



Personal Devices Policy

Of Firhouse Educate Together National School

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This policy outlines the appropriate use of mobile phones and other personal devices in our school.

For the purpose of this policy, an internet-enabled device refers to any device (such as a smartphone, smart watch, tablet, etc.) which has the capacity to connect to the internet, regardless of whether or not the device is actively connected to the internet or contains a SIM card.

Rationale:

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment and is not conducive to learning, a provision which is central to the mission statement and ethos of Firhouse E.T.N.S.

Phones and other smart devices must not be seen or heard on the school premises.

Introduction: As a general rule, pupils should not bring mobile phones to school. We do accept that in some circumstances parents may require their child to bring a mobile phone to school. However, pupils may not use a mobile phone or any internet-enabled device (as defined above) inside the school grounds.

Where a pupil brings a mobile phone or other internet-enabled device to school, the device must be:

- Clearly labelled with the pupil's name
- Fully turned off at the school gate, **before entering school grounds**
- Stored in the pupil's school bag throughout the school day. Pupils cannot carry the device on their person (this includes the wearing of smart watches etc.)
- Switched off until the pupil is **outside the school gate after the school day ends**

The use of mobile phones and smart devices during the school day is completely forbidden. In the case of emergency, parents may contact the school at (01) 406 1010.

Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones or smart devices such as watches during extracurricular activities, or off-site school activities (e.g. school tours, trips to swimming lessons, sports events). A staff member will have a mobile phone in these circumstances.

Pupils are not permitted to use personal devices of any description for the purpose of making a video or audio recording of staff or fellow pupils while at school or on school activities.

Sanctions:

Pupils who ignore school policy and use a mobile phone (or any other internet-enabled device as outlined above) on school grounds, or are seen with a mobile phone or any internet-enabled device, will be required to hand over the device to a member of staff, and his/her parents will be informed.

The device will remain in the office and may only be retrieved by a parent or guardian of the pupil. The school will treat a breach of this policy as we treat any other breach of school discipline, in keeping with our Code of Positive Behaviour Policy.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing or repairing lost, stolen or damaged devices. The safety and security of personal phones is solely a matter for pupils and their parents or guardians.

Mobile Phone Use by Staff

Staff use of mobile phones will be confined to break times and after school (except in the case of an emergency).

Mobile phones or other personal electronic devices should not be visible by pupils during the school day and should be switched off or kept on silent mode.

In very exceptional circumstances (e.g. an ill family member) a staff member may, with the permission of the principal, have their phones on for a period of time. An explanation should be given to the class in this case as soon as possible following the staff member's discussion with the principal.

Staff are reminded to be careful when using their personal mobile phones to contact parents. For privacy & personal safety, teachers should use the school phone or if personal phones must be used, the personal phone number should be withheld through the phone settings. If the parent/guardian is unreachable, the teacher should leave a message for the parent/guardian to contact the school office.

Personal phones should never be used to take photographs of children, or the school environment, or staff, or to store pupils' personal data or school-related data. Instead, school tablets or school cameras should be used for official school photography. *(Please see our Data Protection Policy for storage of photos.)*

Mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times. The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen.

Mobile Phone Use for Visitors to the school/ on school trips.

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy whilst on the premises.

The use of mobile phones or other personal electronic devices is not allowed in the classrooms.

Mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times. The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen.

Adults either in school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their cameras or mobile phone cameras or any other personal electronic devices to take pictures of pupils.

Adults, visitors or volunteers in school should only use their mobile phone within the confines of the school office.

A copy of the policy is shared with all staff members and is available for parents/guardians on the school website.

Ratified by Board of Management June 2020

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

Date of next review: June 2021

Signed: _____
Francis Fullen: Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Collette Dunne: Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____