



St. Nicholas National School, Adare

Mobile Phone and Device Policy

Introductory Statement:

This policy was drawn up in response to circular 0044/2025 '**Baning the use of and access to personal mobile phones by pupils during the school day**'. It is intended that this policy will enable St. Nicholas' NS school provide a phone free environment , support well-being, concentration, academic performance and development.

Rationale:

- iPods, mobile phones, smart watches Game Boys, PSP's, MP3's 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 enabling pupils to disconnect from the online world and connect more with their peers during the school day
- Some electronic devices may be harmful due to frequent use
- Mobile phones may be used to conduct bullying

Relationship to School Ethos:

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices 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 St. Nicholas' NS.

St. Nicholas' NS recognizes the potential of digital technologies to transform the learning experiences of our pupils and we endeavor to facilitate digital learning opportunities, knowledge and skills to help our students successfully navigate an ever changing digital world. Our digital leaning plan outlines the approach of digital technologies that will be used in a planned and purposeful use of the technologies.

Aims:

- To ensure a technology safe school environment
- To lessen intrusions on and distractions to children's learning

Internal School Procedures:

The following are the guidelines for mobile phone/smart devices usage in the school:

- Children are not allowed to use mobile phones/smart watches eg apple watch or electronic games during school hours
- Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones or electronic games into school. In exceptional circumstances, such as when out of school activities and after school activities are scheduled, school tours etc., children may be allowed carry a phone as parents may need to be contacted.
- In these exceptional circumstances, and with **written application from parents**, a pupil may be allowed to have a mobile phone (switched off) and kept on the teachers' desk until the end of the day or in their school bag during after school activities or school outings
- Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so through the school secretary using the school landline phone
- All electronic gadgets are banned, even during after school activities
- Any pupil who brings a mobile phone or electronic game to school without prior permission risks having it confiscated and not returned until the school day is over
- Staff have access to the school landline if urgent calls need to be made to parents
- Staff personal calls are normally confined to break times
- Staff are permitted mobile phone usage only in cases of emergency. Staff should not use their phones for personal reasons during teacher/staff – pupil contact time

Sanctions:

- Any child found to have a phone/ personal devices in school without parental letter will have the phone/device confiscated. The phone will not be returned until a parent/guardian/carer collects it. Similarly, the use of all personal electronic devices is not permitted during the school day – this includes arrival, class time, breaks and dismissal.
- Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone or other personal device for any purpose, it will be confiscated from the pupil and returned only to the parent/guardian/carer.
- The School will not be liable for replacing mobile phones or other devices that are lost, stolen or damaged.
- The School incorporates this policy into the Code of Behaviour and Acceptable Use Policy, and will treat breaches in the same manner as any other breach of these policies.
- If a pupil uses a mobile phone or personal device to take photographs, video footage or recording of other pupils or staff members, or shares inappropriate messages disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Bí Cineálta policy and the School's Code of Behaviour

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone/personal device to menace, harass or offend another person.

School Trips and Outings:

Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones with them on school trips and tours.

However, in some circumstances they be allowed to bring cameras or devices with a camera for a school tour.

Likewise, parents must seek permission in writing. Teachers always have school ipads with them on school tours and lots of photographs and video footage is posted on the media outlets eg class dojo. Therefore there is very little need for children to bring cameras to school.

Teachers will have a contact number in the event that it is necessary to make contact with a parent/guardian.

A copy of the Mobile phone and Devices Policy is made available to school personnel and to the Parents' Council. The policy is readily accessible to parents on request.

A copy of the Policy is also published on the school website

Policy review; this policy will be reviewed by the school management authority periodically.

Possible exemptions that may apply:

St. Nicholas's NS will apply some exemptions to this policy. The examples below are not exhaustive and consideration will be needed on a case by case basis.

- Diabetes blood glucose monitor and/or insulin delivery mechanism
- Blood pressure monitoring
- Seizure conditions where monitoring via a mobile phone app
- Mental health conditions where communication with parents/guardians on an unrestricted basis is needed
- Additional/special needs, for specific tasks relating to a student's visual impairment, speech and language impairment

- Access by and EAL student to support language

School advice on mobile phones for primary school aged children:

The Board of Management of St. Nicholas' NS do kindly advise against purchasing mobile phones for primary school-aged children.

While we understand that mobile phones may offer a sense of safety and connection, research and school experience show that they can also present significant challenges for young children. These include:

- **Distractions from learning and play**
- **Increased exposure to inappropriate content or online risks**
- **Potential for cyberbullying and misuse of social media**
- **Reduced face-to-face social interaction and physical activity**
- **Negative impact on sleep, concentration, and wellbeing**

At this stage in their development, children benefit most from direct communication with family, in-person friendships, and healthy routines free from screen dependency.

We strongly encourage families to consider alternatives such as:

- A simple watch for time-telling
- Direct communication with the school office in case of emergency
- Talking openly with children about responsible technology use before introducing devices

By working together to delay mobile phone ownership, we can better support our children's emotional development, safety, and learning.

Parents can also avail of further supports form webwise

This policy will also keep in line with existing policies

- AUP policy
- Bí Cineálta
- Data Protection Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy and procedures
- Well being

Roles and Responsibilities:

All staff share in the co-ordination and implementation of this policy.

Evaluation:

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

Implementation:

This policy has been in place since June 2007.

Reviewed September 2024

This policy was reviewed and fully updated in line with the new guidelines circular 0044/2025

It was ratified by the Board of Management.

Signed: Janet Bray

Chairperson

Signed :Tanya Brown

Principal

Date : September 2025

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