



Mobile Phone & Digital Device Policy

Mission Statement

Ardscoil Rís aims to provide a holistic education, which is driven by a Catholic ethos. We strive to create a safe environment, which fosters inclusion, honesty, dignity and respect. The School community encourages the individual in their pursuit of excellence. We aim to promote among our students a sense of pride in their school.

The characteristic spirit of our school is based on vision and the values of the ERST charter. The five characteristics of an Edmund Rice school underpin the operation of Ardscoil Rís, namely;

- Nurturing Faith, Christian Spirituality and Gospel- Based Values.
- Promoting Partnership
- Excellence in Teaching & Learning
- Creating a Caring School Community
- Inspiring Transformational Leadership

Basic Principles

This policy has been developed in consultation with the Board of Management, parents, staff and students. This is a school-wide policy, for implementation by all staff, students, parents and the Board of Management.

Rationale

The wellbeing of our students is a key priority of the school. The use of devices is now an integral part of the lives of young people and we acknowledge the benefits that technology brings to teaching, learning and our broader lives. Digital technologies have an important influence on students' wellbeing with research showing that they can play a positive role in supporting high quality teaching, learning and assessment. These technologies help promote student engagement and enhance the teaching and learning experience.

However, their use needs careful consideration and management if they are to have a positive educational impact. It is also equally important to recognise that concerns have been identified including some risks associated with the misuse, abuse and possible overuse of these devices.

Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to;

- Support a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all members of the school community are preserved in line with our mission statement.
- Ensure that mobile phone usage does not disrupt the learning environment.
- Ensure that courtesy, respect and consideration to others are paramount at all times.

- Clarify the responsibilities of students, parents/guardians and staff with regard to mobile phones.

Policy Arrangements

For the purpose of this policy, 'Mobile Phone & Digital Device' will be referred to as 'Device'. Students may possess devices on school premises or grounds under the following conditions:

- The school does not accept any responsibility for these devices. They are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged devices.
- The device must be switched off and kept in the student's possession during the school day.
- Use of a device is forbidden while on school premises or grounds without prior permission.
- Using a device for the unauthorised recording of images or sounds is in direct breach of the Acceptable Usage Policy of the school and doing so may result in a breach of the Anti -Bullying Policy
- Students are advised to mark their devices with their names and use appropriate security measures to prevent unauthorised use of their device. Each student is responsible for all communication from their device and any image or recording on their device.
- In order to assist the school in implementing this policy; parents / guardians are asked not to arrange to contact students by mobile phone at any time during the school day. All student communication with parents / guardians must be made through the school office.
- Students participating in school related activities (e.g. Extra-Curricular Activities, School Trips, and Supervised Study etc.) must abide by this policy.
- In accordance with legislation in this area, it is a criminal offence to use a device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, any party involved may contact the Gardai.

Sanctions

If a student is found to be using a device on the school premises then;

- The device will be confiscated and placed in the Secretary's office. The subject teacher will sign and date the record sheet in the office. The device will be returned to the student at the end of the next school day.
- If the device is confiscated on a Friday, it will be returned to the student at the end of the school day but a two-hour detention must be served.
- In the case of a second offence, the device will be returned at the end of the next school day but must be collected by a parent/guardian.
- Failure or refusal to hand up the device to the subject teacher will result in suspension.
- More severe sanctions will also apply for repeat offenders. The device may be confiscated for 48 hours or more and will only be released to a parent/guardian following a meeting with the Principal/Deputy Principal.
- In accordance with legislation in this area, it is a criminal offence to use a device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, any party involved may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardai in such incidents.
- School tours: it will be at the discretion of the tour organiser whether mobile phones/personal devices may be brought on tours. Sanctions for such breaches will be applied in accordance with legislation listed.

Circulars, Guidelines, Policy and Legislation

Data Protection Act 2018

Circular 0038/2018

Acceptable Usage Policy

Video Recordings Act 1989

Anti-Bullying Policy 2015

Child Trafficking & Pornography Act 1998

Video Recordings Act 1989

This policy will be revised following consultation with staff, students, parents and the Board of Management in the academic year 2019/2020 and in accordance with circular 0038/2018.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 3rd April 2019 and will be reviewed in April 2020.