



Abbey Vocational School

Mobile Phone Policy
(DRAFT)

Feb 2017

Purpose

The following policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all the members of the school community are preserved. The school's policy on mobile phones / devices is therefore devised with the intention of ensuring that teaching and learning can take place without interruption and also with the intention of protecting students and staff from potential invasion of privacy, harassment or bullying.

Rationale

The Abbey Vocational School accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can speak with their child quickly, at any time.

However the Abbey Vocational School gives the assurance that during school hours, should a parent urgently need to contact their child/children (or visa-versa), this can be done using the school phone. It is vitally important to ensure that there is no disruption to classes from mobile phone and that they are not used inappropriately.

Policy

Where a student brings a mobile phone/digital device to school, it must be switched off and out of sight after the first bell in the am and until the last bell in the pm. This includes the period of time the student is on the school grounds during breaks and lunchtimes.

Students participating in school related activities (e.g. Study, Extra- Curricular Activities, School Trips, and Tours etc.) must abide by the rules governing these activities and have mobile phone/digital device switched off unless they have been given teachers permission to do otherwise. However, if it is necessary for the student to contact his parent/guardian, then permission to turn on a mobile phone must be sought from the supervising teacher. The phone must be turned off again at the conclusion of the conversation. The supervising teacher will ensure that this has happened.

We acknowledge that mobile phones may have a positive role to play in teaching and learning. Teachers may give permission for the use of mobile phones in classrooms and other learning environments. In these instances this takes place under strict supervision of teachers and as per AUP policy:

Extract from AUP policy:

- 1.Any student whose teacher wishes them to use a personally owned mobile device within school must read and sign the AUP.

2. The parent /guardian of the student must also read, sign and submit the AUP to the school office.
3. Students take responsibility for appropriate use of their device at all times. The school is not responsible in any way for the device or for its' use.
4. Students/parents/guardians are responsible for their own devices, including any breakages, costs of repair, or replacement.
5. The Principal and Deputy Principals reserves the right to inspect or monitor student mobile devices during school hours.
6. Violations of any school policies or rules involving a student device may result in disciplinary action, for a period to be determined by the school.
7. During school hours students are permitted to use their device for learning related activities only and only at the instruction of the teacher.
8. Charging devices in the school are not permitted.
9. Students may not use the devices at any time to record, transmit or post photos or videos of other staff or students. No images or videos recorded at school can be transmitted or posted at any time without the permission of their teachers.
10. Parents, guardians and teachers will familiarise themselves with all legislation regarding their use.

Outside of the above conditions, students are not permitted to use their mobile phones at all during the day, including at break or lunchtimes.

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact. The school assures parents that their children can be reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

If a student needs to make a telephone call during the day they must ask permission from the class teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal and a school telephone may be used, if deemed appropriate.

Confiscation and Sanctions

Students who are found using mobile phones in the school will have the phone confiscated. The following procedure will apply.

- The phone is to be turned off, in the presence of the student.
- The phone is to be handed into the office where the following details are recorded; the students name, the date, the class/period in which the phone was confiscated and the teachers name.
- The phone is then put into an envelope, sealed and the name of the student put on the outside.

- The phone is then lodged in a secure safe in the Deputy Principals Office. The phone may be held for up to five school days at the discretion of management.
- A replacement phone may be provided in certain circumstances.

Extra Curricular Situations

In the circumstances where students are travelling away to matches, debates, quizzes etc, students are permitted to take their mobile phones with them, in case it is necessary to contact home.

Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed in to the office.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. Their safety and security is wholly the responsibility of the student.

It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones. Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phone and/or passwords should not be shared.

Inappropriate Conduct

Any student/s found using a mobile phone to gain advantage in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the school.

Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the school.

Students using mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person by using SMS messages.

The taking, sending or posting of photos or objectionable images or comments is forbidden. Students using mobile phones to bully or harass other students or staff will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the school.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person (Section 10 of the non-fatal offences against the person Act 1997). Therefore it may be necessary for the school to inform the Gardaí and/or Child Protection/Support Services.

This Policy was adopted and ratified by the Board of Management of The Abbey Vocational School

Signed:

Signed:

 Chairperson

 Principal

Date _____

Date _____

Review Date _____