



Policy on the Use of Mobile Telephones and Electronic Devices

Introductory Statement

This policy was drawn up in response to a significant increase in the use of mobile telephones and hand-held electronic devices and among the school community over recent years.

Rationale

It is recognised that mobile telephones and electronic devices such as iPods and MP3 Players can be intrusive and distracting in all situations and this is particularly so in a learning environment. In addition to the inconvenience, the debate still goes on about the possible harmful effects of the frequent use of mobile phones. The use of mobile phones as a conduit for cyberbullying makes children particularly vulnerable in this regard. Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff working with children, it is vital that staff be engaged with children at all working times.

In the context of these factors, the Board of Management recognises a need to clarify its position in relation to the use of mobile telephones and electronic devices in the school.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices such as smart watches are not conducive to teaching and learning and may interfere with the provision of a safe school environment, a provision which is central to the mission and ethos of Réalt na Mara National School.

Aims

By introducing this Policy on the Use of Mobile Telephones and Electronic Devices, we hope to achieve the following aims:

- To clarify the Board of Managements position in relation to mobile phones and other electronic devices
- To lessen intrusions on and distractions to teaching and learning
- To provide a safe learning environment for pupils and a safe working environment for teachers

Content

In School-Pupils

Mobile Phones

Pupils in Réalt na Mara National School are not to bring mobile phones to school.

Contacting Parents During School Hours

Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so, with their class teacher's permission, through the school secretary using the school landline phone.

School Trips

Pupils are not to bring mobile phones on school trips or tours. If a bus is running late etc, the supervising teacher will alert parents via the Aladdin app.

Other Electronic Devices

Pupils must not bring any other electronic devices (ipods, ipads, tablets etc) to school at any time, unless requested to do so by a teacher, for a specific purpose, eg a calculator. The use of any kind of audiovisual equipment, including watches with visual recording capabilities, are strictly prohibited in Réalt na Mara National School.

Consequences

If a child has a mobile phone or any other electronic device in school, it will be taken from them and only returned to his/her parent or guardian.

Staff

In Class

Staff mobile phones should be on silent during class time and while on supervision duty. With the exception of emergency situations, staff personal calls and texts should be confined to break times. In the case of an emergency, a staff member should organise supervision for his/her class and leave the classroom before making personal calls or sending text messages.

Making Calls from a Personal Phone Number

If a staff member is making a call to a parent/guardian from their personal mobile phone number, they are asked to ensure that the caller ID is turned off.

School Trips

When going on outings outside of the school premises, staff members may leave their phones on. If parents need to be contacted while the children are on a trip, a message may be sent through the Aladdin app.

School Landline

Staff members may use the school landline to make or receive work related calls. As far as possible such calls should be confined to break times or before/after school hours.

Related Policies

Code of Behaviour

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community, teachers, pupils, Special Needs Assistants, ancillary staff and parents to co-operate with this policy.

Review and Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management, in consultation with the Parents' Association and Staff.

The policy will be reviewed in two years.

Signed: Michael White
Chairperson, BoM

Date: 7th June 2022