St. Caillin's National School

Mobile phone and Electronic Device Policy

Introductory Statement

The board of Management of St. Caillin's N.S. recognises that the possession and use of mobile phones/electronic devices is not allowed among the pupils. In this policy, electronic devices such as Ipads, Chromebooks, laptops and interactive boards will be allowed on the school premises to assist in the children's learning.

Rationale

The main function of our school is teaching and learning. This is most effective in an atmosphere free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Therefore, the school does not allow the use of mobile phones by children during the school day. Electronic devices can only be used by pupils/teachers and SNA's to assist learning and teaching. We believe that a number of problems can be created by allowing such devices to be used in school:

- They can be valuable and loss/theft/breakage can cause stress and annoyance
- They are a source of envy among pupils which can lead to issues
- Even when kept on silent, checking messages and texting undermines learning and classroom discipline
- Almost all such devices have inbuilt cameras, the use of which can have consequences in the areas of child protection and data protection
- Cyber-bullying is an increasing worry. Mobile phones may be used to conduct bullying campaigns and keeping them out of the school may help limit instances of it within the school population

Relationship to School Ethos

The unauthorized use of mobile phones and other electronic gadgets contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment conducive to learning, a provision which is central to the mission statement and ethos of St. Caillin's N.S.

Aims

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones and electronic devices at our school.
- To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.
- To reduce distractions to children's learning

Guidelines

Guidelines for pupils:

The board of Management prohibits pupils from bringing mobile phones to school. For reasons outlined above. We ask parents to support us in this.

In case of emergency, the school office remains the first point of contact, should a child need to be reached.

Where a parent feels that it is essential that a child have a mobile phone during school, the following rules apply:

- Parents must send in a letter to the class teacher (annually) requesting permission for the child to bring his/her mobile phone to school. The letter will be kept in the child's file.
- The phones must be turned off and handed to the teacher each day, to be retained in his/her desk drawer. The phone should have the pupil's name on it.

Where pupils are found to have a mobile/electronic device in school without a parental letter or without having handed it up, it will be confiscated and only returned when a parent collects it.

Breaches of the above rules will be dealt with under the school Code of Behaviour. If a device is found to have been used inappropriately, to have inappropriate messages or to have been used to photograph/video members of the school community, it will be regarded as a serious breach of discipline and will be dealt with accordingly under the Code of Behaviour.

(Teachers will be encouraged to teach cybersafety lessons to children, as part of Stay Safe and Anti-bullying measures.)

The school will not be held liable for damaged/lost/broken phones.

Exemptions

Examples of some of the possible issues where exemptions may be authorised include:

- Diabetes blood glucose monitor and/or insulin delivery mechanism.
- Blood pressure monitoring.
- Seizure conditions where monitoring via a mobile phone app is needed.
- Mental health conditions, where communication with parents/guardians on an unrestricted basis is needed.
- Additional/special educational needs, for specific tasks relating to a student's visual impairment, hearing impairment, speech and language impairments.
- Access by an English as a Second Language (EAL) pupil to specific applications to support language.

Guidelines for Staff

During teaching time, while on supervision duty and during meetings, mobile phones/electronic devices will be switched off or put on silent/discreet mode, out of sight of the pupils.

If a teacher is using a phone for above reason, he/she should explicitly tell this to the pupils. Otherwise, a teacher's phone should be on silent and out of sight of the pupils.

Phones will not be used in sight of the children except in case of emergency. Call for school business should be made on school phone.

Guidelines for Tours/Outings

If a teacher is in charge of children outside of school grounds or school hours-tours, football matches, choir events etc., he/she should bring a mobile phone.

Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones on school outings/tours. They may bring cameras on school tours.

Smart watches and similar devices

Teachers and pupils may wear smart watches, Fitbits etc whilst in school for the purposes of monitoring physical exercise.

They may not be used to access messaging.

Where a teacher feels that the wearing of such a device is interfering with a child's concentration in school, he/she may remove it from the child, return it at the end of the school day and ask the child not to wear it thereafter.

Circulation

The policy will be available in the school office for parents/guardians should they request to view and it will be on the school website. This policy can be communicated by providing a written copy if requested, or by email.

Implementation/Ratification and Review

This policy was presented to the Board of Management in April 2026. It will then be reviewed in March 2029. However, changes in technology or in procedures may precipitate an earlier review.

Ratification of the policy of St. Caillin's N.S.

Signed: ____Pat O'Toole_____ Date: _April 2026_____
Chairperson School Board of Management

Signed: _____Orla Redican_____ Date: _April 2026_____
School Principal