

St Nicholas Catholic Primary School Mobile Phone Policy 2022-23

Rationale

Mobile phones are now a feature of modern society and an increasing number of our staff and pupils own one. It is recognised that parents/carers may choose to let their child keep a mobile phone with them when coming to school for safety reasons to maintain contact after the end of a school day.

It is also recognised that mobile phones and smart devices today can present some safety and behavioural issues for our staff and children. These would revolve around:

- Distraction from learning.
- The high value of many phones
- The integration of cameras into phones leading to potential child protection and data protection issues.
- Access to unfiltered internet content within a school context.
- Phone to phone interconnectivity through internet access, Bluetooth, etc that provides the potential for the sharing of inappropriate content or illegal file sharing.
- The 'always on, always contactable,' nature of mobile phones that could provide potential for cyber bullying or the sharing of an individual's location.

The school wishes to have a balanced response that:

- Recognises parents/carers wishes to allow their child to own a mobile phone and have it available at the start and end of a school day.
- Respects our children's good behaviour and develops their self control.
- Ensures children and staff are protected from the potential negative issues described above.

To achieve this aim we will adhere to the following guidelines

Children

- Phones must be clearly marked with the child's full name.
- Phones must always be switched off (not on silent mode) on entering school.
- Phones must be 'handed in' to the school officewhere they will be stored for the day securely in a box and then returned at the end of the day. The phones should not be taken out for any reason without a staff member's permission.
- Phones must not be used for any purpose whilst on our school site.
- If a child breaches these rules the phone will be confiscated and returned to the child after a discussion with parents.
- Must not use a mobile phone in or **out of school*** in an inappropriate manner that involves any member of our school community. This could include:
 - Sharing inappropriate content with other children.
 - Showing inappropriate content to other children.
 - Forwarding or authoring offensive or slanderous messages.

- Threatening or bullying through text or internet eg WhatsApp or other communication apps.

If the school is made aware of inappropriate usage they will work with the parents/carers of the children concerned to take appropriate action. In the first instance we will contact the child's parent/carer to ask them to look at their child's phone with us. If we cannot contact the parent/carer, staff will investigate the phone for inappropriate content. In all cases the phone will be confiscated and will not be returned until the investigation is complete.

*NB: Schools now have a legal duty to act upon behaviour taking place out of school that impacts on another child or a member of our staff.

Parents/carers are requested:

- To keep mobile phones on silent or switched off when in arranged meetings with school staff.
- To keep within the guidelines of our School E-Safety Policy if using their phone for photography.

Volunteers/Visitors

- Phones will be handed in to the school office on arrival where they will be securely stored. Volunteers/Visitors may obtain and use their phones in the school staffroom or in a secure office.
- Visitors to any school events may only use their phone in line with our E-Safety policy.

Emergencies

- If a child needs to contact his/her parents/carers during school time they will be allowed to use a school phone.
- If parents need to contact children urgently they should phone the school office and a message will be relayed promptly.

Responsibility for mobile phones

The school accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones.

Any phone brought to school by a child is the responsibility of the child and their parent/carer.