



Policy for acceptable use of mobile phones and related technologies

Introduction

Omagh Integrated Primary and Nursery School accept that some parents/guardians give their children mobile phones, to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently.

Scope

- This policy provides teachers, pupils and parents/guardians with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones and related technologies during school hours.
- This policy also applies to pupils during school excursions and extra-curricular activities.

Review

Due to the ever-changing nature of information and communication technologies, this policy will be reviewed annually and, if necessary, more frequently in response to any significant new developments, such as guidance or legislation.

Exemptions

Exemptions of this policy can only be approved by the Principal and only in exceptional circumstances. Pupils may be allowed to use these technologies under the specific guidance of the Principal in agreement with the pupil's parent/guardian (s).

Guiding Principles

- Omagh Integrated Primary and Nursery School strongly discourage pupils from bringing mobile phones to school.
- Mobile phones are brought to the school entirely at the owner's risk and the school takes no responsibility for mobile phones taken into school. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
- If pupils bring mobile phones to school, the phones must remain switched off and left in the school office for safekeeping.
- Should parents need to contact pupils during the school day, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures, i.e. via the school office.
- The procedures applying to the inappropriate use of mobile phones, apply equally to the inappropriate use of related technologies with similar capabilities, e.g. messaging, recording (audio & video), photography etc.

- It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. The Principal may consider it appropriate to refer any such matter to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (P.S.N.I.).

Responding to incidents of mobile phone usage

If a pupil uses a mobile phone to, for example, make phone-calls on school premises, to send texts or to take photographs/video footage of either other pupils or staff, this will be regarded as a serious offence. The Principal will decide on appropriate disciplinary action, in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone during the school day, the phone will be taken from the pupil and handed to a member of the school's Senior Management Team (S.M.T.). The mobile phone will be stored in the school office and the child's parent/guardian will be contacted to collect the phone from the office.

If images (photographic or video) of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the pupil, in the presence of a member of the S.M.T. and the child's parent/guardian, has removed the images.

In exceptional circumstances a mobile phone may be retained until further advice has been sought.

A member of the school's S.M.T. will contact parents/guardians in all cases where inappropriate photographs/video/audio footage have been found. The P.S.N.I. may also be contacted.

This policy was reviewed by staff on **November 2015**

This policy was reviewed by Governors on January 2016

Signed: _____ (Chair of the Board of Governors)

Signed: _____ (Principal)

This policy will be reviewed in 2018.