



Knocknacarra Educate Together
National School

Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy

This policy has been formulated by Knocknacarra ETNS to provide guidance for children, parents and staff members in relation to the use of personal mobile phones or other electronic devices within the school or on school-organised excursions.

Contents

Introduction and Rationale:.....	1
Aims and Objectives:.....	1
Procedures:.....	1
Pupils.....	1
Parents/Guardians and Visitors.....	2
Staff Members.....	2
Ratification and Communication:	2
Appendix A: Application for Permission for a Child to Bring a Mobile Phone to School	3

Introduction and Rationale:

Knocknacarra Educate Together NS recognizes that mobile phones and other electronic devices have become pervasive and often useful tools for communication. Even so, the primary purpose of our school community, specifically to provide a caring learning environment, can be adversely affected by the presence of such devices. This policy sets out simple protocols regarding the use of these devices at school as well as on school-organised excursions.

Aims and Objectives:

- To ensure that parents and pupils understand the strict limitations on the use of mobile phones and other personal communication devices.
- To set out clearly when a staff member may use a mobile phone or personal electronic device.

Procedures:

Pupils

- It is school policy to discourage children from bringing mobile phones to school and as a general rule pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones onto the school premises. Exception to this rule will be made where there is a need for a child to have a phone in order to be contactable by parents on route to or from school or for medical reasons.
- Where a parent or guardian wishes their child to bring a phone to school they will be required to complete the form (Appendix A) indicating that they accept the school policy and are giving consent for their child to bring a phone to school. A child may not have a phone in school unless their parent/guardian has completed the form.
- Pupils who bring a phone to school without the consent form being signed by their parent/guardian will have their phone confiscated and it will be necessary for a parent/guardian to call to the school to have the phone returned to them.
- Children who have been given permission to have a mobile phone in school must turn off their phone before entering the school grounds and are not allowed to use their phones, unless they use the phone for medical monitoring. In such cases where a phone is required for medical reasons, it may be switched on but only used for specified purposes. Pupils themselves are responsible for keeping the phone in the school bag. Any child breaking the rules will have their phone confiscated. It will only be returned to the parent/guardian (not the child) who will have to collect it from the principal. Any child who continues to break the rules will have their permission withdrawn.
- Pupils should mark their phones clearly with their name. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing phones that are lost, stolen or damaged on the school premises, including while in the care of the school or any staff member. It is the responsibility of parents to insure phones, and parents/guardians should be aware that the school's insurance does not cover the loss/theft/damage of a phone while on the school premises or while travelling to and from school.
- The safety and security of mobile phones is wholly a matter for pupils and parents. It is strongly advised that pupils use a password/PIN code to ensure unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones. Pupils must keep their passwords/PIN code confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords/pins should not be shared.
- Pupils are not allowed to use phones to take photos or make voice or video recordings while on the school premises, including at after school activities or events outside school hours. Pupils

using a mobile phone in this way or to bully other pupils or send offensive messages or images will face disciplinary action as per the school discipline policy. It is important to note that use of phones or other electronic devices outside of the school setting in a bullying manner towards others may be addressed by the school as described in the Anti-Bullying Policy.

- It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. In addition to applying the school's disciplinary policy the school will, where appropriate, report such incidences to the Gardaí. Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone will be handed over to the Gardaí for further investigation. Parents will be informed in such circumstances.
- In general, devices such as tablets and computers should not be brought to school unless specifically requested by the teacher for a specific purpose. Use of the devices outside of the specified task will not be permitted.

Parents/Guardians and Visitors

- We request that parents/guardians and visitors to the school who are present for events or to volunteer do not use their mobile phones to make or receive calls unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Parents may record or take photos during school events of their children and they must be for personal use only, never sharing them through social media or another capacity.

Staff Members

- Staff members will keep their phones on silent during school times. There are exceptions to this:
 - If a staff member is expecting an urgent call, e.g. news concerning a family member who is ill,
 - Shared SNAs who may need to be contactable during the school day or
 - When out of the school on excursions.
- The use of mobile phones by staff for essential calls should be kept to a minimum and should be taken/made in an area where pupils are not present.
- Staff members do not give out their phone number or that of any other staff member to pupils or parents/guardians.
- Staff members will refrain from using personal electronic devices with children. Instead, the use of school computers and tablets is preferred.
- Staff members may use personal devices to take photos, though it is preferable to use a school-owned device. Photos and videos must be used only in school-sponsored settings, specifically the website and the school social-media accounts or for displays in the school. More details can be found in the Social Media and School Website Policy.

Ratification and Communication:

This revised policy was ratified on the date below. The policy will be distributed to all teachers and will be available electronically via the website for access at any time. It will be reviewed as necessary but no later than 2022.

Louise Shields, chairperson

Date of ratification: 07/10/2019

Appendix A: Application for Permission for a Child to Bring a Mobile Phone to School

Name of child: _____

Class: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian applying for permission: _____

Please state reason why your child needs to bring a mobile phone to school.

- At no time is your child allowed to use the phone either for calling or sending text messages whilst in the school building or in the school grounds. It must only be used when the child has left the premises.
- Any child breaking the rules will have their phone confiscated. It will only be returned to the parent/guardian (not the child) who will have to collect it from the principal.
- Any child who continues to break the rules will have their permission withdrawn.

We have read and agree to respect the school rules on the use of mobile phones.

Parent Signature(s)

Pupil's Signature

Date: _____