



**St. Colman's College**

**Mobile Phone & Electronic Devices  
Policy**

March 2022

## Link to the Mission Statement

Coláiste Cholmáin, a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School for boys only, aims to be a Christian community which respects all members of staff and nurtures each and every student to achieve maximum potential and to develop the whole person within a caring and respectful school. This policy has been developed in line with our mission statement which has the care of students at its core. The school believes that respect for the individual is essential to the smooth and efficient running of a school where effective teaching and learning can take place and individual students are supported in achieving their full academic and personal potential. We strive to achieve this in a healthy, safe and inclusive environment where learning is valued and the rights and responsibilities of all are respected

## Rationale

St. Colman's College values the rights and responsibilities of all staff and students. In order that effective teaching and learning can take place the school community has formulated this Mobile Phone Policy. Students are expected to always show respect and courtesy for each other, for their teachers, for the staff of the school and for all members of the wider community. Phones are an integral part of our lives. While this is a positive development, concerns have been identified including some risks associated with the misuse, abuse, and possible overuse of these devices and the various associated technologies.

***The Wellbeing of the students of the College is our priority. Our policy is guided by the following belief that we “disconnect from tech in order to reconnect with ourselves, with others and with the world around us.”***

*Note: The term 'mobile phone' in this policy denotes any electronic device, including, but not limited to, mobile phones, tablets, and smart watches.*

## Links to other Policies

Code of Behaviour and Responsibilities

Anti-Bullying Policy

Child Safeguarding Statement

Acceptable Use Policy

Digital Learning Policy

## Responsible Use

### **Students need to acknowledge that it is a privilege to be permitted to bring mobile phones to school.**

1. Students must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading or offensive images. The transmission of some images/information can be a criminal offence and will be dealt with as such by the school.
2. Cyber-bullying will not be tolerated and will be followed up by the College as serious misbehaviour. The College will invoke the necessary sanctions as laid out in the school's Code of Behaviour and Responsibilities and the Anti-Bullying policy.
3. St. Colman's College aims to provide effective teaching and learning in a safe and caring atmosphere. Phones can disrupt effective teaching and learning and irresponsible use can lead to child protection and data protection being compromised.

*NOTE: Responsibility for the phone rests with the student and the school accept no financial responsibility for damage, loss or theft.*

### **Rules of this policy**

1. Students must ensure that mobile phones are in their bags, switched off or 'on silent' during class. Without the express permission of a teacher a student may not take out their mobile phone either to use it or charge it. On occasion a teacher may ask the class to look at their phones for a particular educational purpose. When this activity is complete the teacher will instruct the students to put their phones away again.
2. Junior students are not permitted to use a mobile phone for social purposes during the school day. All students must have their phone on silent or switched off on the corridors. This also includes anywhere outside and around the main school building e.g. walking to and from the prefabs, art room, engineering and construction rooms etc.
3. The College aims to provide effective teaching and learning in a safe and caring atmosphere. Phones can disrupt this and irresponsible use can lead to child protection and data protection being compromised. This means that phones must not be used for making calls, checking the time, texting, used as a calculator or used to replace a book.
4. Head phones must not be worn during or between classes, for reasons of safety and courtesy.
5. While off the school grounds but on school business (e.g., travelling to/from another school campus, games, tours, field trips etc.) mobile phones must be switched off unless the supervising staff member or person in charge states otherwise.

6. Parents/guardians are asked not to contact students by mobile phone during the school day or to make any arrangement which would result in the student breaking the school rules in relation to mobile phones. Students who feel unwell must report to the office/DP who will contact home. This ensures that the correct sign-out procedures for leaving the school grounds are followed. Any necessary contact between students and parents/guardians can be made with a student by phoning the school office at 094 – 9371442.
7. To protect the privacy of all members of the school community, the use of phones / cameras / videos / voice recorders to record is strictly prohibited on the school premises / grounds at all times, or on any school-related activity. The school authorities reserve the right, if deemed necessary, for staff members to examine the device in the presence of the student and school management. Any individual recorded or filmed without permission is advised that they are entitled to seek legal counsel.
8. Students are strictly prohibited from publishing (including on the internet on any platform), printing, copying, texting, emailing or otherwise sharing any such recordings and/or images except where expressly permitted by staff, management and school policies.
9. Recording includes posting images/sounds of other students/staff members on any social media platform. Depending on the nature of the content, the school reserves the right to pursue redress and to deal with the matter e.g., by contacting Gardaí, legal advice, etc. It should be noted that criminal or civil action may be taken if a member of staff or student has been photographed or recorded without their permission.
10. Students are not permitted to use mobile phones or any other device to harass, bully, or intimidate other students, staff, management or any other third party.
11. The sharing of explicit images of oneself or others, is unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences for those involved.
12. The school reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities. Mobile phones cannot, under any circumstances, be taken into examination rooms. Breach of this rule will lead to invalidation of that examination and potentially other examinations.

**Rules 7 to 12 are very serious offences and will invoke the necessary sanctions as laid out in the school's Code of Behaviour and Responsibility and the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.**

**Should a student be found using his phone during the course of the school day and refuse to hand the phone up to a teacher, they will be brought immediately to the main office where a Parent/Guardian will be contacted and asked to take the student off the school premises for the remainder of the day.**

***Students who breach this policy and use a mobile phone without permission or use it for harmful purposes as laid out above, will be required to immediately hand over the***

***phone they are using to a member of staff on request. Any staff member has the right to confiscate a personal electronic device; this includes a mobile phone. In the event that the student claims that the phone is not their property they must still surrender the phone to the staff member to allow the staff member investigate the claim. Failure to adhere to these stipulations will lead to sanctions being applied.***

## **Sanctions**

***In the event of a student failing to comply with the above school policy the following sanctions will apply;***

### **First Offence**

On the first offence, the phone will be removed from the student and brought to the Deputy Principal's office. The DP will hold the phone until the end of the school day. The student must collect the phone from the Deputy Principal.

### **Second Offence**

Should a student be found to be using a phone for a second time, the phone will be removed from the student and brought to the Deputy Principal's office. On this occasion, the phone will be returned the day after the offence (e.g. If a phone is confiscated on Tuesday, it cannot be collected until Wednesday evening at 4pm and so on). The DP will store the phone securely. Parents/Guardians are the only persons authorised to collect the phone.

### **Third and Subsequent Offences**

Should a student be found to be using a mobile phone on a third or subsequent occasion, the phone will be removed from the student and brought to the DP's office. On this occasion, the phone will be returned to a parent the day after it is taken at 4pm and the student will be banned from bringing the phone to school for a week. Any further offences will result in the phone being banned from school completely.

If a student persists to breach the rules as laid out in this policy, then the parents/guardians and student will be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal to discuss the issue. Furthermore, if no resolution to the breach of policy can be found, the Parent/Guardian may be requested to attend a Board of Management Meeting.

*Note: All confiscated mobile phones will be stored securely and all offences will be recorded.*

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

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