



Policy on the Use of Mobile Phones

Gaelscoil Naomh Pádraig

Title

Policy on the Use of Mobile Phones

Introductory Statement

The policy was discussed at a staff meeting on 27.11.2018. The entire teaching staff participated. Members of the in-school management team reviewed this policy during the 2018 - 2019 school year and was subsequently presented to the entire teaching staff on the 15.1.19 for feedback. It was submitted to the Parents' Committee on 15.1.19.

Rationale

The policy for the Use Mobile Phones was drafted and reviewed at this time as:

- It is a priority area of concern identified by the staff. The staff recognise that mobile phones can intrude on people's lives especially in a school environment (in this context).
- The school community recognise that many potential difficulties may arise from the use of mobile phones, since cameras/apps were added and the easy accessibility of social media and internet in particular.
- If children have mobile phones in school, there is an increased likelihood of a lack of concentration, application and focus on the educational development of each individual.
- A mobile phone is an electronic device that, if used in a non-constructive way, may potentially lead to an increase in bullying and cyberbullying problems.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Gaelscoil Naomh Pádraig values every child as an individual and it is our vision that each child's personal characteristics and gifts are recognised and developed. We hope to awaken and nurture each child's inquisitiveness and interest in learning, leading to a celebration of each individual's identity in an encouraging, cultural, all-Irish speaking setting.

It is our hope and expectation that mobile phones would not have a negative impact or influence on any child whilst attending Gaelscoil Naomh Pádraig.

Co-operation is required from each member of the school community including staff, parents and the school children, to increase the likelihood of the effective implementation of this policy.

Guidelines (Content of this policy)

The staff agree that, under normal circumstances, the children are not permitted to have mobile phones in school.

The school will acknowledge difficulties that may arise as stated below:

- If a parent/guardian deems it necessary for their child to have a mobile phone in school during school hours due to exceptional circumstances, the parent/guardian of the child must write a formal letter clearly outlining the reason for this requirement. Subsequently, the school principal will discuss the case with the relevant parent/guardian.
- If a child brings a mobile phone to school, it will be confiscated, turned off and placed under lock and key in the principal's office. The parent/guardian will be contacted and notified via telephone or letter. The child's parent/guardian will be required to come to the school to collect the mobile phone.
- The Board of Management discourages (and asks all parents/guardians to discourage) from bringing mobile phones to schools on the grounds that they are valuable and may be lost or stolen. Where a pupil, who has been given permission does bring a mobile phone to school, the phone must be turned off once they are on school property (not on silent).
- 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 trips outside the school.
- Any pupil who uses a mobile phone within the school confines, on a school tour or at a school event, or brings an electronic game to school will have it confiscated. The device will be turned off, parents will be informed, and the phone/gadget must be collected by the parent from the office.
- If a situation arises where it is found that a phone/camera phone or any device which has a facility to take photographs or voice recordings, has been misused within the school grounds, it will be dealt with as a behavioural issue through the Code of Behaviour.
- The contents of this policy will be disclosed to parents through a formal letter. The revised policy will be accessible on the school website both in Irish and in English.
- There are no special conditions for the use of mobile phones. Teachers have mobile phones when children are on school trips etc. to contact the school should an accident occur etc.
- Staff mobile phones should be switched off completely during class time apart from exceptional cases relating to school work or school business.

Implementation Date

This reviewed policy will be implemented from the 5th of February 2019.

Timetable for Review

This policy was reviewed by the teaching staff and the parents' association in January 2019. It will be presented to the Board of Management and amended if necessary.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management officially ratified this policy on 5/2/19. This policy is available on the school website (www.gsnp.ie).