

Coláiste Chiaráin



Mobile Phone/Electronic Media Device Policy

Note: This policy is effective from: **June 2017**, latest review/update **August 25th 2020**.

Introduction

The possession and use of mobile phones/ electronic devices by school students is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. Use of mobile phones (particularly with the advent of sophisticated equipment and camera phones) presents a number of problems, including:

- Mobile phones/electronic devices can be valuable items and might render a student vulnerable to theft.
- Mobile phones/ electronic devices (and their cost and level of sophistication - or otherwise) can make students objects of envy or disparagement and could have implications with regard to discipline and potential bullying.
- Even when apparently silent, the use of mobile phones/electronic devices for texting purposes could be potentially undermining of classroom discipline.
- Use of phones /devices with integrated cameras, sound recording facilities and internet access could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images and audio recordings.
- Students using mobile phones/electronic devices to cheat in exams.
- Students using vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using mobile phones.
- Students using mobile phones/electronic devices to menace, harass or offend another person.
- Students engaging in personal attacks, harassment of another person by posting private information about another person using electronic messages, taking/sending photos, video recording, audio recordings or objectionable images and phone calls (all criminal offences).
- Students posting images, video recordings, audio recordings of other students, staff members, school activities and facilities on the internet.
- Students using mobile phones/electronic devices to bully others in the school community - a practice which may have serious consequences for the victims well being.
- Privacy concerns arising from inappropriate recording and sharing of photographic, audio or video material without the subject's consent.
- Disruption to lessons through the receipt and transmission of SMS, and other media messages, telephone ring tones sounding, phone alarms sounding.

Policy for student use of mobile phones

This policy prohibits the use by students of mobile phones while on school premises; and unauthorized use of phones while on off-site activities.

1 Scope

The Mobile Phone/Electronic Media Device Policy also applies to students carrying mobile phones while in the school and while on the school grounds also applies to students during or on school excursions and extra-curricular activities.

2 Rationale

2.1. Personal Safety and Security

Coláiste Chiaráin accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also ever-increasing concern about children commuting to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance as to their child's safety and wellbeing.

2.2 Responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones onto the school premises to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document.

The decision to provide a student with a mobile phone/electronic device is made by parents / guardians and as such they should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone onto school premises.

Students who have a mobile phone/electronic device at school while under the school's supervision do so according to this policy.

2.3 Unacceptable Use

Mobile phones are required to be switched off while the student is on school property during term time and during state exam times. There will be no exceptions to this part of the policy. Students are responsible for any mobile phones/electronic devices which they are in possession of.

2.4 Theft or damage

Students are required to mark all their mobile phone /electronic devices clearly with their names. In order to reduce the risk of theft during the school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not advertise that they have them.

Students who bring a mobile phone /electronic devices onto school premises must have them in their school bags as soon as they arrive.

Mobile phones/electronic devices which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed into the school office.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing mobile phones /electronic devices that are lost, stolen or damaged whilst on the school premises or on school sponsored functions.

The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones/electronic devices stolen while travelling to and from school.

2.5 Inappropriate conduct and Sanctions

(a) **Any student whose phone/device is seen by a staff member, whether or not the phone/device is switched on will have his/her phone/device including sim cards confiscated. It will be kept in a secure place within the school. The phone /device will be returned one week later and only to a parent/guardian.** Students and parents/guardians are reminded that confiscation of a phone/device may result in very serious inconvenience for the student and parents/guardians. Failure to hand up a phone/electronic device for confiscation when asked by a staff member to do so, will be treated as a serious offence.

(b) Any students caught using a mobile phone/electronic device during Coláiste Chiaráin school exams or during Certificate examinations or assessments will face disciplinary actions.

(c) It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone/electronic device to menace, harass or offend another person. Where warranted, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardai. Students with mobile phones/electronic devices must not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person, via SMS messages/chat rooms/ social networking sites, taking/sending/uploading photos, phone calls. Circulating objectionable images will also be treated as a serious disciplinary issue. The recording of another person **with** their knowledge may result in disciplinary action. The recording of another person **without** their knowledge will result in disciplinary action.

Multiple breaches of the terms of this policy may result in the imposition of further sanctions including Suspension and/or referral to the board of management.

Note:

Parents and Guardians are reminded that in case of emergency, the school office remains the only acceptable point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly.

(School Phone: 061 - 397700)

Also, any student who is feeling unwell at school and needs to go home, must arrange this through through their Dean or school Management. Under no circumstance should students use their mobile phones to contact home and make arrangements to leave except through the front office.

3 Use of mobile phones/electronic devices on out-of-school activities.

- 3.1 Phones may only be used in a manner which has been permitted by the teacher in charge.

COVID-19 Amendment to Mobile Device Policy

In light of the current pandemic and the required changed approaches to sharing materials, access to lockers and work routines etc., the following amendment is being made to our Mobile Device Policy for the 2020/2021 academic year.

- In the event that a teacher requires students to use mobile devices, personal ICT equipment or mobile phones **for specific tasks in class time**, permission may be granted on a case by case basis for students to use devices when given permission to do so.
- This provision applies to classroom setting only. The ban on mobile phones and personal devices etc. during lunch, break and in all non-classroom settings still applies.
- In all cases where a teacher has not granted specific permission for the use of personal devices, the provisions of the School AUP and Mobile Device Policy apply.
- Students may not use any personal devices except when requested to do so by a teacher.
- All usage of personal devices must be in line with the Schools Acceptable Usage Policy.
- Any breaches in relation to the use of personal devices will be subject to the sanctions as set out in the schools Mobile Device Policy.
- When given permission to use personal devices, they may only be used for the purposes as directed by the class teacher. Any inappropriate use of devices will be subject to the sanctions/confiscations as set out in the Mobile Device policy.
- Where practical, teachers should proactively monitor the use of technology in the classroom to ensure the optimal use of the devices to support teaching and learning

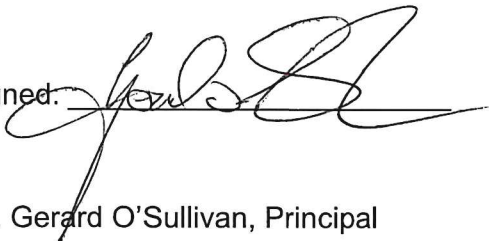
The default position relating to mobile devices is in line with the foregoing policy (that personal devices may not be used). This amendment permits the use of personal technology devices only where/when given specific permission to do so by class teachers.

This policy and COVID-19 amendment was adopted by the Board of Management of Coláiste Chiaráin on **August 25th 2020** and is due for review at the beginning of 2021/2022 academic year.

Signed: 

Date: 25/08/2020

Mr. Tony Brazil, Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: 

Date: 25/08/2020

Mr. Gerard O'Sullivan, Principal