

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy

Mobile Phones – Acceptable Use Policy for Students

Introduction

The increased ownership of mobile phones requires that school management, teachers, other school staff, students and parents / guardians take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly. The Board of Management of Curragh Post Primary School has agreed this Mobile Phones – Acceptable Use Policy for students as a means to adopt a co-ordinated response to student (and, in certain circumstances, staff) use of mobile phones. It is intended to illustrate the minimum standards of behaviour and co-operation expected of all students and to inform students, their parents / guardians and staff how the school will respond to both positive and negative behaviours.

This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues (such as mobile etiquette) can be clearly identified and addressed; ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety and security) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

Relationship to school's Mission / Vision / Aims:

Curragh Post Primary School's Mission Statement is as follows:

Our School values the gifts and talents of students and staff in their development in an atmosphere of equity, caring and mutual respect. Can we achieve this? Yes, we can. Is Feidir Linn.

This Mobile Phones – Acceptable Use Policy is another important framework within which “the development of whole people, empowered to lead effective lives in the wider society” is enhanced in our school. The community of the school works in a holistic manner to ensure that dependence is gradually replaced by responsibility for self, society and the world. The dignity of each student, staff member and parent / guardian is honoured and reflected in school policies and structures, including this policy.

This policy is informed by the school's Mission Statement which commits us to preparing all students for the challenges of adolescent and adult life and to respecting the dignity, worth and individuality of every member of the school community. The school's role in the development of young people supports and is enriched by the active participation of teachers and parents / guardians in many aspects of students' lives.

Section 1 – Scope and Aims of Mobile Phones – Acceptable Use Policy

Scope

This Mobile Phones – Acceptable Use Policy for students deals primarily with student use of mobile phones while in school, on the way to and from school, on the school premises and on all school related activities, while students are under the care and instruction of any member of school staff, in both Ireland and abroad.

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy

Aims

This Mobile Phones – Acceptable Use Policy aims to inform students as to how they are expected to conduct their use of mobile phones and how their adherence / non-adherence to the school's rules will be dealt with. It, also, aims to inform parents / guardians of how students are expected to behave in accordance with the school's rules and those who break the school's rules may be dealt with by teachers, Year Heads, the Deputy Principal, the Principal and, in a limited number of cases, the Board of Management.

Personal Safety and Security

Curragh Post Primary School accepts that parents / guardians give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is, also, ever-increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents / guardians reassurance that they can speak with their child quickly, at any time.

The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or guardians. Parents / guardians should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone onto school premises. It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones onto school premises to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document.

Section 2 – School Rules and Sanctions

School Rules

As part of the expected standards of Student Behaviour, students are expected to ensure that the phone should never be turned on and / or used during the school day and / or on school premises. Phones must not be used for any purpose, e.g. phoning, texting, checking the time, using the calculator, taking photos, taking video / audio recordings, surfing the internet, etc. Where teachers form the opinion that the student's mobile phone causes a disruption of any sort, it will be confiscated. It must be given to the teacher on request and it will be left in the Principal's office for collection by the student at the end of the school day. The student is not permitted to remove the SIM card from the phone prior to it being confiscated.

Any phone confiscated (unless it is for a recording offence) will be returned to the student at the end of the school day.

Recording devices must never be used in the school and / or on any school related activities. If any unauthorised recording takes place, the device used will be confiscated. The student will be required to delete the offending material in the presence of the Principal. Any such device will be returned to the student, (by the Principal) after a short period of time, as decided by the Principal. A penalty for carrying out the recording will, also, be issued by the Principal.

Sanctions on Students

As part of the Student Code of Behaviour, the full range of sanctions permissible is laid out.

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy

Section 3 – Other School Procedures

Parental / Guardian Contact

Students and parents / guardians are reminded that in cases of emergency, the School Office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly, and assisted in any appropriate way. If a student needs to make a telephone call during the day, he / she must ask permission from the class teacher and a school telephone will be used if deemed appropriate.

Theft or Damage

Students are required to mark their mobile phone clearly with their name.

Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed into the School Office.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. Their safety and security is wholly in the hands of the student.

The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

It is strongly advised that students use passwords / pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other students or if stolen). Students must keep their password / pin numbers confidential. Mobile phone and / or passwords may not be shared.

Inappropriate Conduct

Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the School.

Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking / sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully / harass / offend other students and / or staff will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the School.

Any student(s) found using a mobile phone to gain advantage in exams or assessments will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the School.

Criminal Law

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 School is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the gardai.

Section 4: Review Procedures

This Mobile Phones – Acceptable Use Policy for students will be reviewed regularly and by the Board of Management every four years. Any staff member who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible. The Parents' Council and / or

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy

Student Council may request a formal review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible by the Board of Management.

Adopted by Board of Management: 27th May 2013

Review Date: May 2017