

## **Mobile Phone, Smart Watch and Electronic/Smart Devices Policy (including all electronic devices with recording/photographic /video/online capability)**

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### Introduction:

This policy sets out the School's framework governing what is deemed to be the acceptable use of mobile phones/smart watches/electronic/smart devices, including all electronic devices with recording/photographic /video/online capability (recording may include audio) \* (**\*from here on referred to as mobile phones/electronic/smart devices**). The purpose of this policy is to prevent unacceptable use of mobile phones/electronic/smart devices by students, and thereby to protect the school's staff and students from undesirable materials, recording, filming, intimidation or harassment.

This policy will operate in conjunction with other policies, to include the Discipline Policy and Internet Acceptable Use policy. It is recognised that these documents must be reviewed and revised regularly in response to the ever-changing ICT environments at the school.

***Typically, such devices may include, but are not limited to; mobile phones, smart watches, tablets, handheld consoles, cameras, smart glasses, mp3 players, etc.) that have the capability to record audio/ take pictures/videos/media and/or send messages, upload/share content, access online content etc.***

### The Policy:

***\* 'School' shall be taken to mean from the time the student enters the school grounds at the start of the day to the time the student exits the school grounds at the end of the day. It shall also include all school extra-curricular activities, both on and off-site. At certain times, it may also include the environs of the school immediately preceding or following the school day.***

As a general rule, the pupils should **not** bring mobile phones/electronic/smart devices to school. We do realise however, that in certain circumstances, parents may want their child to bring a mobile phone/electronic device to school.

A permission form has to be signed by the parent/guardian if they wish their child to have such a device in school (see page 4).

Where a pupil brings a mobile phone/electronic/smart device to school, the phone/device must be:

- Clearly labelled with pupil's name.
- Switched off at the school gate, before entering school grounds.
- Stored in the pupil's schoolbag. Pupils are **not** permitted to carry a mobile phone/electronic/smart device on their person.
- Switched off until the pupil is outside the school gate after the school day.

***(The use of a mobile phone/electronic/smart device includes making/receiving phone calls, sending/receiving text messages, engaging with social media, recording in any means, (audio and taking photographs or video footage), accessing or attempting to access the internet, or by having the mobile phone/electronic device turned on.)***

In the case of an emergency parents may contact their son or daughter (or vice versa) through the main school phone line (045-432174) and **not** via a student mobile phone.

A parent who receives contact from their child during school times from the child's mobile phone/electronic/smart device must be aware that the child has not followed correct procedures *(except in exceptional circumstances, e.g. unless specific instruction is given by teacher to use the mobile phone/electronic/smart device)*.

Pupils are also **not** permitted to use mobile phones/electronic/smart devices during off site school activities, such as school tours and excursions without **permission** from the teacher.

Therefore, any use of a mobile phone/electronic/smart device at school can only be viewed on, as being used in an inappropriate manner.

The school will incorporate this policy in the school's discipline policy and will treat breaches as they would treat any other breach of school discipline.

The school accepts no responsibility, in any circumstances, for replacing lost, stolen, mislaid or damaged mobile phones/electronic/smart devices. The safety and security of mobile phones/electronic/smart devices is wholly a matter for pupils/parents. The school also accepts no responsibility for mobile phones/electronic/smart devices lost or stolen while travelling to and from school.

It is strongly advised that pupils use passwords/PIN numbers to ensure that unauthorised use cannot be made of their mobile phone/electronic/smart device (e.g. by other pupils, or if stolen). Pupils should keep their password/PIN numbers confidential.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone/electronic/smart device to menace, harass or offend another person.

Pupils using mobile phones/electronic/smart devices to bully other pupils or send offensive messages/calls/videos/media may face disciplinary actions as per the School Code of Behaviour.

Using any mobile phone/electronic/smart device to record in school may be seen as serious misbehaviour as per the School Code of Behaviour.

If a teacher has any suspicion that a mobile phone/electronic/smart device has unsuitable material stored on it or has been used to record/access unsuitable material, the pupil will be required to hand over the **mobile phone/smart watch/electronic/smart device** to a teacher and parents/guardians will be asked to call to the school to discuss the issue. We must always be aware that photos/videos can be taken, uploaded and even subsequently deleted within seconds. Every parent has the right to expect that school authorities will do all in their power to ensure that **all** children are safe and that the privacy of every child/adult is protected.

Where there is suspicion that the material on the mobile phone/electronic/smart device may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone may be handed over to the Gardai for further investigation. Parents will be informed in such circumstances.

**The Board of Management will take the abuse of mobile phones/electronic/smart devices very seriously.**

If a pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone/electronic/smart device turned on whilst in school without permission from the teacher, the mobile phone/electronic/smart device will initially be confiscated and kept in the school office for collection by the child's parent/guardian. It is the child's responsibility to ensure that any mobile phone/electronic/smart device is turned off whilst in school.

If a pupil needs to have a mobile phone/electronic/smart device at school with them, then parents/guardians must sign the official permission form. If a pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone/electronic/smart device, without this permission form having been signed, the mobile phone/electronic/smart device will be confiscated. This may be deemed as a serious breach of school rules, dealt with accordingly.

#### Communication/Circulation of Policy

The policy is available for viewing in the school office and on the school website. The policy will be made available to the parents of new children who enrol in the school.

#### Approval of Patron

With the approval of the patron, this policy will be published on the school website.

Ratified by Board of Management \_\_\_\_\_

This policy will be reviewed in \_\_\_\_\_

## **PERMISSION FORM**

Please review the attached school Mobile Phone and Electronic/Smart Devices Policy, sign and return this form to the Principal.

**(Please note:** Any pupil found to have a mobile phone/electronic device in school and without a signed agreement to this Mobile Phone and Electronic/Smart Devices Policy from both Parent/Guardian and Pupil, will have their mobile phone/electronic/Smart device confiscated and kept in the school office for collection by the child's parent/guardian.)

**This may be deemed as a serious breach of school rules and dealt with accordingly.**

Pupil's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class & Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Pupil**

I agree to follow the school's Mobile Phone and Electronic/Smart Devices Policy.

Pupil's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Parent/Guardian**

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read and accept the terms of the Patrician Primary School's Mobile Phone and Electronic/Smart Devices Policy.

I give my son/daughter permission to bring a mobile phone/electronic/smart device to school.

I fully accept that for the safety/protection of all pupils/staff that breaches of this policy may be treated as a very serious disciplinary issue.

I accept that If my child is found in possession of a mobile phone/electronic/smart device turned on whilst in school or during off site school activities (such as school tours and excursions) without permission from a teacher, the mobile phone/electronic/smart device will initially be confiscated and kept in the school office for collection by the child's parent/guardian.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***One copy will be returned to Parent/Guardian***

***One copy will be kept on file in school.***

***\*Mobile phone/electronic/smart device relates to mobile phones and ALL electronic devices (i.e. mp3 players, tablets, handheld consoles, cameras, smart watches, smart glasses etc.) that have the capability to record audio/ take pictures/videos/media and/or send messages, upload/share content, access online content etc.***

This policy is available to view online on School website or in hard copy by request.