



St. Patrick's College
Lacken Cross, Killala - Co. Mayo

Mobile Phone Policy

St Patrick's College
Lacken Cross
Killala
Co Mayo

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Mobile Phone and Electronic Media Device Usage Policy

Introduction

St Patrick's College Lacken Cross recognises most students own a mobile phone/electronic device and have a right to possess it on their person during the school day. Nonetheless, this cannot compromise or disrupt teaching and learning. 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.

Urgent phone calls to or from a student **will always** be facilitated through the office.

Rationale

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

*Mobile phones/ electronic devices can be 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. if they ring or are used during class time.

*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 causing of isolation rather than the interaction and integration of students.

Aims

- To optimise teaching and learning situations for students.
- To reduce the possible distractions to/for the students.
- To provide an environment free from threat or invasion of privacy.
- To discourage cyber bullying among students.
- To encourage interaction among students outside of class.
- To encourage the use of a mobile phone as an educational tool in the classroom.

In order to assist the school in implementing this policy, parents/guardians are asked not to arrange to contact students by mobile at any time during the school day.

Contact with the school **must be** made through the office at 096 34177 and students are directed to use the office telephone if needed.

a) Where a student brings a mobile phone to school, the phone **must** be on silent mode or switched off during the school day and may be used for educational means only on the school premises.

For this policy to work successfully, good will and trust is essential. Teachers can remind students of the policy and ask them to put their phones out of view.

However, students who continue to be in contravention of this rule shall have their phone and sim card confiscated by the teacher and will be instructed to turn their phone off before handing it up. Phones will be kept in the office until 4p.m. where they can be collected.

b) The teacher will write a note in the student's journal which must be signed by parent(s)/guardian(s).

c) If a second occasion arises, the teacher in question will confiscate the phone and a parent/guardian will need to collect the phone from the school office.

d) If a third occasion occurs, the phone will be given to the Deputy Principal who will arrange for the parent/guardian to collect it from his/her office.

e) If a fourth occasion arises, the phone will be given to the Principal who will arrange for the parent/guardian to collect it from his/her office.

f) If a student fails to hand up their mobile phone to a teacher after being requested to do so, it will be regarded as a serious breach of the school's code of conduct.

g) When a student's phone is confiscated the parent/guardian will be contacted before the end of the school day to notify them that their son/daughter has had his/her phone confiscated. Should a student use his/her mobile to call, text or communicate, he/she will also be sanctioned with a detention.

h) Students participating in school related activities (e.g. Study, Extra-Curricular Activities, School Trips, Tours etc.) must abide by the mobile phone rules governing these activities.

i) Incidents where students use mobile phones to bully other students will be treated as serious breaches of discipline. **It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí in such incidents.**

j) The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged phones. The safety and security of mobile phones is wholly a matter for students/parents.

k) It is strongly advised that students mark their mobile phones with their names and use passwords to ensure that unauthorised phone calls or texts cannot be made on their phones.

1) All students **will be instructed** to hand up mobile phones before sitting State examinations/In house school exams. **Failure to do so will result in exam results being null and void.**

All incidents of confiscation will be recorded in a specific book in the school office.

Use of Mobile phones for Educational means

1. **Note taking.** If a student is slow in taking notes from the board or projector they can use their phone to take a picture of the notes, they didn't catch, so as not to miss anything.
2. **Take photos:** mobile phones can be used as cameras to illustrate work and presentations.
3. **Make videos:** similar to the last point. For example, videos can be used to **record experiments** and later include them in projects.
4. **Stopwatch/timer:** classes, exercises and presentations often come with time limits. Practice their time management by using their mobile phone's stopwatch
5. **Share Notes:** many teachers tend to distribute material at the beginning or at the end of the class through OneNote. Instead photocopying large amounts of paper and handing them out, student's mobile phone allows them to easily Access this information.

Recording Devices and Internet:

The Internet is an excellent educational tool and the school encourages its safe use. The school encourages parents/guardians, pupils and teachers to be informed of Internet safety and best practice.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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 express permission and the permission of the school Principal/Deputy Principal.
4. 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 issue 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 discipline code and the school will have full recourse to the range of sanctions available. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí in such instances.

Ratified by Board of Management on: _____

Date

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management