

St. Conleth's Community College

Mobile Phone and Audio Equipment Policy

Mobile phones, MP3 players, ear phones, smart watches and audio equipment will **not** be *used or visible* in the vicinity of the *school grounds*.

The decision has been taken by the School Authorities that mobile phones, particularly camera phones with internet access may pose a threat to the personal security and safety of students in the following ways:

- A person being photographed without consent or knowledge is an invasion of privacy and can be extremely distressing.
- Incidents of bullying can be videoed using a camera phone and posted online.
- Bullying on social networking sites has become a matter of concern.
- Mobile phones can make young people targets for theft and for unwanted and inappropriate friendships online.

Mobile phones, MP3 players, ear phones, smart watches and audio equipment are a distraction for students and can disturb the learning and teaching in the classroom. However, mobile devices/phones have become an important and invaluable part of our modern lifestyle and the school recognises that *“young people need to be guided and supported to become good digital citizens. In a school setting, using digital technologies mediated by the teacher with the skills to exploit the potential of the technologies can be invaluable in equipping children with the skills to navigate the online world safely.”* DES, Circular 0038/2018

This Policy applies to the entire school campus which includes the school buildings, environs and all school related activities that occur on-site and off-site in the name of the school. Mobile phones should *preferably be left at home*. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. The safety and security of mobile phones is wholly a matter for students / parents.

Students may bring a mobile phone to school. If brought to school mobile phones must be switched off and stored throughout the day in student's school bag/secured in student locker.

'Switched off' does not mean 'Silent', 'Airplane' or any similar mode. The phone must be powered off. Students are not permitted to access or use mobile devices during the entire school day, inclusive of after school events/study and training. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the confiscation of the device. The school accepts no responsibility for the safe keeping of any items confiscated under the terms of this policy.

NOTE: In certain classes as pre-arranged by the class teacher, specific teaching and learning or research activities may require access to a personal mobile device. Such access and usage will take place under the clear, focused guidance and supervision of the teacher with defined learning intentions and once that activity is completed students will be requested and required to turn their mobile devices off and stow them safely in their bags. Such access is limited to that specific activity and is governed by the St. Conleth's CC AUP.

Students are not permitted to carry their mobile devices in uniform pockets (trouser/skirt/shirt/jacket). The School does not permit the streaming of music through mobile devices at any time in the school day. Ear-phones/ear-buds /speakers are not to be used nor are they to be accessed during the school day. Students should store ear-phones and/or ear-buds away in school bags and/or school-jacket pockets once on school premises. Failure to do so will result in the confiscation of these devices.

Parents wishing to contact their son/daughter are required to do so by making contact with the school office on 045-431417. Students needing to contact home during the school day for urgent matters will be facilitated via the school office.

Confiscated mobile devices will be held securely on site and parents will be required to come to the school and sign for the return of a mobile phone. This return-service will be available from 11 am - 1pm on Friday only. Any mobile device not claimed within one year and a day will be disposed of. School staff will act uniformly in accordance with this policy. Refusal to hand a mobile device over to a staff member, on instruction, will be dealt with through the St. Conleth's CC Code of Behaviour.

****It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve An Garda Síochána in such incidents****

This policy is being implemented to ensure the personal safety of all students. We would appreciate your cooperation in this matter as the best interest of the students is our main concern.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 6th February 2020