

Mobile Phone, Smartwatch and Electronic Games Policy

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Introductory Statement:

This policy was drawn up in response to technological advances, which have seen a significant increase in hand held electronic 'gadgets' amongst the school population over recent years.

Rationale:

- Mobile phones, smartwatches, iPods, MP3's etc. are intrusive and distracting in a school environment
- Strategies must be put in place to reduce the intrusiveness of unauthorised technology in a school situation
- Some electronic devices may be harmful due to frequent use
- Mobile phones/smartwatches may be used to conduct bullying campaigns

Relationship to School Ethos:

The use of mobile phones, smartwatches and other electronic games contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment and is not conducive to learning - a provision which is central to the mission statement and ethos of Kilbonane National School.

Aims:

- To ensure a "technology free" school environment
- To lessen intrusions on and distractions to children's learning

Definitions:

A smartwatch is defined as any watch that can be connected to a smartphone and notifies the user of incoming calls, e-mail messages, and notifications from applications.

For the purposes of this policy, any watch that can perform 'smart' functions beyond telling the time and counting steps is considered a smartwatch.

(For example: a 'Fitbit' that tells the time and counts steps is not considered a smartwatch but if it has any additional 'smart' functions, it is then considered a smartwatch)

Internal School Procedures:

The following are the guidelines for mobile phone/electronic games usage in the school:

- Children are not allowed to use mobile phones/smartwatches/electronic games during school hours
- Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones, smartwatches or electronic games into school. In exceptional circumstances, children may be allowed carry a phone as parents may need to be contacted. In this instance, a valid reason must be supplied by the parent to the school. The phone must be switched off and handed to the class teacher at the start of the day
- Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so through the school secretary using the school landline phone
- All electronic gadgets are banned, even during after school activities

- Any pupil who brings a mobile phone, smartwatch or electronic game to school risks having it confiscated and not returned until a parent comes to collect it
- Staff have access to the school landline if urgent calls need to be made to parents

Roles and Responsibilities:

All staff share in the co-ordination and implementation of this policy.

Evaluation:

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments added as new technology comes on stream.

Implementation:

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on 8 December 2021.
It will be reviewed when and if necessary.