



# Mobile Phone Policy

# St Patrick's Primary School

## Mobile Phone Policy

### for staff, visitors, volunteers and pupils

**This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones in school by both staff and pupils**

#### **Introduction**

St Patrick's has a clear policy on allowing pupils to bring mobile phones into school and this policy makes explicit reference to camera mobile phones.

#### **Camera Mobile Phones**

Camera mobile phones are now the norm and a built in digital camera enables users to take high resolution pictures. These can be sent instantly to other Mobile Phone users or email addresses. They can also be posted on the internet or in chat rooms.

There is a potential for camera mobile phones to be misused in schools. They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils or/and teachers.

#### **Staff policy**

Staff use of mobile phones during their working day should be:

- outside of their contracted hours
  - discreet and appropriate eg: not in the presence of pupils
- Mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times.

The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen.

Staff should **never** contact pupils or parents from their personal Mobile Phone or give their Mobile Phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, they should use the school telephone in the office.

Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.

With regard to camera phones, a member of staff should never use their phone to photograph a pupil(s) or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff, the school and the Local Authority. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing Policy and associated procedures.

### **Parent, Visitors or Volunteers In School Policy**

Adults either in school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their cameras or Mobile Phone cameras to take pictures of pupils unless it is at a public event such as Sports Day or Summer Fair and of their own children.

Adults, visitors or volunteers in school should only use their Mobile Phone within the confines of the school office or staff room. Personal cameras and Mobile Phone cameras should not be used to take pictures of children. If parents who accompany children on a school trip are asked by the teacher to take photos as a record of the educational visit, they will be issued with a school camera. Parents accompanying children on school trips should not use their mobile cameras to take pictures of children.

### **Pupil Policy**

While we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a Mobile Phone to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision, St Patrick's discourages pupils bringing mobile phones to school due to the potential issues raised above.

When a child needs to bring a phone into school, a permission slip (Appendix 1) must be signed by the parent and the phone must be left in the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Parents are advised that St Patrick's accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into school or school grounds.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil, handed to a member of the office team who will record the name of the pupil and attach it to the phone. The Mobile Phone will be stored by the school office. The pupil may collect the phone at the end of the school day. A letter will be sent home to parents requesting that a permission slip be returned the next day. If this practice continues more than three times, then the school will confiscate the phone until an appropriate adult collects the phone from a senior teacher.

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 our Behaviour Policy.

If images of other pupils or teacher have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior teacher. (Please see more guidance on sexting in our Child Protection Policy).

Should a pupil be found to be using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school.

*We ask that parents should talk to their children about the appropriate use of text messages as they can often be used to bully pupils.*

*Should parents need to contact pupils or vice versa during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone or email.*

The policy supports the Health & Safety, Anti bullying, Child Protection, Safeguarding and Internet/E-safety policies. This policy will be monitored and reviewed as required but at least every two years.

## Mobile Phone Parental Consent Form

Dear Parent/Carer

In accordance with our Mobile Phone Policy, if your child is bringing in a Mobile Phone to school on a regular basis, please could you sign the form below to give your permission for your child to do this and remind them of our school policy.

- Your child needs to bring their phone to the school office first thing in the morning before they go to their classroom.
- The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to a Mobile Phone and Digital Device
- Your child's phone should be appropriately marked so that they can recognise it
- Should your child be found using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right

to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring their phone into school. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Seamus Scullion

Principal

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### MOBILE PHONE PARENTAL CONSENT

I/we give permission for our child (name) ..... in Primary  
..... to bring their Mobile Phone into school.

We have read the policy and understand its implications

Signed ..... Date.....

PLEASE RETURN PERMISSION SLIP TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. THANK YOU.

September 2018