

Mobile Phone and Digital Device Policy

Preamble

The aim of this policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from teaching and learning opportunities in a safe environment. Mount Sackville provides a safe, secure learning environment that promotes a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community.

It is envisaged that school management, staff, the Student Parliamentary Council and parent representatives will revise the mobile phone and digital device policy annually.

Before signing, the policy should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

This policy is directly linked to the: The Code of Behaviour, The Acceptable Use Policy, The Anti-Bullying Policy.

Rationale

While Mount Sackville Secondary School accepts that it is a student's right to have a mobile phone and/or other digital devices, the following policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where personal dignity and rights of all the members of the school community are preserved.

The school's policy on mobile phones/digital devices is 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 and bullying.

Mobile phones/digital devices are not to be used during the school day. This includes between classes, in class and break-time. The use of mobile phones/digital devices is limited to before/after school and during lunchtime.

1.1 If a student insists on bringing a mobile phone/digital device to school, the phone must be switched off and stored in a secure place (locked in her locker or carried in her bag). No student should have a mobile phone/digital device on their person during the school day.

1.2 No photographs can be taken or recordings, video or audio, made with electronic devices while on the school premises and during school related activities unless permission is given and suitably supervised. Using mobile phones/digital devices in such a way without permission can seriously infringe on people's rights.

1.3 In relation to the library, evening study, field trips, school tours and sporting events, special arrangements will be outlined in regard to mobile phones/digital devices, by the relevant teacher or school management.

1.4 Phones/Digital devices are forbidden in examination centres.

1.5 In order to assist the school in implementing this policy, parents/guardians are asked not to contact students by mobile phone/digital device at any time during the school day. Contact with the school may be made through the office at (01) 8214061 and students are directed to use the office phone in emergencies. A student, who wishes to go home for any reason during the school day, must arrange to do so through the school office and not independently by mobile phone/digital device. This ensures that correct procedures for leaving school before the ending of classes for the day are observed. Responsibility cannot be taken by the school authorities for students who arrange independently to go home without proper procedure.

1.6 It is strongly advised that students mark their mobile phones/digital devices with their names and use passwords to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones. It is good practice that valuable items should not be brought to school.

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

Sanctions for the misuse of mobile phones/digital devices

2.1 A student whose mobile phone/digital device disrupts class through no fault of their own (beeps in class, alarm goes off etc.) will be obliged to leave the mobile phone/digital device and its SIM card in the school office for the remainder of the day. The phone and SIM will be powered off by the student, placed in an envelope and given by the teacher into the school office to be securely held until the end of the day.

2.2 A student who is found actively using a mobile phone/digital device unsupervised or outside the agreed hours will be obliged to leave the mobile phone/digital device and its SIM card in the school office for phone detention. Initially the phone and SIM will be powered off by the student, placed in an envelope and given by the teacher

into the school office to be securely held. The phone will be placed in *phone detention* from 8:50 to 4 for each subsequent day until a week's confiscation has been served.

- 2.3 Incidents where students use mobile phones/digital devices to bully other students or send offensive messages or calls will be investigated under the Anti-Bullying Policy for students. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone/digital device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí in such incidents.
- 2.4 The school reserves the right to ensure in so far as is practicable, that the mobile phone/digital device contains no images or information which would compromise any member of the school community. If school management wishes to view the phone content, parents/guardians and students will be informed prior to this happening.
- 2.5 Breaches of this policy may also be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Principal/Deputy Principal/Deans/Class Tutor/Class Teacher
- Monitor implementation of policy
 - Implement sanctions in cases of breach of policy
 - Review Policy
- 3.2 Parents/Guardians
- Support the school policy on mobile phones/digital devices
- 3.3 Students
- Comply with rules on mobile phones/digital devices

Parents Signature _____

Students Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix

Phone Detention Contract

_____ (PRINT STUDENTS NAME)

I have read and understood the phone detention procedure outlined below. I agree to follow the procedure until the confiscation period has been completed.

Confiscated Period

From _____ To _____

Parents Signature _____

Students Signature _____

Management Signature _____

Date _____

Phone Detention Procedure

1. Switch off the mobile phone/digital device
2. Place the phone and SIM card into an envelope
3. Complete the envelope and sign the phone detention sheet
4. This must be completed by 8:50 in the morning
5. The phone may be collected at the end of the school day (4:00/1:10 on Wednesday)