

Loreto Secondary School

Mobile Phone/Electronic Device Policy



Review Dates

Stakeholder	Date	Draft/review/ratified
Staff	11 th February 2022	
Parents	11 th February 2022	
Student Council	14 th February 2022	
BOM	17 th February 2022	

Signed _____ Date _____
(Chairperson of BOM)

Due for next review on _____

Introduction:

Loreto Secondary School Fermoy appreciate the importance of mobile phones in today's society. We also acknowledge the positive aspects of this and the manner in which the phone may be harnessed as a learning tool in the classroom and at home. However, the use of a mobile phone in school is solely at the discretion of the subject teacher and must not compromise or disrupt teaching and learning. The school continues to facilitate urgent phone calls to or from a student through the office.

There are potential dangers for the school community (pupils, parents, visitors, staff, coaches, teaching staff, management, trustees) stemming from the misuse and abuse of electronic media. As a result, the school will rigorously endeavour to protect the personal dignity and right to privacy of all the members of the school community

This policy covers all electronic devices including smart watches

Rationale:

The use of mobile phones/electronic devices has increased dramatically in the last number of years.

Mobile phones/electronic devices can be harnessed as a tool to complement current methodologies in teaching and learning and is of great benefit to students when used appropriately.

Mobile Phones /electronic devices can distract from Teaching and Learning when used in an inappropriate manner, i.e. disruptive noises and distractions from notifications.

Mobile Phones/electronic devices can be a cause of difficulty inside and outside of school when/if mobile phones are used in "cyber bullying", where students/teachers are photographed against their will, where some recordings/video recordings are made against the will of those featured etc.,

Mobile Phones/electronic devices are often mislaid by students.

Mobile Phones/electronic devices can be a major distraction to students in the classroom, on the corridor/in the bathrooms, causing isolation rather than interaction and integration of students

Aims:

1. To reduce the possible distractions to/for the students.
2. To provide an environment free from threat or invasion of privacy while students/teachers are in school.
3. To discourage cyber bullying among students in the school.
4. To encourage real life interaction and communication between students during classes.
5. To optimise teaching and learning situations for students.
6. To encourage responsible digital citizenship.

Rules for mobile phone usage.

Definitions

Mobile phone can include smart watches

The school campus. The school campus includes the school buildings, environs and all school related activities that occur on-site and off-site in the name of the school.

'Switched off' does not mean 'Silent', 'Meeting' or any similar mode. The phone must be **POWERED OFF.**

- Mobile phones are to be kept out of sight during the school day.
- Mobile Phones are permitted in the classroom either to access a digital book or at the request of a teacher.
- A student may use a mobile phone/ electronic device to access a book in class at the permission of their teacher. It is not advised that students would use a phone all day for this purpose
- Students may only take out a phone in class when a teacher is present.
- During the lesson phones must always be kept on top of the desk, not under the desk.
- The camera function is not to be used in the classroom except at the express request of a teacher for a learning purpose. Students using the camera function in school at any stage will have the phone taken off them and subject to serious sanctions. **This is deemed a very serious breach of our Code of Behaviour.**
- Phone usage is strictly forbidden in the bathrooms and dressing rooms under any circumstances. If they are seen they will have the phone taken off them and subject to serious sanctions. **This is deemed a very serious breach of our Code of Behaviour.**
- The misuse of mobile phones, electronic recording devices, or the Internet is a serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour. All mobile phones/electronic devices are to be switched off and out of sight during school hours and when in school buildings. This includes the period of time each student is in the school building before commencement of the first class, during the small break, during lunch and after the last class of the day. While off the school premises, but on school business (e.g. games, field trips and school tours etc.), mobile phones /electronic devices must be switched off. However, if it is necessary for the student to contact her parent/guardian, then permission to turn on a mobile phone/electronic devices must be sought from the supervising teacher. The phone must be turned off again at the conclusion of the conversation. The supervising teacher will ensure that this has happened.
- If parents/guardians wish to contact students during school hours they may do so using the office. Parents/Guardians are urged not to contact students during school hours and particularly during class.

Policy Sanctions:

If Student is found using her mobile phone during school hours without the permission of her teacher the phone will be confiscated and given to the Deputy principal. The phone will be reclaimed at the end of the day.

The name of the student and other relevant details will be recorded and given to the Year Head.

In the event of a second offence, phone will be confiscated. The phone will be reclaimed at the end of the day and lunchtime detention will be issued.

For subsequent offenses the phone confiscated, parents will be contacted contact parent, and a sanction will be issued in line with a serious breach of the code of behaviour.

A student who refuses to surrender a mobile phones/electronic devices found in her possession, which is not turned off, will be considered to have committed a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour and therefore will be removed from class with a possibility of suspension.

Any students found using the camera function, or using the phone in toilets or changing rooms will have the phone confiscated and subject to serious sanctions. The mobile phone /electronic devices and SIM card will be kept with the Deputy Principal the until such time as it is collected by a parent/ legal guardian. The Year Head will meet with parent/guardian and senior management. The school will require a written statement of support of the mobile phone policy from the parent/guardian and from the pupil. **This is deemed a very serious breach of the Code of Behaviour and carries a sanction up to and including suspension or expulsion.**

Misuse of Mobile Phones/Electronic Devices:

- An incident on school activities or in the school building during the school day where mobile phones/electronic devices are used to bully or harass a member of the school community is a serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour and will be dealt with accordingly.
- In such cases the mobile phones/electronic devices will be confiscated at the principal's discretion.
- It should be noted it is an offence to use a mobile phones/electronic devices to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí in such incidents.
- The Principal may invoke the school's Code of Behaviour and impose sanctions as per the Code of Behaviour.
- The school accepts no responsibility for damage to or loss of the confiscated mobile phones/electronic devices.

WHILE ON SCHOOL PREMISES OR WHEN OFF THE PREMISES ON AUTHORISED SCHOOL BUSINESS (e.g. games, field trips, etc.):

(a) Photographs cannot be taken, nor can recordings (audio or visual) be made, of a member of the school community without his/her expressed permission. Using phones or any other recording devices to record a person with all appropriate authorisation, will be considered a serious breach of the School's Code of Behaviour.

(b) Students will observe good 'netiquette' (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) in their representation of and comments on members of the school community and about the school itself. (Refer to the Internet Use Policy)

(c) Students will not upload, download, send or forward any material on the Internet that is obscene, defamatory or intended to annoy or harass a member of the school community.

(d) No photographs of, or recordings (audio or visual) of, or comments about a member of the school community can be uploaded to the Internet without his/her expressed permission and the permission of the school Principal/Deputy Principal.

(e) Instances where the Internet is used to insult, offend, slander, defame, harass or bully a member of the school community by another member of the school community is a serious offence and will be treated accordingly. Any student who uses the Internet as a vehicle to insult, offend, harass or bully another student or teacher will be deemed to have committed a serious breach of the School's Code of Behaviour and the school will have recourse to the range of sanctions available. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí in such instances. Serious breaches of the School's Code of Behaviour will be dealt with by the appropriate Year Head, and/or the Deputy Principal/Principal and may be reported to the Board of Management. It is intended a copy of this Policy will be included in the Student Journal. Parents/guardians and students will be asked to read and sign each year.

Appendix 1 (parent Form for signing)

✂-----

(Student's Name)

Has my permission to access her books on her phone for the duration of the current crisis. She has agreed to use the phone in a responsible manner. She will not use it in class without the teacher's permission and will not use the camera function while in school, unless at the instruction of a teacher.

We have discussed phone usage and she understands that the appropriate use of her phone is her responsibility. She accepts that misusing the phone may result in it being confiscated for the day. Repeat offences may require a visit to the school to discuss the matter with the Year Head.

Signed _____

Date _____