

Boyne Community School
Mobile Phones / Devices Policy
2024/25



Introduction

Boyne Community School recognises that mobile phones are now an integral part of young people's culture and way of life and can be of considerable value when used appropriately. However, we are also cognisant that phones can be a distraction, can hinder communication and socialisation and can increase levels of anxiety and stress for many students.

Mobile phones/devices can be a cause of difficulty in schools when/if they are used in 'cyberbullying', where students/teachers are photographed against their will, where some recordings/video recordings are made against the will of those featured etc. Mobile phones/devices can be a major distraction to students in the classroom or in the corridor. They are a threat to privacy in bathrooms or changing rooms. They can also cause isolation rather than interaction and integration of students. To ensure a healthy, engaging, and safe environment for all members of our school community we are a mobile/smartphone-free school during the school day from the beginning of the academic year 2024.

All students enrolled in Boyne Community School are required to place any mobile phone, device (turned off) in a magnetic pouch, which is locked once they are on school environs and can only be accessed if enabled by a staff member or when leaving the school environs.

Aims of the policy

- To optimise teaching and learning for students.
- To reduce the possible distractions to students and teachers.
- To provide an environment free from threat or invasion of privacy to members of our school community.
- To discourage cyberbullying among students in the school.
- To promote positive student interaction and enhance the well-being of all members of our school community.

Daily Procedure

Once a student arrives to school they will be asked to:

1. Turn off their phone.
2. Place their phone inside their Phone Pouch and lock the pouch.
3. The pouch is the student's responsibility for the school day.
4. Students must bring their Pouch to school with them each day.
5. The pouch must be placed on the student's desk during class. Regular checks will be undertaken during the school day and students must present their pouch to a member of the school staff when directed to do so.
6. At the end of the school day, students will unlock their pouch at an unlocking station.

*Students arriving late or being signed out by a parent will lock/unlock their pouches at the school office.

****Students who decide to not bring a phone to school must still have a pouch with a signed slip inside the pouch from home stating that they are aware that the phone is at home. Please see the slip below**

***** A student who requires their device for medical reasons may be facilitated. Prior written agreement is required with school management.**

Violations

Using a personal Mobile Phone During The School Day

1. If a student uses or is caught on their phone during the day, their phone will be confiscated and placed in the school office. The phone will be handed back at the end of the week and must be collected by a Parent / Guardian.
2. If the violation is a repeated offence, then the student will serve two lunchtime detentions and the phone is once again held for 7 calendar days.
3. Repeated breaking of this rule will be seen as a serious breach of school policy and may lead to further, and more serious sanctions up to and including suspension.
4. Refusal to hand up your phone is considered a serious breach of our school's Code of Positive Behaviour and may lead to further, and more serious sanctions up to and including suspension.

Damaged or Lost Pouch

Any loss or damage to the Pouch, which renders it unusable, will result in the student purchasing a new one immediately for €20.

Forgotten Pouch

If a student forgets their Pouch, the student must present it to the school office upon arrival and hand in their phone. The phone will be returned upon presentation of the pouch.

A record will be kept of incidents of this nature, repeat offences will lead to further, and more serious sanctions up to and including suspension.

Liability for mobile phones/devices

A pupil bringing a mobile phone/device to school is responsible for its care and usage at all times. It is a choice to bring mobile phones/devices to school and the school cannot accept any responsibility for damage or loss of any device. We advise appropriate insurance for any mobile device brought onto the school premises, as the school **cannot/ will not** cover any loss or damage.

Communication of the policy to the school community

A copy of the mobile phones/devices policy is made available to the whole school community through our website. An abridged version of the policy will be available in the student journal, this must be signed by both parents/guardians and students.

Implementation of the policy

School personnel have the responsibility of enforcing this policy. A copy of the policy will be circulated to all staff members.

Parents/guardians are requested to familiarise themselves with the policy and to sign the relevant section of the journal.

Students are requested to familiarise themselves with the policy and to sign the relevant section of the journal.

Monitoring of the policy

A record will be kept in the office of all phones confiscated. Recurring breaches of this policy will result in more serious sanctions.

Policy reviews

This policy will be reviewed by the school management authority periodically or when necessary due to changes in mobile device capabilities or school circumstances.

Extract for Journal

BOYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS A PHONE-FREE SCHOOL:

This means:

When a student brings a mobile phone to school they must:

1. Turn off their phone.
2. Place their phone inside their Phone Pouch and lock the pouch.
3. The pouch is the student's responsibility for the school day.
4. Students must bring their Pouch to school with them each day.
5. The pouch must be placed on the student's desk during class. Regular checks will be undertaken during the school day and students must present their pouch to a member of the school staff when directed to do so.
6. When leaving the school premises, students will unlock their pouch at an unlocking station.

Please Note:

- Students arriving late or being signed out by a parent will lock/unlock their pouches at the school office.
- Students who decide to not bring a phone to school must still have a pouch with a signed slip inside the pouch from home stating that they are aware that the phone is at home.
- Pouches must be kept damage/graffiti free and if deemed necessary a replacement will be required.
- As phones are turned off, the use of all ancillary devices for your phones can not be used.
- A student who requires their device for medical reasons may be facilitated. Prior written agreement is required with school management.
- Students found using their phones during the school day will have their phones confiscated and may receive a disciplinary sanction in line with our Mobile Phone Policy.

Because:

- Mobile phones can be a major distraction to students in the classroom or on the corridor.
- They also cause isolation rather than interaction and integration of students.
- Mobile Phones can be a cause of difficulty in schools when/if they are used in 'cyber-bullying', where students/teachers are photographed against their will, where sound recordings/video recordings are made against the will of those featured etc.
- They are a threat to privacy in bathrooms or changing rooms.
- The full policy on the use of mobile phones can be accessed from the school office.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable Usage Policy

APPENDIX 1

Slip for students not bringing a phone

This slip below is to be filled out and signed by a Parent/Guardian if a student/parent has decided not to bring a phone/device to school. This slip must be kept safe inside the pouch and should be available upon request from a member of staff. These printed slips are available from Year Heads and a record will be kept of all students no longer bringing their phone to school.

The following student or parent has decided to not bring / send a phone to school.

Student name: (PRINT):

Parent Signature:

Date:

Student Signature:



Boyne Community School
www.boynecs.ie

Date of policy adoption

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 6th of June 2024.

Signed: *JSh Bandon*

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: *6 May 2024*



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