

LISNEAL COLLEGE



Mobile Phones and Digital Devices Policy

Updated: September 2016

Review: June 2017

It is recognised that such technology will play an increasing part in future learning practices, but their use in school should follow agreed rules and guidelines to prevent inappropriate behaviour. Therefore, the school accepts that pupils are permitted to bring mobile phones and digital devices to school but that their use is subject to the following guidelines.

Increasing sophistication of this technology presents a number of issues for schools:

- The high value of many phones.
- The inherent dangers associated due to the integration of cameras into many phones and media players leading to child protection and data protection issues.
- The potential to use the phone during the school day thus causing disruption in many situations.
- The increasing need to protect from any invasion of privacy or harassment associated with the misuse of phones.

Benefits

- Students can use phones in cases of emergency outside school hours.
- Students may feel more confident knowing they can make contact with someone if in difficulties.
- Some digital technology can be useful for learning and homework.

Potential Disadvantages

- Mobile phones are valuable and can be lost or stolen.
- Students can be bullied by text messaging or silent phone calls.
- Mobile phones can be used to store and communicate inappropriate material.
- Unsuitable people are known to use mobile phones and text messages to make inappropriate contact with young people.

Responsible Use

- Pupils are required to use phones etc responsibly at all times.
- Pupils must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading or offensive images. The transmission of some images/information can be a criminal offence and will be dealt with as such by the school/PSNI.
- Cyber-bullying is completely unacceptable, and will be followed up by the school/PSNI as serious misbehaviour.
- The school is a workplace, and phones can interfere with teaching and learning in the classroom. Mobile phones **MUST** be switched off and kept in bags during and between lessons.
- Good habits in digital usage are outlined in the notes of information attached to this policy.

Rules

1. Responsibility for the phone rests with the pupil and the school accepts no financial responsibility for damage, loss or theft.
2. Pupils must not use mobile phones between 9:00am and 3:15pm. This means that phones must not be used for example, for making calls, checking the time, texting or used as a calculator. Mobile phones must not be visible during the school day. Equipment must be switched off and stored in the pupil's pocket or bag. *Where appropriate, an individual member of staff may give permission for the use of a device for a specific educational purpose.*
3. Pupils must not use phones to broadcast music, or transfer inappropriate material.
4. Parents wishing to speak to their child during school hours should contact the school office and the child will be permitted to contact home, using a school telephone. This allows for an appropriate adult to be present if a child needs support.
5. Pupils who feel unwell must always report to their Head of Year. They **MUST NOT** use their mobile phone to arrange for a parent to come into school. This ensures the pupil is collected by a parent and is safely escorted home.
6. Mobile phones cannot, under any circumstances, be taken into examination rooms. Breach of this rule will lead to invalidation of that examination and potentially other examinations.
7. Pupils need to acknowledge that it is a privilege to be permitted to bring mobile phones to school. Pupils who abuse the rules and do not act responsibly will lose this privilege.
8. Pupils **MUST NOT** access social media websites during school hours.
9. **A mobile phone should never be used to make voice recordings or take photographs of other pupils or of members of staff.**

Consequences

- If a pupil is caught using a mobile phone without permission, it may be confiscated by the member of staff. If confiscated, the phone will be placed in the school office where it can be collected by the pupil at 3:15pm.
- If a pupil refuses to co-operate with a teacher, a senior member of staff will confiscate the phone and it will have to be collected by a parent/guardian.
- If there is persistent abuse, the pupil will no longer be permitted to bring their mobile phone to school. The Head of Year may also place the student in detention.

Advice to Pupils on the Safe Use of Mobiles Outside School

- Using your mobile is convenient and practical but you need to observe some common sense ground rules to protect yourself from potential abuse or danger.
- Don't give out your number or friends' numbers to people you don't know, especially in Instant Messenger or Chat rooms.
- Keep your security code or PIN number private.
- If you get texts, which upset you, don't reply but keep a record and tell an adult. In serious cases you can report it to the police.
- If you receive a rude or embarrassing image or text about someone don't forward it to others. Distributing sexual images of other young people is harassment and is illegal. If you receive something like this, tell an adult immediately.
- Ask permission before taking a picture of your friends and think before sending it on. Once sent you have lost control of it and it could become public before you know it.
- If you have any concerns regarding the improper use of mobile phone technology, speak to a responsible adult, parent/guardian, your teacher, Head of Year or Mrs Smith immediately.

PERSONAL MEDIA PLAYERS

Many pupils use music to assist them in all aspects of study. Studies have proven that concentration can be increased whilst listening to background music. With this in mind personal media players can be used at the following times with headphones;

- Private study sessions
- Pupils may use their personal media players to listen to music in lessons when it has been agreed with their subject teacher and the Head of the Department. Pupils may use mobile phones in **AIRPLANE MODE** if the class teacher grants permission
- If a pupil is in breach of the rules set out in this policy, the personal device will be confiscated and sent to the school office for collection by a parent. If there is persistent abuse, the pupil will no longer be permitted to bring their personal media player to school. The Head of Year may also use a range of sanctions to address persistent offending.

Lisneal College accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects relating to mobile phones and personal media equipment. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that all personal devices brought to school are fully insured.