

# ST FINTINA'S POST PRIMARY SCHOOL LONGWOOD

## REVISED MOBILE PHONE/PERSONAL MEDIA PLAYER POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

St Fintina's post primary school aims to create an orderly environment so that effective teaching and learning can take place. Live mobile phones may disturb this environment and violate the rights of other members of the school community. The school acknowledges the integration of mobile phones into the culture of adolescents and that they can be an effective communication device. In this policy the school wishes to strike a balance between the positive and the negative by promoting the responsible use of mobile phones.

### Scope

This policy applies to all students while on school grounds during the day.

### Relation to mission statement

While the school accepts that it is a pupil's right to own a mobile phone it also has a responsibility to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all members of the school community are safeguarded in accordance with its mission statement.

### Rationale

The misuse of mobile phones/personal media players can have a disruptive effect on the teaching and learning environment. There are also privacy, health and safety issues associated with the misuse of mobile phones.

### Policy

- Pupils who bring mobile phones/personal media players to school do so at their own risk and the school will not be responsible in any way for loss, theft or damage of these devices.
- If phones/personal media players are brought to school they must be switched off and out of sight *in the classroom unless the teacher is using the mobile phone as part of a teaching strategy. In this circumstance the phone is to be used for the specific task outlined by the teacher and must be powered off when this task is completed.*
- *Students may use phones for brief periods outdoors during recreational time for communication purposes only. If the phone is used to take photographs, record or make inappropriate communication it will be confiscated and a possible sanction may be imposed.*
- All communication with home in respect of illness or emergencies is to be made through the school office. The school phone is made readily available, free of charge, for such communication. For safety reasons it is important that school management is aware of students leaving the school premises during the day so mobile phones are not to be used to contact parents for this purpose.

- Parents/Guardians who need to contact a pupil urgently may do so by calling the school office at **046-9555018** and leave a message on the answering machine, if the phone is unattended at that time. As the answering service is checked at regular intervals any messages will be promptly relayed to students.
- All other phone accessories and personal media players are covered under this policy

## **SANCTIONS**

***Any teacher has the right to check that a phone, which becomes visible, is powered off.***

1. If the phone is on the pupil will be requested to switch it off and put it away safely. A warning will be issued and the offence will be recorded. A repeat of this offence will result in the phone being confiscated by the teacher and deposited in the office. The pupil will be given the opportunity to switch off the phone but not to remove the sim card prior to handing it to the teacher. The phone may be retrieved after school. If the student refuses to comply then the matter will be referred to the school management and the pupil may be suspended from school.
2. Any student phone/media player which interrupts class through ringing, text alerting or making any audible sound will be confiscated by the teacher and deposited in the office. This will also be the sanction if a student is observed using a phone to transmit or receive calls or texts in class. The procedures as outlined in the previous paragraph will apply.
3. If a phone is confiscated on a second occasion then it will be held in the office until a parent/guardian can collect it. The parent/guardian will be notified that the phone has been confiscated. The student and parent will be required to give a guarantee that there will not be a repeat of this offence.
4. A phone confiscated for a third time will be held in the office for one week and will be returned to the student at the end of this term.
5. A fourth offence will result in the phone being held in the office for one week and will be returned only to a parent/guardian.
6. Any subsequent offence will result in the phone being confiscated for an additional week per infringement and will be returned only to a parent at the end of this period and the pupil will be placed on the school's Discipline System or suspended from school.

If at any stage the pupil refuses to hand over the phone s/he will be suspended from school for a minimum of one day.

**Monitoring**

This policy will be monitored by the School Development Co-ordinator and staff during the first year of implementation.

**Review**

The policy will be briefly reviewed one year after it has become official school policy. There will be a major review not more than 5 years from the date of ratification.

Team: Ms Dempsey, Ms McCoy, Ms McDonagh, Ms Hamilton, Ms Durcan  
Drafted in April/May 2008

Staff Consulted: 25<sup>th</sup> August 2008

Students Consulted: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2009

Parents Consulted: 24<sup>th</sup> March 2009

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Submitted for ratification by VEC: