

# **Castaheany Educate Together National School**

## **Mobile Phone & Smart Devices Policy for our School Community**

### **Rationale:**

The possession and use of mobile phones and other smart devices by school pupils is now commonplace, even in the primary school sector. Appropriate use of mobile phones and smart devices are welcomed at CETNS and these devices are seen as valuable educational tools. At the same time, the school recognises the potential challenges/risks associated with the use of mobile phones and smart devices, some of which are listed below:

- Use of mobile phones and smart devices with integrated cameras could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images.
- Mobile phones and smart devices can be valuable items and could potentially be damaged in school or may render a pupil vulnerable to theft.
- Mobile phones and smart devices may make pupils objects of envy or disparagement and could have implications with regard to discipline and potential bullying.
- Mobile phones and other smart devices can be very intrusive, distracting and anti-social when used in a school environment.

### **Definition of Smart Device:**

A smart device is an electronic device, generally connected to other devices or networks via different wireless protocols such as Bluetooth, NFC, Wi-Fi, LiFi, 3G, etc. Examples of smart devices include but are not limited to iPods, iPads, smart watches, Kindles, gaming devices.

### **Aims & Objectives:**

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones and smart devices at our school.
- To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.

### **Guidelines:**

- The Mobile Phone & Smart Devices Policy is consistent with the school's Code of Good Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Acceptable Use Policies and any inappropriate use of mobile phones and/or smart devices will be treated in accordance with these policies.
- Pupils are not permitted to bring smart devices to school. These include, but are not limited to iPods, iPads, smart watches, Kindles, gaming devices.

- In exceptional circumstances Senior Leadership may give permission to bring and use smart devices in school.
- Pupils do not need mobile phones at school and are requested not to bring them to school. We ask for parents' co-operation in this matter.
- If, however, you feel that your child genuinely needs to bring their phone to school, please sign a permission form for your child and return it to the school.
- If a mobile phone is deemed absolutely necessary and the relevant form has been signed, pupils must:

**1. Switch off their phone at the outer school gates, when entering the school grounds in the morning.**

**2. The phone can be switched on again at the outer gates, when they leave the school grounds.**

**3. At 8.30 the pupil must give their phone to their class teacher to lock away until 2.10.**

**4. Children can collect their phone from their teacher at 2.10, or on a half day, 12.00.**

**5. Pupils may not bring their phone on school trips or events. It is the pupils responsibility to hand up and collect their phone each day.**

- If any pupil brings a mobile phone to school, without permission from the principal/class teacher, that phone will be confiscated and kept in the office until a parent comes to collect it.
- Even with permission, if a pupil is found with/using a phone during school hours, or if their phone rings/beeps in the classroom, that phone will also be taken to the office and the parents will be asked to come and collect the phone.
- In the event of the pupil continuously breaking the above rules, Senior Leadership will inform parents that the pupil is no longer permitted to bring their mobile phone to school.

#### **Guidelines for Parents:**

- Parents must complete a Mobile Phone consent form and return to school if they wish their child to be permitted to bring a mobile phone to school.
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains the first point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly, and helped in any appropriate way.
- If a staff member has reason to believe that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, pupils will be required to hand over the phone to a teacher and parents will be asked to collect it from the school. Where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone will be handed over to the Gardaí for further investigation. Parents will be informed in such circumstances.
- 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 pupils/parents.
- The school accepts no responsibility for pupils who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

**Staff:**

- Staff working directly with children must keep their phones on 'silent' during teaching time/yard duty.
- Phone calls may not be made or taken and text messages may not be sent or read during teaching time/yard duty unless in exceptional circumstances.
- If a staff member needs to make/take an important call they may organise supervision for their pupils and leave the room to do so.
- In certain situations staff may use their phone during lessons to access lesson content / resources when the teaching PC is in use.
- Teachers are encouraged to be discerning in their use of mobile phones as an educational tool during class lessons.

This policy was created in consultation with staff, parents and the Board of Management, The policy was ratified by the Board of Management and will be reviewed in June 2020 or before if deemed necessary by the BOM.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson).      Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CETNS Mobile Phone Permission

Name of pupil:
Pupil's mobile phone number: (for policy monitoring and child protection safeguarding)
Class:
I believe that my child needs to bring their mobile phone to school each day because:
I understand that my child will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Switch off his/her phone each morning when they enter the school grounds and will give it to their class teacher at 8.30.</li><li>● Collect their phone from their teacher at home time.</li><li>● Have their phone confiscated if it is used inappropriately. The phone will be kept in the office until I will come and collect it.</li><li>● Follow all the procedures and rules outlined in the CETNS Acceptable Use Policy and Code of Good Behaviour Policy in relation to the use of mobile phones.</li></ul>

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

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

**\*Storage and retention of this data is in keeping with our Data Protection Policy.**