



Mobile Phone Policy

Loreto Secondary School, Bray, Co. Wicklow

June 2022

Introduction

The Mobile Phone Policy exists for the safety and protection of all members of the School Community. This policy is directly related to and should be read in reference with the school Code of Behaviour, the Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) and the Child Safeguarding Statement. This Mobile Phone Policy has been developed as per Circular 0038/2018 and in partnership with staff, students and parents and will be updated on a regular basis.

Rationale

While Loreto Bray accepts that it is a student's right to have a mobile phone, 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.

While it is accepted that technology, including mobile phones, are an important part of many young people's daily lives, parents may require their children to have a phone for a variety of reasons including safety and ease of contact. However, mobile phones have the potential to cause significant disruption to learning, safety and the efficient operation of the school:

- Having a phone reduces attention and subsequent memory during classes.
- Their use can potentially lead to students being subjected to bullying or inappropriate contacts.
- They can disrupt the learning environment.
- Camera functions can lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images.

The school's policy on mobile phones 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 harassment or bullying. It is also intended to increase face-to-face social interaction between students.

This policy was devised in line with the Mary Ward Compass document for Loreto Schools below:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Pb-Coxlkcn0T5dfZJgwGBokokST9eOA/view?usp=sharing>

Scope of this Policy

The Mobile Phone Policy applies to all students while they are in school, while they are on the school premises, and attending off-campus school activity. For the purpose of this Mobile Phone Policy, the term mobile phone includes all phones, smart phones, and related electronic and telephonic devices and equipment.

School Philosophy and Mission Statement

Loreto Secondary School, Bray is a Catholic girl's secondary school under the trusteeship of the Loreto Education Trust. Loreto Bray strives for the all-round development of the student, promoting knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and Catholic values. We affirm the personal worth and dignity of each student, respecting the many religious traditions and world views of our students and their families. We follow the Loreto philosophy of education by aiming to:

- Contribute to the spiritual development of our students in a safe and caring learning environment upholding the values of Justice, Freedom, Sincerity, Truth and Joy.
- Foster within our students care for others, mutual cooperation, equality, integrity, a passion for social justice and a love of learning.
- Develop the student's ability to ask and seek answers to perennial questions of meaning and values and open our students to the spiritual dimension of this search for meaning.

Use of Mobile Phones

- Mobile phones must be switched off, unseen and unheard once students enter the school grounds until the end of school day. If a student is using their mobile phone it is a breach of the mobile phone policy and sanctions will apply.
- Students are permitted to use their mobile phone following the conclusion of the final class of the school day. In doing so, students must adhere to the

school Code of Behaviour, the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and the Child Safeguarding Statement.

- Students attending supervised study must switch off their phone again prior to the commencement of after school study.
- Students participating in school related activities (e.g. extra-curricular activities, co-curricular activities, school trips and tours, etc.) must abide by the instructions of the teacher and / or staff members governing these activities.
- No student is permitted to use a mobile phone to take a photograph / recording (audio / visual) in the school or at any school event without the express permission of a member of staff. Students are not permitted to upload to the internet or online storage e.g. cloud / drive, or transfer by text or social media photographs / recordings (audio / visual) / digital images of other members of the school community without their permission and in the case of a student, without the permission of the parents / guardians of that student.

Procedures for necessary and emergency contact

- If Parents / guardians need to contact their daughter during the school day they are respectfully asked not to contact their daughter via their mobile phone. All communication must go through the school office.
- Contact with the school office may be made at 01-2867481 and a message will be given to your daughter or if required, your daughter may use, with permission, the office phone in emergencies.
- If a student feels unwell or sick during the school day, the student must report to the school office, and a phone call will be made to a parent / guardian if necessary. **A student who needs to go home for any reason during the school day must arrange to do so through the school office only.** This ensures correct procedures for leaving the school complies with school policy.
- Responsibility cannot be taken by the school authorities for students who arrange independently to go home without following proper procedure. Any such arrangement is a breach of the school Code of Behaviour and will incur sanctions.

Sanctions for Misuse of Mobile Phones

Sanctions

- The mobile phone (including its SIM) will be confiscated until the end of the following school day i.e. if a phone is confiscated on a Monday, the phone will be returned Tuesday after the school day ends.
- 3 PBPs will be recorded as a chronicle entry on Compass.

Procedures for confiscation of mobile phone

- The staff member will ask the student to turn off the mobile phone (if not already done so).
 - The student will hand over the phone (including its SIM) to the staff member.
 - The staff member will note on Compass that the mobile phone has been confiscated and 3 PBP's will be added to the student's chronicle on Compass.
 - The staff member will hand in the mobile phone to the main office where the phone will be placed in an envelope with relevant details (student name, year group, date and time of confiscation, etc.) and secured in the main office.
 - Parents / guardians will be notified via the school's educational management system Compass to advise them the mobile phone has been confiscated.
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- Incidents where students use mobile phones to bully other students or send offensive messages/calls will be investigated under the Anti-Bullying Policy. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone / digital device to menace, harass, intimidate or offend another person. As such, the Gardaí may be asked to investigate such incidents.

 - If a member of staff witnesses a student using a mobile phone to take photographs / recordings (audio / visual) / digital images and therefore in breach of the school's mobile phone policy, the staff member will ask the student for the phone (including SIM). The staff member will bring the phone

(including SIM) to a member of the senior leadership team (e.g. Deputy Principal).

- If a student refuses to cooperate with the procedures as outlined it will be considered an instance of serious misbehaviour and further sanctions may apply.

Collection of the Mobile Phone

- The parent / guardian may collect the mobile phone from the school office at the end of the next school day if it has been confiscated.
- The parent / guardian will be asked to sign the Mobile Phone Collection Record.
- If the parent / guardian cannot come to the school at that time, they may sign the record book prior to the due time for collection. Please note in this instance, the phone will only be returned at the due time.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

- Read the policy with your parents / guardians
- Be familiar with the contents of the policy. i.e. when a mobile phone is permitted to be used, when it is not permitted to be used, etc.
- Comply with and support the school's mobile phone policy

Parents / Guardians

- Read the policy with your daughter and ensure she is aware of her responsibilities in relation to this mobile phone policy
- Be aware of striking a healthy balance regarding your daughter's screen time and usage of her mobile phone. Technology is used for a wide variety of purposes, many of which may be educational and interactive, but it is important to be aware of the time spent on and usage of mobile phones.
- Support the school's mobile phone policy

Class Teacher / Class Tutor / Year Group Leader / Deputy Principal / Principal

- Implementation of the school's mobile phone policy.
- Implementation of sanctions in cases where there is a breach of the policy.

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- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. The safety and security of mobile phones is wholly a matter for students and their parents / guardians.

Conclusion

Ratified by Board of Management: 23rd June 2022

Review Date: June 2023

Signed: For and behalf of the Board of Management



Michael Denny

Chairperson of Board of Management



Emma Raughter

Principal