



GILNAHIRK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mobile Phone Policy

1. Rationale

We recognise that mobile phones are now widely owned and used by primary aged children. In considering the benefits and the dangers of children bringing mobile phones into school, it is clear that the negatives strongly outweigh any positives. **As a consequence, and in keeping with the circular issued by the Minister for Education (2024/14), children in Gilnahirk Primary School should not bring mobile phones to school and only in exceptionally mitigating circumstances, after written request and consideration by the Principal, will permission be granted for a child to bring a mobile phone into school.**

General

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| (1) Concerns about mobile phone use in school. | (2) Acceptable use by children. |
| (3) Acceptable use by staff and Volunteers | (4) Acceptable use by parents. |
| (5) School trips and residential. | (6) Disclaimer |

(1) Concerns

- ✓ Misuse: The major concern regarding mobile phone use in school, is that the camera or video facility is used to capture inappropriate images and that these images are displayed or distributed via the internet.
- ✓ Mobile phone use can interrupt lessons, affecting the learning of the owner and others.
- ✓ Inappropriate content or images may be downloaded from the internet and displayed.
- ✓ Cyber harassment/bullying may occur via mobile phones
- ✓ Mobile phones may be damaged or stolen.
- ✓ Peer pressure may develop over ownership of latest/more sophisticated devices.
- ✓ On residential trips children often become homesick in the first few hours and unsupervised phone calls to parents made on mobile phones can result in unnecessary anxiety and worry on the parents' behalf.

(2) Acceptable Use by Children

- Children and parents should be aware that the school office is the first point of contact in all circumstances.
- If a child wishes to contact their parents, this can be done with their teacher's permission using the classroom phone, if appropriate, or via the school office.
- If permission has been granted for a child to bring a mobile phone to school, then the phone must be switched off and handed to the child's teacher first thing in the morning and collected from their teacher at the end of the school day. The mobile phone must not be switched on until outside the school grounds.
- Mobile phones must not be taken on trips or residential visits.
- If a child brings a mobile phone into school without permission, the phone will be kept safely in the school office. Parents will be contacted to collect the phone.

(3) Acceptable use by Staff and Volunteers.

- Staff and volunteers are not permitted to use mobile phones whilst carrying out any duty that involves supervision, teaching or contact with children, **unless the phone usage is directly linked to school business.**
- Phones must remain on silent at all times and calls should be made at break, lunchtime or outside working hours except in an emergency situation when the Principal or Vice-Principal should be informed.
- Phones should be switched off and kept out of sight at meetings.
- Phones should be kept in a concealed place and in courtesy to others; calls should be made and taken in a non-public area.
- Staff are asked to bring their mobile phones on all excursions and residential.
- Staff are asked to update school records when mobile phone numbers are changed.

(4) Acceptable use by Parents.

Parents should silence phones during meetings and performances. We would ask parents to inform the school when mobile phone numbers are changed.

(5) School Trips

- Staff are asked to bring their mobile phones on all school trips and residential.
- Parents are always given a land line and mobile number for contact purposes when their child is attending a residential.
- Children attending trips and residential may be permitted to contact their parents upon request to the supervising teachers but should not bring their own mobile phone.

(6) Disclaimer

Parents are advised that Gilnahirk Primary School accepts no liability for the loss, damage or theft of mobile phones which are brought into school.