# Our Lady & St Patrick’s Catholic Primary School Mobile Phone Policy

**2022-23**

# Rationale

Mobile phones are now a feature of modern society and an increasing number of our staff and pupils own one. It is recognised that parents/carers may choose to let their child keep a mobile phone with them when coming to school for safety reasons to maintain contact after the end of a school day.

It is also recognised that mobile phones and smart devices today can present some safety and behavioural issues for our staff and children. These would revolve around:

* Distraction from learning.
* The high value of many phones
* The integration of cameras into phones leading to potential child protection and data protection issues.
* Access to unfiltered internet content within a school context.
* Phone to phone interconnectivity through internet access, Bluetooth, etc that provides the potential for the sharing of inappropriate content or illegal file sharing.
* The ‘always on, always contactable,’ nature of mobile phones that could provide potential for cyber bullying or the sharing of an individual’s location.

The school wishes to have a balanced response that:

* Recognises parents/carers wishes to allow their child to own a mobile phone and have it available at the start and end of a school day.
* Respects our children’s good behaviour and develops their self control.
* Ensures children and staff are protected from the potential negative issues described above.

To achieve this aim we will adhere to the following guidelines

# Children

* Phones must be clearly marked with the child’s full name.
* Phones must always be switched off (not on silent mode) on entering school.
* Phones must be ‘handed in’ to the school office where they will be stored for the day securely in a box and then returned at the end of the day. The phones should not be taken out for any reason without a staff member’s permission.
* Phones must not be used for any purpose whilst on our school site.
* If a child breaches these rules the phone will be confiscated and returned to the child after a discussion with parents.
* Must not use a mobile phone in or **out of school\*** in an inappropriate manner that involves any member of our school community. This could include:
  + Sharing inappropriate content with other children.
  + Showing inappropriate content to other children.
  + Forwarding or authoring offensive or slanderous messages.
  + Threatening or bullying through text or internet eg WhatsApp or other communication apps.

If the school is made aware of inappropriate usage they will work with the parents/carers of the children concerned to take appropriate action. In the first instance we will contact the child’s parent/carer to ask them to look at their child’s phone with us. If we cannot contact the parent/carer, staff will investigate the phone for inappropriate content. In all cases the phone will be confiscated and will not be returned until the investigation is complete.

**\***NB: Schools now have a legal duty to act upon behaviour taking place out of school that impacts on another child or a member of our staff.

# Parents/carers are requested:

* To keep mobile phones on silent or switched off when in arranged meetings with school staff.
* To keep within the guidelines of our School E-Safety Policy if using their phone for photography.

# Volunteers/Visitors

* Volunteers/Visitors should only use their phones in the school staffroom or in a secure office .
* Visitors to any school events may use their phone in line with our E-Safety policy.
* Any visitors to our school site will be challenged by staff if they observe that individual(s) using their phone(s) not in line with the above.

# Emergencies

* If a child needs to contact his/her parents/carers during school time they will be allowed to use a school phone.
* If parents need to contact children urgently they should phone the school office and a message will be relayed promptly.

# *Responsibility for mobile phones*

***The school accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones.***

***Any phone brought to school by a child is the responsibility of the child and their parent/carer.***