

Mobile phone and Smart devices Policy

Introduction:

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices is not conducive to the provision of a safe and secure school environment where learning is of paramount importance, provisions which are central to the mission statement and ethos of Rathfarnham ETNS.,

Rationale:

The use of mobile phones and personal devices (Smartwatches, tablets, iPods, iPads, PSPs, MP3s etc.) may prove intrusive and distracting in a school environment in the following ways:

- The capacity of many devices to take photographs, and make video or sound recordings could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images
- They can be used to cause or exacerbate challenging behaviour, or as a means of bullying others.
- They can be a source of distraction in the school environment.
- They can also be a source of unneeded competition among children.

Aim of the Policy

The Board of Management has a policy that prohibits the use by children of personal mobile/smartphones, and other personal devices, while on school premises or involved in school activities such as tours, trips or extra-curricular activities. This ensures that the school environment is safe for all children and lessens intrusions on, and distractions to, children's learning.

Therefore the school strongly discourages pupils from bringing mobile phones/electronic devices to school.

School Procedure: Guidelines for Parents and Children

- An electronic device is any device that has the capability to make or receive calls and/or send and receive messages and/or notifications Where such devices cannot be switched off (not on silent) they will not be allowed in school. This includes smartwatches.
- A mobile phone may be brought to school by children in 5th and 6th classes, if required by children for their return journey home after school.

- P/Gs must request an ECD application from the office to seek permission for their child to be in possession of a device in school. A device cannot be brought to school without this consent being granted by the principal.
 - Devices must be entirely turned off before the children enter the school gates in the morning and not turned back on until the children leave the school grounds in the afternoon.
 - Devices must be stored securely and discreetly by the pupil in their school bag.
 - Devices will not be taken on any school outings or school tours. Any important messages can be communicated by the teachers on the trip to the relevant p/gs or to the school, and the school office will inform teachers of any arrangements re: children
 - If a child does not follow school procedure and has a device without permission, the device will be stored in the office. It must be collected from the principal/deputy principal by the child at the end of the school day. Parents/Guardians will also be informed that the device has been taken from their child and stored in the office.
- Electronic devices are brought in at the owner's risk and the school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to the device.
 - Parents / Guardians should speak to their children regularly about appropriate behaviour online and monitor their activity online in line with the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

School Procedure: Guidelines for staff.

- During teaching time, while on yard duty and during meetings, mobile phones will be switched off or put on 'silent' or 'discreet' mode. Staff should not use their phones for personal reasons during teacher-pupil contact time.
- Staff are permitted to use their phones for school-related business only or for emergencies.
- In very exceptional circumstances (e.g. illness in the family,) the teacher may, with the principal's permission, have their phones on for a period. An explanation should be given to the class in this case.
- Teachers must only use school phones to contact parents/guardians. In the event that a teacher must use their personal mobile phones to contact parents/guardians they must deactivate their caller ID and not share their personal number.
- Staff will follow the school's AUP in regard to GDPR.

Sínithe: Shangal Byrne

Cathaoirleach an Bhoird Bainistíochta

Dáta: 6/12/23

The policy will be updated as deemed necessary.

Síniú: Jerus Jelata

Príomhoide na Scoile

Dáta: 6/12/23