

Mobile Phone Policy

Harold's Cross N.S.

Reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on-
17th of April, 2018

Signed: Dr. Treasa Leahy, Chairperson

Dr T. Leahy

Mobile Phone Policy for Staff and Pupils at Harold's Cross N.S

Introductory Statement:

This policy was drawn up in response to a directive by the Board of Management and in response to the increased technological advances which have seen a significant increase in the use of hand held equipment among the school population. It was reviewed in March 2018 in light of the implementation of the Children First Act, 2015.

Rationale:

Mobile phones etc are intrusive and distracting in a school environment. They can also be used as means to engage in bullying behaviour. The use of mobile phones is not conducive to learning which is central to the mission statement and ethos of our school.

Aim of this policy:

To reduce intrusions on and distractions to the teaching and learning in Harold's Cross N.S.

Internal School Procedures:

For Staff:

Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff in working with children, it is vital that staff be engaged with children at all times. The following applies to staff while attending staff meetings or in- service training within or outside the school.

Personal Calls:

Staff may not make or receive personal call or texts during pupil contact hours or during staff meetings.

Mobile phones are not allowed at staff meetings.

In cases of emergency, the office phone is available at all times to receive emergency calls. Staff will be notified immediately and cover provided so as to allow the staff member take the call. All staff should provide next of kin with the school number in the event of an emergency.

Exceptional Circumstances:

The principal may allow activation of personal mobile phones in the classroom and at staff meetings in exceptional circumstances. Staff are to consult with the school principal to seek permission in these exceptional situations.

Work Related Calls:

Staff has access to the school landline for all work related matters.

In consultation with the Principal, classroom supervision will be arranged if a member of staff has to contact other professionals or outside agencies in relation to a particular child. On any field trips teachers may use the school mobile phone or their own personal phone for school related business or as a point of contact with the school.

Personal phones may not be synchronised with school computers/laptops etc.

Personal phones may not be used to take photos of the children.

All school staff and visiting tutors/instructors are responsible for the safe custody and security of their personal mobile devices. The BoM will not entertain claims for loss of mislaid or stolen phones.

Pupils:

- Only pupils in fifth and sixth class are allowed mobile phones.
- All mobile phones must be powered down and switched off at the school gates and handed up to the teacher on arrival in the classroom. Mobile phones not handed up at the beginning of the school day or, use of a mobile phone by a pupil during the school day will result in the phone being confiscated and handed back at a time decided upon by the principal.
- Children who need to contact their parents during the school day may use the school landline.
- It is strongly advised that pupils use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorized phone calls cannot be made on their phones.
- Pupils using mobile phones to bully or send offensive messages/ calls will face disciplinary actions in line with the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policies. In serious cases of bullying, in line with Children First 2015, Tusla or the gardai may be contacted. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person
- If a teacher has suspicions that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, pupils will be required to hand it over to a teacher. Parents will be informed and will be asked to call to the school to discuss the matter.
- If action sanctioned by the school is deemed to be ineffective, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the gardai or Tusla.
- Parents/ volunteers will be obliged to comply with the terms of this policy while involved in all school related activities. eg, photographs can only be taken on school devices.

Parents:

At all assembly and dismissal times, parents are forbidden to use their phones to take photos of children.

At Assembly and during events such as the Christmas Concert, Sport's Day and Harold's Cross Talent Competition to name just a few, parents may only take photos or record **their own children**. They are strongly advised that they cannot post photos/clips of any child on social media without prior consent of all parties.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Policy - Mobile Phone Policy for Staff and Pupils

Ratified by BOM - 26 October, 2011, Implemented - November 2011. Reviewed and amended April, 2018

All members of the Board, staff, parents and pupils share in the co-ordination and implementation of the policy.

Evaluation:

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Board, Principal and members of staff and will be reviewed on a regular basis, usually every three years.

Implementation and Ratification:

This policy was originally implemented in November, 2011 following ratification by the Board of Management. It was reviewed and amended by staff in March, 2018 and reviewed and ratified by the Board on April, 17th following the enactment of the Children First, 2015, legislation on December 11th, 2017.