



Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy

Address: Rathgormack National School, Rathgormack, Carrick
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School Name: Rathgormack National School

Date of Commencement: 01.03.2022

Introductory Statement:

This policy was drawn up in response to technological advances, which have seen a significant increase in hand held electronic 'gadgets' amongst the school population over recent years and in consideration of circular 38/2018.

For the purpose of this policy, smart devices include any device capable of connecting to the internet, taking a photograph, video or voice recording.

Rationale:

- iPods, mobile phones, PSP's, Smart Watches, etc. are intrusive and distracting in a school environment
- Strategies must be put in place to reduce the intrusiveness of unauthorised technology in a school situation
- Some electronic devices may be harmful due to frequent use
- Mobile phones may be used to conduct bullying campaigns

Pupils:

- The possession and use of personal mobile phones and personal smart electronic devices by pupils on school grounds and during school hours, including break times, is strictly forbidden. This policy also applies to pupils during school trips and extracurricular activities.
- However it is understood that on very rare occasions students (who walk home on their own/ who don't get dropped off by bus at their house) may need a mobile phone for before/after school use on safety grounds. If this is the case parents/guardians will be asked to contact the principal and explain the reason for their child needing the phone/device in school. If permission is granted, the parents/guardians must sign a mobile phone/smart device consent form before any phone/device can be allowed onto the school grounds. This form will be presented to the principal and a copy given to the teacher.
- On the rare occasion when a student is permitted by the school to bring a mobile phone/smart device to school, the student must ensure that they are switched off before entering school grounds.
- The device remains in school bag and remains switched off until outside school grounds.

- A pupil in breach of these rules will have the phone/device confiscated. The phone will be switched off and will be given to the principal and will be returned to the parent only on appointment when the incident will be discussed.
- If granted permission, students take full responsibility for having a personal device on school grounds. Students are required to mark all the mobile phones/smart device clearly with their name.
- The school authorities do not accept responsibility for the safety or security of a mobile phone or electronic game/equipment under any circumstances. Loss or damage is the responsibility of the owner.

Consequences/Violation of Policy

- Any violation of the school policy, will result in a student facing disciplinary actions as per the school's Code of Behaviour.
- The possession of a mobile phone/smart device throughout the day will be classed as a minor misdemeanour. A re-offence will be classed as a serious misdemeanour. See code of behaviour.
- Any incident involving a student taking unauthorised photos or recordings of other students or staff members will be considered a serious misdemeanour or a gross misdemeanour depending on the nature of the offence.
- Incidents occurring outside of school that are brought to the attention of Staff, will be reported to parents/guardians who can refer to the Gardaí as necessary. If it is a Child Protection concern, a referral will be made to TUSLA.
- It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone/smart device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the school in this regard is ineffective, as with all incidents, the school may consider it necessary to involve the Gardaí.

Staff:

- Staff calls will not be made/taken during class times unless in emergency situations. If a staff member needs to have their phone on in class for an important reason, essential calls should be made/taken in an area where pupils are not present while ensuring the class is appropriately supervised.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 2nd March 2022.

Signed: Mr Maurice Power

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: Cathy Power

Principal

Date: 2/3/2022