

# Scoil Mhuire na nGael



## Mobile Phone, Electronic and Smart Devices Policy

### Introductory Statement

Scoil Mhuire na nGael is a co-educational Catholic primary school under the patronage of the Archdiocese of Armagh. Our mission is to provide a well ordered, happy and secure environment where the self-esteem of each child will be enhanced and the educational, spiritual, moral and cultural needs of each child is identified and developed with compassion, enthusiasm and due regard for the child's individuality.

This policy was drawn up in response to technological advances, and the increased usage of mobile phones and electronic/smart devices in our society, including pupils attending primary school. A list of devices to which this policy relates can be viewed in appendix A of this document. This list is not exhaustive and is expected to evolve.

### Rationale

- The use of devices, while in school, is for educational purposes only
- Mobile phones and/or electronic/smart devices have the potential to be intrusive and distracting in a school environment
- Strategies must be put in place to reduce the intrusiveness of unauthorised technology in a school situation
- Procedures must be put in place to ensure the safety of all pupils and staff within the school
- The school's policy regarding mobile phones and electronic/smart devices must be reflective of, and responsive to our Code of Behaviour; Child Safeguarding

Statement; Anti-Bullying Policy; Remote Learning Policy and Internet Acceptable Usage Policy

- To clarify the rules regarding the children's use of mobile phones and electronic/smart devices in Scoil Mhuire na nGael

### Relationship to School Ethos

The use of mobile phones and/or personal electronic/smart devices has the potential to affect the provision of a safe and secure school environment and is not conducive to learning - a provision that is central to the mission statement and ethos of Scoil Mhuire na nGael.

### Aims

- To promote a safe learning environment for all pupils
- To ensure the digital safety of all pupils and staff in accordance with our Child Safeguarding Statement and procedures

### Internal School Procedures:

The following are the guidelines for mobile phone and/or personal electronic/smart device usage in the school;

- Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones or electronic/smart devices to school, to school-related events in school or to offsite school-related activities. In very exceptional and limited circumstances, parents/guardians may seek permission, in writing, from the Board of Management for their child to take a mobile phone or other device to school. A specific application form for permission to take a mobile phone/ smart device can be requested from the school office. Permission to take a mobile phone and/or smart device are granted for one school year at a time and must be reapplied for on an annual basis, if necessary. For the purpose of using any type of electronic device (smart or otherwise) for a medical reason, medical certification must be provided along with application form for permission.
- The Board of Management reserve the right to revoke or refuse parental requests for permission to take a mobile phone and/or smart device to school if deemed necessary.
- In the event that a pupil brings a mobile phone or an electronic/smart device to school without prior permission from the Board of Management, whether he/she uses the device or not, they will be required to switch the device off and hand it over to their teacher who will store the device in the school office. Parents will be contacted to arrange collection of the device as soon as possible.
- Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so through the school secretary using the school landline or mobile phone. Parents who need to

contact their child during school hours may do so by calling the school landline 042 9336158 or the mobile phone 086 1384114.

- Children who are granted permission to bring a mobile phone or a personal electronic/smart device to school will give the device to their teacher at the beginning of the day (unless it is medically necessary for the device to remain with the pupil). The device can be retrieved by the child at the end of the day. The mobile phone or personal electronic/smart device must not be used while the pupil is still on the school grounds.
- Any misdemeanour in relation to this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our Code of Behaviour, Acceptable Usage and Anti-Bullying Polices.
- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones and electronic/smart devices. The safety and security of mobile phones and electronic/smart devices is wholly a matter for pupils/parents.

#### Staff use of mobile phones and electronic devices

All staff mobile phones and/or smart devices must be on silent during class time. Staff members are permitted to use their mobile phones during teaching/instructional time in exceptional circumstances only. In general, staff may only make/accept phone calls or read/send text messages during break time or in the event of an emergency.

Staff are permitted to use their own mobile phone for school-related business (if the school mobile or landline is not available to them at the time). However, in the use of a personal device for a school activity, staff members must adhere to all other relevant polices such as child protection, data protection and acceptable usage policies.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

All staff and parents/guardians share in the coordination and implementation of this policy.

#### **Evaluation:**

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments are added as new technology comes on stream.

#### **Implementation:**

This policy has been in place since October 2021. It was reviewed in October 2023.

Date of ratification: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of the Board of Management

### *APPENDIX A – List of Devices*

- Non-smart mobile phones
- Smart mobile phones
- iPad
- Android tablets
- Smart watches/fitness trackers
- Lap tops
- Chrome Books
- Any device capable of recording sound, images or videos
- Any device capable of sharing, storing or receiving sound, images, video or text