

## **Use of Mobile Phones Policy**

The use of and access to, personal mobile phones by pupils in Mallow Community National School is completely prohibited for the duration of the school day, as per Circular 0044/2025. Any reference to mobile phones in this policy also includes electronic devices. This was reviewed in consultation with staff of Mallow Community National School in April 2026.

### **Rationale**

The possession and use of mobile phones by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Therefore, the school completely prohibits the use of and access to mobile phones to school by students.

The school is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises when absolutely necessary but only within the strict parameters of the policy as stated below.

The use of mobile phones and other personal smart devices in primary schools presents significant concerns in relation to teaching, learning, wellbeing, and child safeguarding.

These include:

- Mobile phones can be a major source of distraction, reducing pupils' concentration, engagement, and participation in learning.
- Notifications, messaging, gaming, internet access, and social media can disrupt classroom routines and undermine effective teaching, even when devices appear to be on silent.
- Group chats, messaging apps, and social media can contribute to friendship difficulties, cyberbullying, inappropriate communication, and emotional distress, affecting pupils' wellbeing and readiness to learn.
- Devices with cameras, audio recording, and internet access raise child protection, privacy, and data protection concerns, including the inappropriate capture or sharing of images, videos, or recordings.
- Similar concerns apply to smart watches, tablets, handheld gaming devices, and other internet-enabled personal devices.

For these reasons, the school seeks to ensure that the learning environment remains calm, focused, safe, and free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions.

### **Aims**

This policy aims to

- improve the learning environment in school by reducing distraction,
- reduce the risk of cyberbullying and access to inappropriate content during school hours



- inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at our school
- outline the procedures and processes of this policy.

The school accepts that it is not realistic to prohibit pupils from carrying phones while travelling to and from school. Therefore, the ban on the use of phones does not apply to travel to and from school, or once after school activities have concluded, as per the procedures outlined below. However, it is the school's policy to prohibit the unauthorised use by pupils of mobile phones while on school premises, grounds or off-site activities e.g. school swimming, trips to library, shows etc.

### **Guidelines for Parents and Pupils**

The school strongly discourages pupils from bringing mobile phones to schools and asks all parents to support this. Where it is necessary for a pupil to bring a mobile phone to school, the parent is first required to contact the principal to discuss why it is necessary for their child to carry a phone before and after school.

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains the first point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and helped in any appropriate way.

Where a parent feels that it is essential for their child to carry a mobile phone to and from school, the following will apply:

1. The child's parent is first required to contact the principal to discuss why it is necessary for their child to carry a phone before and after school.
2. Parents must sign the form attached to this policy, requesting that their child be permitted to bring his/her mobile phone to school and return it to the principal. One letter per school year needs to be submitted and if approved, will be kept on file.
3. The phone needs to be handed into the school office on arrival to school and can be collected from the school office at the end of the school day.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone or other electronic device, they will have the device confiscated. The phone/device will be confiscated from the pupil and returned only to the parent, guardian or carer following a meeting with the principal.

The school incorporates this policy into the Code of Behaviour and will treat breaches as they would treat any other breach of the Code.

### **The school will not be liable for the replacement or repair of lost, stolen or damaged devices.**

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers or sharing inappropriate messages this will be regarded as a serious offence, and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Code of Behaviour Policy.



If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a teacher.

### School Trips and Outings.

- Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones with them on school trips and tours. The child can be contacted through the school office by a message being relayed to staff on the outing.

### Guidelines for Staff

During teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings, mobile phones will be switched off or put on 'silent' or 'discreet' mode.

Calls for school business e.g. checking a booking for school tour, making arrangements for sporting events etc. should be done on the school phones. Mobile phones are used by teachers for professional purposes on occasion, e.g. accessing Aladdin, class timers, class dojo, etc. Staff also use the mobile phones for photographs for educational purposes (school website, school blogs, awards, parent information, class dojo, projects etc). These images are deleted from staff phones afterwards and are used with permission from the parents at enrolment.

### Success Criteria

Ensure a safe environment for all our children.

Increase awareness among the children about appropriate use of mobile phones and respect each other's privacy.

### Implementation

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 28.4.26 and circulated to all staff and parents. It will be implemented from May 2026.

Signed: Lia Aherne  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Fine O'Connor  
(Principal)

Date: 28.4.26



Mallow Community National School  
 Kingsfort Avenue, Castlepark Village, Mallow, County  
 Cork  
 Phone: 022 - 55314 or 087 - 1474329  
 Email: ScoilAonghusa@corketb.ie



## Mobile phone permission form

Pupil Name ..... Class .....

Signed ..... Date .....  
 (Parent)

I would like to request permission for my child to bring a mobile phone into school. I understand that the following conditions apply:

1. The phone needs to be handed into the school office on arrival to school and can be collected from the school office at the end of the school day.
2. Any child found to be in breach of condition 1 will have their phone confiscated. A parent/guardian will have to meet with the principal in order to recover confiscated phones.
3. Mobiles cannot be activated until after 2.40 p.m. unless collected by a parent.
4. **Mallow Community National School is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage to the phones whilst on our premises.** Please make arrangements to include this in your household insurance or other appropriate cover.

.....

I authorise this request.

Signed ..... Date .....

Ms Áine O'Connor, Principal

Please note that this agreement is valid until the end of the school year.