyber bullying and access to inappropriate content during school hours
- Increase traditional social interactions between students at school break times.

Scope

Applies to all students for the duration of the full school day while on the school campus. It also applies to all school organised activities off site. Pouches can be unlocked as needed by coordinating staff. The restriction does not apply to travel to/from school or after-school activities/study unless otherwise communicated.

Consultation

Policy developed through consultation with Board of Management, Kerry ETB, Parents' Council, Student Council, staff and support teams and incoming 6th class Parent/Guardian information sessions.

Implementation – Lockable Pouch

• One phone only may be brought to school.

• On arrival: phone switched off → placed in personal pouch → pouch locked → stored securely by student.

• Pouch remains locked until students exit the building at the end of the day.

• Teacher may temporarily unlock/relock pouches solely for specific learning purposes.

• Smartwatches/other personal digital devices are also stored in the pouch.

Daily Procedures & Locations

Expectation:

Students must keep phone on Silent Mode, in a locked pouch and out of sight for the full duration of the school day while on the school campus-during class, corridors, toilets, lockers, canteen, break and lunchtime, supervised study and all on-site/off-site activities unless explicitly directed to do otherwise by staff.

Students are responsible for keeping the pouch in good condition and bring it to and from school every day.

Forgotten, Lost or Damaged Pouches

Forgotten: report to reception before 09:00; receive a temporary pouch if available or surrender the phone for the day & collected by student at the end of the day. Repeated forgetting triggers sanctions.

Lost/Damaged Pouch: Expectation: student reports immediately to the Year Head/Team and surrenders phone every day until the new school pouch is purchased and replaced. The phone will be available for the student/parent to collect every evening; a sanction may be applied. Deliberate damage is a serious breach.

Leaving Early & Off-site Events

Early sign-out : pouch may be unlocked at reception after signing out per school procedure.

Senior Leaving campus for lunch-students may unlock pouch when leaving the school campus for lunch. Phones to be relocked on return to school campus.

Matches/trips/events: phones remain off and locked in the pouch unless explicitly authorised to be unlocked by staff. Mobile unlocking device will be taken by staff on trips.

Exemptions (fair, transparent, needs-based)

Exemptions may be granted for medical, wellbeing or SEN/practical reasons (e.g., diabetes/insulin monitoring, seizure alerts, mental-health contact, visual/hearing supports, EAL apps). Access is permitted only for the approved purpose and recorded on the student file. Parents/Guardians must make such a request together with supporting/ medical documentation to the Principal for case by case consultation

Liability

Students bring personal devices at their own risk. The school/Kerry ETB is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage.

Breaches & Sanctions (progressive + restorative)

Where student phone is not locked in a pouch, the phone will be confiscated and held until the end of the school day, restorative conversation with student and parents informed. Student collects phone at the end of the school day

Where there are further /ongoing breaches of the Mobile Phone Restriction Policy, the phone is held in the school until the end of the school day, a restorative conversation held with the student and the parent informed. Parents may be asked to attend a meeting, and or to collect the phone/device/additional sanctions may be applied as appropriate.

Where a student is using a phone inappropriately in school the school will follow the Acceptable Use Policy/Bi Cinealtas/ Code of Behaviour /Child Protection as appropriate & follow the advice of Gardaí/Tusla as appropriate

Parents contacting students Should parents/guardians need to contact a student during the school day, please call into the School Office or phone 066 9473335

Students contacting parents/guardians Should a student need to contact their parent /guardian during the school day they will have access to the phone in the School Office/pouch will be unlocked as needed.

Review & Ratification

Policy reviewed annually or as required; published on the school website; ratified by Coláiste na Sceilge Board of Management.

Approved by: Board of Management on 17/6/2026

Chairperson: Cllr Norma Moriarty

Principal Mr Maurice Fitzgerald