

# Mobile Phone Policy

## **Introduction and Rationale**

The possession and use of mobile phones by school students is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. Use of mobile phones (particularly with the advent of increasingly sophisticated equipment and camera phones) presents a number of problems, including being a distraction to learning, causing discipline problems or a method of bullying, to menace, harass or offend another person. There are also privacy concerns mainly related to the ability of many phones to take photographs, make video recordings or record. In order to manage the issue of mobile phones this policy has been reviewed.

## **Relationship to Our School Ethos**

The use of mobile phones and other electronic games contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment and is not conducive to learning - a provision which is central to the mission statement and ethos of Scoil Mhuire Gransha

## **Aim of Policy**

School Management is introducing a policy which prohibits the use by students of mobile phones while on school premises or involved in school activities such as tours/ trips or extra-curricular activities in order to create a safer environment and to lessen intrusions on and distractions to children's learning.

## **School Procedures**

The use of mobile phones by children who attend the school is not allowed while the children are in the care of the school staff, while at school or on trips from the school. The children should therefore not bring mobile phones to school or when engaging in school-related activities and therefore the school will accept no responsibility for replacing mobile phones that are lost, stolen or damaged.

Mobile phones which are found in the school should be handed to the office. Teachers and Staff should have their mobile phones switched off during work time or when supervising children and should only use mobile phones in private areas out of view of the children.

## **Inappropriate Conduct and Sanctions**

1. Any student whose phone is seen or heard by a staff member, whether or not the phone is switched on, is liable to have their phone confiscated.

- The phone should be given to the office by the teacher and retained here. The matter will be treated as a Gross Misbehaviour. The phone may be collected from the office by appointment. For the First Offence the phone may be collected from the following day. The parent who collects the phone from the office must sign out the phone and agree to enforce the mobile phone policy with the child who owns the phone. Second Offence: 2

weeks, Third Offence 4 weeks etc.

- Failure to hand up a phone for confiscation, when asked by a staff member to do so will be treated as a serious offence.

2. Students using mobile phones or similar devices to bully, harass or take pictures of other children others will face disciplinary actions. If it is clear that these offences have taken place then the parents of the offending child are requested to come to the school to discuss the matter.

3. If a child uses a phone or similar device to take pictures of a member of Staff without the staff member's permission then the parents of the offending child are requested to come to the school to discuss the matter.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the Principal is deemed ineffective, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí. Hence, students with mobile phones must not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person, via SMS messages/chat rooms/social network sites, taking/sending/uploading photos, phone calls. Circulating objectionable images will also be treated as a serious disciplinary issue. Infringements under section 2 and 3 above may result in the matter being referred to the Gardaí. In such case the parent will be informed.

**Responsibility:**

It is the responsibility of Parents, Staff and Children to adhere to this policy. Any student who is feeling unwell at school and needs to go home, or who needs to contact their parents for any reason must arrange this through the office.

**Evaluation:**

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments added as new technology comes on stream or as necessary.

**Implementation:**

Approved by Board following consultation for implementation from \_\_\_\_\_ onwards.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_