ST CIARÁN'S
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

OMNES VIRTUTEM SEQUENTES

St. Ciarán's Community School

Mobile phone policy

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Board Of Management
St Ciarán's Community School
MOBILE PHONE POLICY

St Ciarán's Community School recognises that mobile phones and digital devices are now an integral part of young people's culture and way of life and can have considerable value, particularly in relation to individual safety. It is recognised that such technology will play an increasing part in future learning practices, but, like existing ICT use, this should follow agreed rules and guidelines to prevent disruption and instil good learning habits.

The school therefore accepts that students are permitted to bring mobile phones and digital devices to school, but their use is subject to the following guidelines. The school aims to educate students in the responsible use of technology.

Note: The term 'phone' in this policy denotes mobile phones, iPods, MP3/MP4 players and any similar portable electronic devices.

St Ciarán's Community School recognises the:

Benefits of digital devices:

- Students may use phones in emergencies outside school hours.
- Students may feel more confident knowing they can make contact with someone if in difficulties.
- Some digital technology can be useful for learning and homework.
- Digital access can support problem-solving, language skills, and wider learning.

Problems associated with digital devices:

- Devices are valuable and at risk of theft.
- Their use can expose students to bullying, inappropriate contact, or disruptive behaviour.
- Camera and messaging functions raise child protection and data safety issues.
- Devices may store or transmit inappropriate materials.

RESPONSIBLE USE

Students are required to use phones and devices responsibly at all times.

1. Students must ensure that files stored on their devices do not contain violent, degrading, or offensive images.
2. Cyber-bullying is completely unacceptable and will be treated as serious misbehaviour.
3. Phones can disrupt teaching and learning and may compromise child protection and data protection guidelines.

NEW REQUIREMENT – PHONE POUCH SYSTEM
To support responsible use and provide a fair, consistent, and distraction-free environment, **all students must place their phone into their assigned, school-issued mobile phone pouch upon arrival each morning.**

How the pouch system works

- Every student receives a **tamper-proof, lockable phone pouch** at the start of the school year.
- Prior to arrival on school grounds, phones must be switched off and placed inside the pouch.
- The pouch will be checked by teachers in Tutorial, Period 1 and periodically throughout the day.
- The pouch must remain locked throughout the school day, including break and lunchtime.
- A 25euro deposit is applied and will be refunded when the pouch is returned in a reusable state free from graffiti.

Storage of the pouch during the school day

- Students retain their locked pouches on their person or stored in their school bag or lockers.
- A locked pouch may **not** be opened, damaged, or tampered with.
- Students may not carry a phone outside of the pouch under any circumstances.

Accessing phones during the day

Phones may only be accessed:

- At the end of the school day via designated unlocking stations.
- In exceptional circumstances (medical, urgent family matters) with permission from a Year Head, Deputy Principal, or Principal.
- For approved educational use, only if a teacher authorises the pouch to be unlocked for the duration of the activity.

Trips/tours:

- For all school-based extracurricular trips, students' mobile phones must remain locked in their assigned pouches for the duration of the activity to ensure safety, consistency, and minimal distraction.
- For longer excursions—such as overnight or extended trips—where phone access may be necessary, the requirement to use pouches will be reviewed, and a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis by school management, taking the specific needs and context of the trip into account.

Emergency Procedures

- If a parent/guardian needs to contact their child urgently, they must phone the school office.
- If a student feels unwell or requires urgent contact home, they must report to their Year Head/Deputy Principal or main office—students **may not** use their mobile phone for these purposes.

RULES

- Responsibility for the device and pouch rests with the student; the school accepts no responsibility for loss, theft, or damage.
- Phones must remain **switched off** inside the pouch for the entire school day.
- Phones may not be used before school, during break or lunch, or after school while on school grounds.
- Phones may not be used to make calls, check the time, text, act as a calculator, record audio/video, or play music.
- Headphones must not be visible or used during the school day.
- Broadcasting music or sharing inappropriate content is forbidden.
- The school's Acceptable Use Policy and Code of Behaviour apply to all device-related issues.

Lost or Damaged Pouches

- Lost or damaged pouches must be reported immediately.
- A replacement fee may apply.

BREACH OF THE MOBILE PHONE POLICY:

- Any student found with a mobile phone not in their pouch or using it unauthorised during school hours will have the phone confiscated.

- Students who refuse to hand up their phone on request from any staff member may face sanctions up to and including suspension(s).
- Confiscated phones will be placed in the General Office, and parents/guardians will be contacted.
- Confiscated phones will only be returned to parents/guardians after the end of the school day.
- If the confiscated phone cannot be collected as outlined above, the parent/guardian must make arrangements with the Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal for a time to collect the phone the following day.
- Phones will not be returned to students.
- Repeated breaches of this policy may lead to sanctions up to and including suspension(s).
- Students in breach of the policy by bringing multiple phones into school may face sanctions up to and including suspension(s).
- Students who say they have not brought a phone to school and are subsequently found to have one may face sanctions up to and including suspension(s).

Forgotten / Damaged Pouches:

- The pouch is the property of St. Ciarán's Community School.
- If the pouch is lost or damaged, rendered unusable or defaced with graffiti, the student will be responsible for funding a replacement for €25.
- If students forget their Pouch, they must leave their phone in the general office at the start of the school day.
- Any student who purposely interferes with or damages their pouch or the pouch of any other student may face sanctions up to and including suspension.
- Students must return the pouch they were assigned at the end of the school year.
- Students failing to return their pouch at the end of the school year will be required to refund a replacement.

If a student persists in breaching the rules as laid out in this policy, then the parents/guardians and student will be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal to discuss the issue. Furthermore, if no resolution to the breach of policy can be found, the Parent/Guardian may be requested to attend a Board of Management Meeting.

NOTE:
Should a student be found to be using a phone/audio device during the course of the school day and refuses to hand up the phone/audio device, they may be brought to the main office where the Parent/Guardian will be contacted and asked to collect the phone from the student.

Note:

More advice to students about safe use of devices can be found in our Acceptable Use Policy

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management of St Ciarán's Community School at its meeting on:

15th September 2026

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson
Board of Management

Principal

Date: 15/9/26 15/9/26

Date of next review: 2028