Killeen N.S Mobile Phone & Electronic Games Policy

**Introductory Statement**

This policy was drawn up in 2020 in response to technological advances which have seen a significant increase in hand held electronic ‘gadgets’ amongst the school population over recent years.

**Rationale**

The possession and use of mobile phones by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector.

Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Therefore the school strongly discourages the bringing of mobile phones to school by students.

In addition, they are a potential and real source of bullying and abuse through texting and the dissemination of unacceptable and inappropriate images

The school is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises but only within the parameters of the policy as stated below.

Use of mobile phones (particularly with the advent of increasingly sophisticated equipment and camera phones) presents a number of problems, including:

* Mobile phones can be valuable items and might render a pupil vulnerable to theft
* Mobile phones (and their cost and level of sophistication – or otherwise) can make pupils objects of envy or disparagement and could have implications with regard to discipline and potential bullying
* Even when apparently silent, the use of mobiles phones for texting purposes could be potentially undermining of classroom discipline
* Use of the newer phones with integrated cameras could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images
* Many of the above issues also pertain to I-Pods, +tablets, Nintendo DS, etc. They can be very intrusive, distracting and antisocial in a school environment
* Strategies must be put in place to reduce the intrusiveness of unauthorised technology in a school situation
* Some electronic devices may be harmful due to frequent use
* Mobile phones may be used to conduct bullying campaigns

**Relationship to School Ethos**

The unauthorised use of mobile phones and other electronic gadgets contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment conducive to learning, a provision which is central to the mission statement and ethos of Killeen NS.

**Aims**

* To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at our school. To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.
* To lessen intrusions on and distractions to children’s learning

**Internal School Procedures**

The following are the guidelines for mobile phone / electronic games usage in the school:

Mobile Phone Use by Children

1. Children are not allowed the use of mobile phones during school hours. The school holds no responsibility for phones lost or stolen on school grounds or on external school visits.
2. Personal electronic gadgets, tablets, ipods, ipads or consoles are not allowed in school, either during school hours or on school tour.
3. Children who need to contact home in an emergency during school hours may do so through their class teacher/Office using the school landline phone.
4. Any pupil who uses a mobile phone or brings an electronic game to school risks having it confiscated. This device will be turned off and only returned to the parent/guardian.
5. If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school’s Code of Behaviour.

Mobile Phone Use by Staff

1. Staff use of mobile phones will be confined to break times and after school (except in the case of an emergency).
2. Staff are reminded to be careful when using their personal mobile phones to contact parents. For privacy & personal safety, teachers should use the school phone or if personal phone must be used, the personal phone number should be withheld through the phone settings.
3. Personal phones should never be used to take photographs of children, or the school environment, or staff, or to store their personal data. Instead school tablets pr school cameras should be used for official school photography. *(Please see our Data Protection Policy for storage of photos)*

**Roles and Responsibilities**

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

All staff, parents & pupils have a responsibility for appropriately using electronic gadgets & phones. Please read our Acceptable Use Policy and our Bullying Prevention policy in relation to this.

**Evaluation**

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

Ratification:

Mark McDowall                                      Date: 10/06/2020

Chairperson

On Behalf of the Board of Management