



Safe Use Of Digital Device Policy

St. John's Primary School, Coleraine

Principal: Mrs H. McDonnell

ICT Coordinator: Mrs J. Lenehan

Child Protection Teacher: Miss A McNicholl

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Work hard

Give everything a try

Enjoy the rewards



Introduction:

The pervasiveness of mobile digital devices (such as tablet computers and smart phones) in schools provides both educational opportunities (for learners and teachers alike) as well as management challenges which are different from those afforded by desktop and laptop computers. Research and advice indicates that, provided that those affordances are well understood by teachers and school leaders, and the deliberate use of digital tools, social communication environments and online resources which are easily accessed by mobile devices, is well prepared and planned, it can benefit learning and teaching inside and beyond the classroom. Similarly, there can be advantages for teachers' own professional learning from the use of mobile learning devices and for management and administration. Online safety, in all cases in schools and elsewhere, remains a paramount concern. It is essential not only that pupils and adults are kept safe online whilst in school and on school-organised activities, but that schools are energetic in teaching pupils how to act responsibly and keep themselves safe in the digital world.

(Department of Education Circular 2016/26)

Making and Storing of digital and video images:

When using digital devices, staff should inform and educate pupils about the risks associated with the taking, use of, sharing, publication and distribution of images. In particular, they should recognise the risks attached to publishing their own images on the internet e.g. on social networking sites.

Staff and volunteers are allowed to take digital/video images to support educational aims, but must follow school policies concerning the sharing, distribution and publication of those images.

Staff members should where possible use school equipment (school camera/iPad). They may use personal digital cameras on field trips but any images should be appropriately transferred back to a centralised area in the staff folder and deleted from their personal camera.

Care should be taken when digital/video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or school into disrepute.

All images will be deleted when they are no longer required.

Use on School Website:

Including images of pupils on the school website can be motivating for the pupils and provide good opportunities to celebrate and promote the work of the school.

- *Parental consent will be requested to cover the use of such photos at the beginning of each school year before using images on website or elsewhere (twitter/local press).*
- *Where possible, group photos will be used rather than full-face photos of individual children.*
- *Names of children will not be shared on website or on twitter.*

Use of Mobile Phones and other digital devices:

Rationale:

The policy provides teachers, pupils, parents/guardians with guidelines and instructions for their appropriate use during school hours. This policy also applies to students during school excursions and extra-curricular activities.

Pupils:

- *St John's Primary School does not allow pupils to bring mobile phones to school.*
- *The school takes no responsibility for mobile phones. Mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. Pupils are never encouraged to bring mobile phones to school.*
- *Should parents need to contact pupils during the school day, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures: via the school office.*
- *Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone during the school day, the phone will be taken from the pupil and handed to the principal. The mobile phone will be stored in the school office until the end of the school day. The pupil may collect the phone at the end of the school day and the child's parent/guardian will be contacted.*
- *Phones must **NEVER** be used to photograph other children within the school. There are children in school whose parents have opted for 'no photographs' in the consent forms.*

- *If a pupil uses a mobile phone inappropriately (eg. Phone calls on school premises, to send inappropriate texts or to take inappropriate photographs/video footage of either other pupils or teachers), this will be regarded as a serious offence and the Principal will decide on appropriate disciplinary action in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.*
- *If a pupil repeatedly misuses their mobile phone on school premises they will be required to leave the phone at the school office during the school day. The pupil would collect the mobile phone before leaving the premises at the end of the school day*
- *If images (photographic or video) of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the pupil, in the presence of a member of the Principal, Senior teacher, Child Protection Teacher or the child's parent/guardian has removed the images. A member of the school's SLT will always contact a parent/guardian before asking a child to delete material from their mobile phone.*
- *A member of the school's Child Protection Team will contact parents/guardians in all cases where inappropriate photographs/video/audio footage has been found.*

Staff:

- *Staff must have their phones on 'silent' or switched off during class time.*
- *Staff may not make or receive calls during teaching time. If there are extreme circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative) the member of staff will have made the Principal aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.*

- *Use of phones must be limited to non -contact time when no children are present.*
- *Phones must be kept out of sight (e.g. drawer, handbag, pocket) when staff are with children.*
- *Calls/texts must be made / received in private no-contact time.*
- *Phones will never be used to take photographs of children or to store their personal data.*
- *A mobile will be carried to sporting fixtures away from school or on an educational visit for contacting parents in the event of an emergency.*
- *In the event of an unplanned school closure (i.e. snow closure or a heating failure) the school texting service will be used to send each family a text message informing of the change of circumstances. It is therefore imperative that parents supply school with at least one up to date mobile number.*
- *This mobile phone policy will be shared with staff, students and volunteers as part of their arrival / training.*

Links to other policies

Esafety Policy

Online Safety Policy

Social Media Police

Child Protection Policy

Policy Review:

St. John's Primary School will update this Policy in the light of any further guidance and legislation and review it annually.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Ratification: May 2019

Review Due: Term 3 2020