



Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa

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Mobile phone and Electronic Games Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was devised in response to technological advances, which have seen a significant increase in hand held electronic ‘equipment’ amongst the school population in Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa since 2009.

The possession and use of mobile phones by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. Use of mobile phones (particularly with the advent of increasingly sophisticated equipment and camera phones) presents a number of problems, including:

- (i) 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 content
- (ii) 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;
- (iii) Even when apparently silent, the use of mobiles phones for texting purposes could be potentially undermining of classroom management;
- (iv) Mobile phones can be valuable items and might render a pupil vulnerable to theft;

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to protect all members of our school community and to maintain a pleasant working and learning environment free from the intrusion of unnecessary technology.

In Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa we believe that mobile phones (through text messages and images) may be used to conduct bullying campaigns which interfere with other pupil’s right to learn in a safe atmosphere. (Anti Bullying Policy)

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Our aim in Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa is to generate and maintain an inclusive climate of learning within which every pupil is enabled to develop and fulfil their own unique potential.

Aims

- To ensure a “technology appropriate” school environment
- To lessen intrusions on and distractions to children’s learning

Policy

Pupils:

Pupils are not to bring mobile phones to school.

- The school has a land-line and pupils are allowed contact their parents if necessary.
- The adults working with children in After School Activities should have the contact details of parents if the need arises.
- Teachers will have phones with them on school tours/outings. Children are not allowed to digital devices with access to the internet with them on school tours/outings.

If a pupil is found to have a phone either on them or in their school bag switched on between the hours of 9:20 a.m. and 3 p.m. the phone will be confiscated and kept until the following day. A child suspected of having a phone may be asked to empty his/her bag. If this happens on a number of occasions the child’s parents will be notified. The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged phones. The safety and security of phones is a matter for pupils /parents.

The school incorporates this policy into the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy and will treat breaches as they would treat any other breach of the Code. The school will include a statement on this policy in the School Information Handbook, which is issued annually to parents.

Staff:

Staff members do not give out their phone number or that of any other staff member to pupils or parents/guardians unless it is a Health & Safety issue to do so. Each case will be decided on its own merits. We trust that parents will only contact the teacher when these circumstances warrant such contact. Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff in working with children, it is vital that staff be engaged with children at all working times. Staff are trusted to use their phones accordingly.

Work Calls

Calls to parents/guardians should be kept as short as possible. Where a lengthy conversation with parents/guardians is required, appointments should be made to meet parents. Calls to other professionals and organisations should be made in consultation with the Principal and classroom supervision will be arranged where appropriate.

After school activities:

Adults in charge should have a mobile phone and should have access to the phone numbers the parents of children in their group.

Personal Calls

In general, personal calls should be carried out outside of teaching time. In cases of urgency, a staff member should use discretion in making calls and ensure that their classroom is supervised during the call. Incoming personal calls should be reserved for urgent matters.

<i>Implementation Date</i>

This Policy will apply from 12th June 2013

<i>Timetable for Review</i>

The new policy be reviewed and, if necessary, amended in 2016

<i>Ratification & Communication</i>
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This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa on 12th June 2013

The policy will be communicated to the Parents' Association and will be available to all parents on request. The policy will be uploaded on the schools website and excerpts will be available in the school's Information Booklet

Date: 12th June 2013

Signed:



Chairperson, Board of Management