



North Dublin Muslim National School

Ratoath Road

Dublin 7

Phone Policy

October 2018

Introduction

This policy was formulated in consultation with the teaching staff, ancillary staff and Co-Managers of the North Dublin Muslim National School in May 2015 and reviewed in 2017/2018. In accordance with circular 38/2018, the views of the school's Parents' Association were sought when reviewing this policy.

At North Dublin Muslim School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. This policy on the use of mobile phones and landline phones in the school has been drawn up in the best interest of pupil safety and staff professionalism. Readers of this policy should also refer to the school's Internet Acceptable Use policy.

Aim

The aim of the phone policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through the establishment of clear and robust acceptable use guidelines for pupils and staff.

Guiding Principles

- It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.
- It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.
- When mobile phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.
- It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras and videos.
- The use of all mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to take any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Code of conduct

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- Know how to minimise risk.
- Avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.

- Are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- Are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

Use of mobile phones

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

Pupils

- The school does not encourage its pupils to bring mobile phones to school, and all pupils have access to the phone in the office when necessary, e.g. if they need to call home in case of sickness. However, we do acknowledge that some pupils travel long distances to school every day, and parents may request that their child takes a mobile phone to school so that they can be contacted before or after school.
- If, in the event that a parent wishes for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school, the child should ensure that the phone is switched off and kept in their school bag (left at the owner's own risk)
- If a child forgets to switch off their phone and it rings or receives an alert, the child will be given a verbal warning and the phone must immediately be switched off.
- If a member of staff finds a child using a mobile phone during the school day, it will be confiscated until the end of the school day.
- If they are found using the phone on a second occasion in the same academic year, the teacher will keep the phone until the end of the day and a note will be written to the parents.
- Finally, if it used for a third time, the phone will be sent to the office, where the principal will contact parents in relation to the issue.
- Any child found to be taking a voice or video recording of another child or staff member will have their phone confiscated immediately. Parents will be contacted and an investigation will take place which may result in the issuing of further sanctions.
- This code of conduct applies to school tours and other outings from the school.

Staff

- Staff must have their phones on 'silent' or switched off during class time.
- Staff may not make or receive personal calls or send/receive texts during teaching times/contracted hours. If there are extreme circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative) the member of staff should make the Principal aware of this and will have discussed the need to take the emergency call.
- Making/taking calls and sending/receiving texts on mobile phones must be limited to non-contact hours.
- Staff are responsible for their own mobile phone at all times in the school.
- Phone calls are not permitted in the staffroom.
- Phones should never be used to take photographs in which children can be identified.

- Phones should never be used to take photographs of pupil's personal information.
- It is also advised that staff use the phone's security features to protect data in their own phone.

Use of School Phone

- Staff are not permitted to use the school phone for contacting Directory Enquiries.
- In the event that they are unable to find a phone number, staff are encouraged to use a search engine online to locate the number.
- Staff are not permitted to use the school phone for personal calls.

Ratification and Communication

This mobile phone policy was ratified by the Co-Managers in May 2018. A copy of the ratified policy was distributed to all staff in the school. This policy is available to view on the school website.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____