

Coláiste Cholmcille,

Ballyshannon



Mobile Phone Policy

Ratified by BOM _____

Purpose

The following policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all the members of the school community are preserved. The school's policy on mobile phones / devices is therefore devised with the intention of ensuring that teaching and learning can take place without interruption and also with the intention of protecting students and staff from potential invasion of privacy, harassment or bullying.

Rationale

Coláiste Cholmcille accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can speak with their child quickly, at any time.

However, Coláiste Cholmcille gives the assurance that during school hours, should a parent urgently need to contact their child/children (or visa-versa), this can be done using the school phone. It is vitally important to ensure that there is no disruption to classes from mobile phones and that they are not used inappropriately.

Receiving texts or calls during class time can cause serious disruption to the teaching and learning process.

Inappropriate material or material of a bullying nature can cause stress and anxiety for students and have a detrimental effect on their well-being. For this reason, the following policy has been implemented.

Policy

Where a student brings a mobile phone/digital device to school, it must be switched off and out of sight at all times during and between classes. This means that phones must not be used for;

- Making calls
- Checking the time
- Texting or using as a calculator (other than as directed by the teacher)
- Looking at or engaging in social media pages

Students may check their phones during break and lunchtime only.

Students participating in school related activities (e.g. Study, Extra- Curricular Activities, etc.) must abide by the rules governing these activities and have mobile phone switched off unless they have been given teachers permission to do otherwise. However, if it is necessary for the student to contact his parent/guardian, then permission to turn on a mobile phone 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.

We acknowledge that mobile phones may have a positive role to play in teaching and learning. Teachers may give permission for the use of mobile phones in classrooms and other learning environments. In these instances, this takes place under strict supervision of teachers.

Charging of phones in school is not permitted.

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact. The school assures parents that their children can be reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

If a student needs to make a telephone call during the day they must ask permission from the class teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal and a school telephone may be used, if deemed appropriate.

Students who feel unwell must report to the office where a member of staff will contact home.

Mobile phones cannot, under any circumstances be taken into examination rooms.

Confiscation and Sanctions

Students who are found using mobile phones in the class or school building will have the phone confiscated. The following procedure will apply;

- The phone is to be turned off in the presence of the student.
- The phone is to be handed into the office straight away where the following details are recorded by the teacher; the student's name, the date, the class/period in which the phone was confiscated, the teachers name and the reason why the phone was confiscated.
- The phone is put into an envelope, sealed and the name of the student put on the outside.
- The phone is then lodged in a secure safe in the office.
- The incident is logged on VS Ware by the teacher.
- In the case of a **first and second offence**, the phone will be securely stored in the office for the remainder of the day, until a parent, guardian or a person nominated by the parent collects the phone. When this occurs parents/guardians will receive a notification.
- For **third and recurrent offenders**, the phone will be securely stored in the office for the remainder of the day, until a parent, guardian or a person nominated by the parent collects the phone. When this occurs parents/guardians will receive a notification and a meeting with parents, student and management will be arranged.

- The office will remain open until 4:30pm for phone collection.

Refusal to hand over the phone may lead to disciplinary sanctions for refusing to comply with the school rules. Parents/Guardians will be contacted and asked to meet with management. Clear communication is encouraged at all stages during the initial incident in order to avoid conflict.

Extra-Curricular Situations

In the circumstances where students are travelling away to matches, debates, quizzes etc, students are permitted to take their mobile phones with them, in case it is necessary to contact home.

Appropriate Conduct

Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed in to the office.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. Their safety and security is wholly the responsibility of the student. Mobile phones should be locked safely into the locker during PE and other activities.

It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pins to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones. Students must keep their password/pins confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords should not be shared.

Inappropriate Conduct

Any student/s found using a mobile phone to gain advantage in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the school.

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

Students using mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person by using any communication method.

The taking, sending or posting of photos or objectionable images or comments is forbidden. Students using mobile phones to bully or harass other students or staff will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the school.

Recording devices must never be used in school and /or on any school activities unless under the direct instruction and guidance of a teacher. Unauthorised recording is a very serious offence and will be dealt with under the code of conduct.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person (Section 10 of the non-fatal offences against the person Act

1997). Therefore it may be necessary for the school to inform the Gardaí and/or Child Protection/Support Services.

Disclaimer

Unless officially confiscated by a staff member, the school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. Their safety and security are the responsibility of the student. Mobile phones should be locked safely into the locker during PE and other activities.

This Policy was adopted and ratified by the Board of Management of Coláiste Cholmcille.

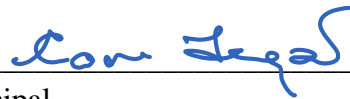
Signed:



Chairperson

Date 30/9/2022

Signed:



Principal

Date 30/9/2022

Review Date 2025