



8.4 Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones

Purpose

- The increased ownership of mobile phones requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly.
- This Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones is designed to ensure that potential issues can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can be enjoyed by our students.
- Scoil Choilm CNS has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones that provides guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones in our school.
- It is school policy that children from Junior Infants to Second Class are not allowed mobile phones in school.
- Only children from 3rd-6th class who walk to or from school alone and have written permission to do so are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school for their personal safety while travelling to and from school.
- Pupils from 3rd-6th class, whose parents wish them to bring a mobile phone to school, must sign the attached request form and this form must be returned to the school. This permission will be kept on file.
- If a parent has given permission for their child to have a mobile phone during school hours, pupils and their parents / guardians must first read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones.
- The Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones also applies to pupils during school trips and extra-curricular activities.

Rationale

Personal Safety and Security

- Scoil Choilm CNS accepts that some parents who allow their children to walk / cycle to and from school alone may give their child a mobile phone to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety and to allow them to make contact with home.
- It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone may give parents reassurance that they can speak with their children quickly while children are on their way to or from school.

Children and Mobile Phones

- Where parents / guardians propose to provide mobile phones to their children, they should first satisfy themselves that it is absolutely necessary for them to do so to ensure their child's safety.

Responsibility

- It is the responsibility of students (3rd – 6th class) who have permission to bring a mobile phone to school, to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this policy.
- Permission to have a mobile phone at school or while under the school's supervision is contingent upon parents / guardians signing the Consent Form attached to this policy and permission being granted by the principal teacher.



If a student disrespects the Acceptable Use policy for mobile phones, the Principal has the right to revoke the permission for the child to bring a mobile phone to school. In such cases, parents will be called to a meeting with the child's class teacher and the principal. Arrangements will be made for collection of the device.

Acceptable Uses

- If a child is granted permission to bring a mobile phone to school, it must be powered off during school hours, including break times and must be kept in the child's school bag at all times.
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school telephone remains the appropriate and quickest point of contact. Parents should never phone their child during school hours.

Staff usage

- Staff usage of mobile phones will be limited to school related business only including during morning duty, yard time and during staff meetings.
- The integrity of the school day and face to face teaching must be respected by all teachers and SNAs.

Unacceptable Uses

- Children's mobile phones must be powered off at all times during school hours. It is therefore, in breach of school rules for children to disrupt the school day by phones ringing or beeping.
- This also applies to school trips and other out-of-school supervised activities.
- Should there be any disruption during the school day caused by a pupil's mobile phone, the responsible pupil will face disciplinary actions under the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Children who use their phone in school will have their device confiscated, sanctions applied and their phone permission will be revoked for the remainder of their time in primary school.

Theft or Damage

- The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones on the school premises or while travelling to and from school.
- Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be given to a teacher.
- It is strongly advised by the school but ultimately the responsibility of parents/guardians that pupils use passwords or pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls are not made on their phones. Pupils should keep their passwords / pin numbers confidential.

Inappropriate Conduct

- Pupils using mobile phones to bully or harass other pupils will face disciplinary actions under the school's Code of Behaviour, whether this happens during the school day or outside of school.
- Any pupil who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language towards another pupil while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary actions under the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Pupils with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks on other pupils, harass other pupils or post private information about other pupils using phone calls, SMS, Snapchat, images, videos or social media posts. e.g. Facebook, Instagram or any other form of social media.

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- Any pupil who feels threatened or disturbed by any message or phone call they receive should report this immediately to a teacher (if it happens at school or on school-related activities) or to a parent / guardian (if it happens outside of school).
- Non-observance of these rules may result in the mobile phone being confiscated and privileges restricted or withdrawn.
- If the mobile phone is confiscated, it will be brought to the Principal and the parent will have to attend a meeting with the child's class teacher and the principal to collect the device.

Ratification and Review

This policy was adopted and ratified on the 16th June 2017.

This policy has been made available to the school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and the Patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed regularly by the school management. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department of Education and Skills.

This policy was revised in October 2020 and will be reviewed again in June 2023.

Signed: *John Walsh*
Chairperson of BOM

Signed: *Laura Maher*
Principal

Date: April 26th 2021



Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones

Consent Form - please return this form to school if you give permission for your child to bring a phone to school.

I / We have read and understand the above information about appropriate use of mobile phones in Scoil Choilm CNS and I / we understand that this form will be kept on file at the school and that the details may be used (and shared with a third party, if necessary) to assist/identify a phone should the need arise (e.g. if lost, or if the phone is being used inappropriately).

I / We give my / our child _____, in _____ class permission to carry a mobile phone to school as they travel to and from school alone. I /We understand that he / she will be responsible for ensuring that the mobile phone is powered off during the school day.

This permission is valid until the end of June 2022 and will be reviewed annually.

Signature of Parents / Guardians:

Signature of Pupil: _____ **Class:** _____

Mobile Phone Number: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Please return this permission sheet to the school