

Mobile Phone Policy

Mobile Phone, Recording Devices and Internet Policy

Ballyhaunis Community School recognises that it is a student's right to carry a mobile phone to school and we acknowledge the positive aspects of this in terms of personal security. Nonetheless, this right cannot compromise or disrupt teaching and learning. Therefore, student's mobile phones are expected to be powered off at all times when on the school premises. The one exception to this will be in instances where students are asked to power their Mobile Phones on for the purposes of Teaching & Learning.

Urgent phone calls to or from a student will always be facilitated through the office. Parents/Guardians are asked to cooperate with this policy by refraining from making calls/texts to their daughter's/son's mobile phones during the school day.

It is strongly advised that students use pins/passwords to ensure that unauthorised use cannot be made of their phones.

There are potential dangers for the school community (pupils, parents, visitors, staff, coaches, teaching staff, management, trustees) stemming from the misuse and abuse of electronic media. As a result, the school will rigorously endeavour to protect the personal dignity and right to privacy of all the members of the school community.

The misuse of mobile phones, electronic recording devices, digital media or the Internet is a serious breach of the School Code of Behaviour. Ballyhaunis Community School will respond appropriately in such cases and will have the full range of sanctions open to it.

Mobile Phones

Students must ensure that mobile phones are switched off at all times while on the school grounds. This includes the period of time each student is on the school grounds before commencement of the first class, during the small break, during lunch and after the last class of the day. If attending evening study students should ensure that mobile phones are switched off for the duration of study also.

The one exception to this will be in instances where students are asked by their teacher to power their Mobile Phones on for the purposes of Teaching & Learning.

While off the school premises, but on school business (e.g. games, field trips etc), mobile phones must be switched off. However, if it is necessary for the student to contact his/her parent/guardian, then permission to turn on a mobile phone must be sought from the supervising teacher. The phone must be turned off again at the conclusion of the conversation. The supervising teacher will ensure that this has happened.

Switched off does not include 'Silent', 'Meeting' or any similar mode. The phone must be powered off.

Students found in contravention of the above will have phones confiscated. Parent's/Guardian's will be contacted to inform them that a phone has been confiscated and it can be collected at the parent's/guardian's earliest convenience **after the end of the school day (4.00 pm)**. A student should ensure that his phone is powered off before being surrendered to the teacher.

The name of the student and other relevant details will be recorded.

1. A student who refuses to surrender a phone found in his/her possession, which is not turned off, will be considered to have committed a serious breach of the School Code of Behaviour.
2. In the case of second and subsequent offences, the school will implement its Code of Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures.

3. An incident where mobile phones are used to bully or harass a member of the school community is a serious breach of the School's Code of Behaviour. In such cases the phone will be confiscated at the principal's discretion. It should be noted that it is an offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí in such incidents.
4. The school accepts no responsibility for damage to or loss of the phone.

The management and staff of Ballyhaunis Community School are appreciative of students' and parents' ongoing support of our efforts to maintain and foster the positive use of technology in a caring and safe learning environment.

Recording Devices and Internet: Mobile Phones with cameras and recording capabilities; multi-media recording devices (audio and visual)

While on the school premises or when off the premises on authorised school business (e.g. games, field trips etc):

1. Students must ensure that recording devices are switched off at all times.
2. Photographs cannot be taken, nor can recordings (audio or visual) be made, of a member of the school community without his/her express permission and the permission of the school Principal/Deputy Principal. Using phones or any other recording devices to record a person without appropriate authorisation, will be considered a serious breach of the School's Code of Behaviour.

The Internet is an excellent educational tool and the school encourages its use. The school encourages parents/guardians, pupils and teachers to be informed of Internet safety and best practice.

1. Students must observe good etiquette when online in their representation of and comments on members of the school community and about the school itself.
2. Students will not upload, download, send or forward any material on the Internet that is obscene, defamatory or intended to annoy or harass a member of the school community.
3. No photographs of, or recordings (audio or visual) of, or comments about a member of the school community can be uploaded to the Internet without his/her express permission and the permission of the school Principal/Deputy Principal.
4. Instances where the Internet is used to insult, offend, slander, defame, harass or bully a member of the school community by another member of the school community is a serious issue and will be treated accordingly. Any student who uses the Internet as a vehicle to insult,

offend, harass or bully another student or teacher will be deemed to have committed a serious breach of the school discipline code and the school will have full recourse to the range of sanctions available. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí in such instances.

Serious breaches of the School Code of Discipline will be dealt with by the appropriate Year Head, and/or the Deputy Principal/ Principal and may be reported to the Board of Management.

Signed: *Ann Hosty*

Date: 15/02/20

Chairperson