



## **Tannaghmore Primary School**

# **POLICY ON THE USE OF MOBILE PHONE & OTHER DIGITAL DEVICES**



**September 2020**

## **1. CONTEXT**

Tannaghmore Primary School recognises that students regularly use electronic devices and that many parents wish their children to carry mobile phones to enhance their safety before and after school and on journeys to and from school.

Tannaghmore Primary School aims to develop a culture of responsible use of mobile phones and other digital devices by the students.

Tannaghmore Primary School further recognises that there are many benefits and learning opportunities to be gained from the use of technology such as mobile phones and other digital devices. However, the increasing technical sophistication of these telephones raises the following issues and challenges which the school management must address:

- 1.1 Research has shown that mobile telephones may impact on the health of young people
- 1.2 Mobile telephones represent a serious nuisance and form of disruption when they are left switched on in teaching areas or any other public forum within the school grounds
- 1.3 Research has shown that some students experience bullying through the use of text and picture messaging via mobile telephones and other digital devices
- 1.4 Picture messaging is being used to send pornographic images via mobile telephones
- 1.5 Picture telephones with built-in or attached digital cameras are being used to take pictures without the subject knowing and many of these photographs are appearing on so-called "Candid Camphone" websites. Such pictures can be digitally stored and manipulated as required.

## **2. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

2.1 There are a number of aspects of the law that may apply to the misuse of mobile phones and other digital devices, and the response to that misuse. This will depend on the circumstances of individual cases. In the most serious cases there may be a crime involved – filming an assault, circulation of pornographic images of a child, copyright infringement or nuisance calls.

2.2 Offences may fall under Data Protection Legislation or Communication Act 2003

## **3. STUDENTS**

3.1 Pupils are not permitted to have a mobile phone or other electronic device on their person during the school day.

3.2 Failure to observe the above rule will result in the immediate confiscation of the mobile phone or other digital device by the teacher observing or detecting the breach of this rule.

3.3 When a student has his/her mobile phone confiscated, the teacher will bring the phone to the main office where a member of the administrative staff will log the relevant details:

- The name and class of the student using the phone
- The time and place when the phone was being used
- The purpose for which the phone was being used

3.4 The phone will be securely stored in the main office.

3.5 The school is not liable for the theft, loss or damage of mobile phones or other digital devices belonging to students

- 3.6 Students and parents are reminded that in cases of an emergency, the school office remains the appropriate point of contact

#### **4. STAFF**

- 4.1 Staff must have their mobile phones on 'silent' during class time
- 4.2 Staff may not make or receive calls during teaching time – if there are extreme circumstances (eg sick relative) the member of staff will have made the Principal aware of this and an exception to 4.1 applies
- 4.3 Staff use of mobile phones is restricted to non-contact time when no children are present
- 4.4 Consistent with the school's Child Protection Policy, staff may not use their personal mobile phone or other digital device to take photographs of students or to store a student's personal data

#### **5. PARENTS & OTHER VISITORS**

- 5.1 Parents and other visitors are requested to refrain from using, in the school grounds, a mobile phone or other digital device which is capable of taking, storing or sending still digital images and/or video clips. This includes any mobile phone which can be attached to an imaging device
- 5.2 We very much appreciate our parents' cooperation and support in implementing this policy in order to keep our students/your children safe.

#### **6. SANCTIONS**

- 6.1 Inappropriate use of mobile phones or other digital devices will be regarded as a breach of discipline and will invoke the School's Disciplinary Procedures

## **OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

### **Childnet International**

Childnet International is a children's charity committed to helping to make the Internet a safe place for children. They recently co-hosted a conference on Children, mobile telephones and the Internet with the Internet Association, Japan. A link to the full conference proceedings is available from their website: <http://www.childnet-int.org/>

### **FKBKO**

For Kids By Kids Online (FKBKO) exists to make the Internet a better and safer place for children and young people. The website includes a section on mobile telephones which outlines all the ways in which you can use the technology, in addition to general safety advice.

<http://www.fkbko.co.uk/>

### **ICSTIS**

ICSTIS, the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services, is the industry-funded regulatory body for all premium rate charged telephone services. <http://www.icstis.org.uk/>

### **NCH IT OK**

NCH is one of the UK's leading children's charities, and is a member of the Children's Charities' Coalition for Internet Safety (CHIS). The NCH IT OK website promotes safe and equal Internet access for young people. The website is also developing information on 3G services.

<http://www.nch.org.uk/itok/>