



Scoil Phobail Beál Átha h-Amhnais

BALLYHAUNIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

David McDonagh *Principal*
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Update to Mobile Phone Policy

Dear Parent/Guardian/Student,

Students are currently allowed to carry their phones with them during the school day provided that they are powered off. The logic behind this is to allow students access to their phones on occasion, under teacher supervision, to assist with Teaching & Learning. This provision has been in place for a number of years now and has been quite beneficial at times.

However, it has become increasingly obvious in recent times that the value of this measure is outweighed by the negative impacts of phones on school life and student wellbeing. Increasingly we are dealing with very unsavoury incidents that revolve around mobile phone use. It is obvious to us that mobile phones are a real distraction to students during the school day and also contribute to situations that cause students unnecessary stress.

Consequently, it has been decided to remove this provision which allows access to mobile phones in the classroom with immediate effect. The clear message we want to give is that students do not require mobile phones in BCS and we would encourage them to leave their phones at home. If you son/daughter requires access to a phone for reasons around transport then they may be permitted to have a phone in school. In such cases the expectation is that the phone will be placed in the locker for the duration of the school day. Special provision will of course be made for students who require phones for medical reasons.

If parents wish to contact students and vice versa during the school day this can be done through the school office. This facility should only be used for pressing matters and not for routine issues that can be dealt with out of school.

Please note that students will no longer be able to use their phones to pay for purchases at the school canteen. Alternative arrangements (use of Bank/Revolut Cards/Cash) need to be put in place in advance of the return to school as no exceptions will be made.

Students found to be using their phones in school will have their phones confiscated and will be dealt with through the disciplinary process. A parent/guardian will have to collect the phone in the event of repeat offending.

I have no doubt that this measure will have a positive impact on student engagement in the classroom and student wellbeing overall. For those reasons I would greatly appreciate your support and co-operation on this matter.

David McDonagh

Principal