

## **Phone Policy for Staff & Pupils Muire na Dea Chomhairle N.S**

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. In this context, access to phones should be limited to urgency only.

### **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

### **Personal Calls**

- In general, personal calls should be carried out during break time
- In cases of urgency, a staff member should use discretion in making calls
- Incoming personal calls should be reserved for urgent matters

### **Mobile Phones**

- Mobile phones may be turned on during lunch time
- In case of urgency, staff should use discretion in making calls
- Texting should follow the rules in relation to calls

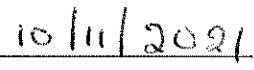
### **Children's Phones**

- Generally, children are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school. If, at the request of parents, a child takes a mobile phone to school, it must be switched off and handed up to the teacher as soon as the child enters the classroom
- The teacher returns the mobile phone to the child at home time
- Pupils who are obliged to carry a mobile phone must switch it off on entering the school grounds in the morning
- Pupils are forbidden to switch their phone back on until they leave the school grounds after school
- Pupils who ignore this policy and are found with their phones switched on will be dealt with according to the Code of Behaviour
- If a teacher or staff member has a suspicion that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be asked to hand over the phone to the teacher or the school principal. The child's parents will be contacted and will have to collect the phone from the school
- Where there is evidence that the material on the phone may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the phone will be handed over to the Gardaí for further investigation and the parents will be informed
- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones
- Pupils should mark their phones clearly with their name

- Mobile phones which are found in the school without a name must be handed to a member of staff immediately
- It is strongly advised that pupils have passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made from their phones. These pins and passwords must be kept confidential
- Pupils who use mobile phones to bully other pupils or to send offensive messages or to make offensive calls will face disciplinary actions as per the school's Code of Behaviour
- The same applies to pupils who take unauthorised photos or recordings of other students or staff members
- It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the school in this regard is ineffective, as with all incidents, the school may consider it necessary to involve the Gardai.

This policy was ratified by the B.o.M of Muire na Dea Chomhairle N.S on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

  
Joan Connolly (Chairperson)

  
Date