



## **St. Louis Primary School Smart Device Policy**

### **Introduction**

- 1) This policy was drawn up in response to technological advances which have seen a significant increase in children's possession of smart technology.
- 2) This policy was written in consultation with the Staff, Board of Management and Parents. It was created in order to provide information and guidelines regarding children's possession and use of smart technology.

### **What is a Smart Device?**

A smart device is an electronic device, generally connected to other devices via different wireless protocols such as Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, cellular networks, etc and that can operate to some extent interactively by sending and receiving messages and/or calls. Smart devices can include, but are not limited to, devices such as phones, smart watches, Kindles, i-pads, i-pods, tablets, etc.

### **School Ethos & Smart Device Voluntary Code**

In St. Louis Primary School we encourage all parents/guardians to support our smart device voluntary code. This code, set out in this Policy, encourages parents/guardians to not provide a smart device for their child during their time in St. Louis Primary School. We acknowledge that most parents/guardians do not intend to provide a device to their child during their time in St. Louis Primary School.

However, we understand that in certain circumstances, children may need to bring mobile phones/smart devices to school in order that they can communicate with parents/guardians on their way to and from school. We aim that children who need to bring mobile phones to school would learn to use them in a respectful manner and adhere to the regulations outlined in this policy.

## **Aims**

- To outline the regulations relating to smart devices that are brought to school.
- To outline what happens should these regulations not be adhered to.

## **Procedures**

If parents/guardians need to contact their child(ren) urgently during the day, such contact should be made through the school office. The same facility is available to the children where urgent contact with a parent/guardian is required. However, if a parent/guardian feels it necessary for their child(ren) to have a smart device in school for using on the way to and from school, the following conditions will apply:

- Devices may not be used for any purpose on school premises or grounds, during school or during extra-curricular activities facilitated by the school or during off-site school activities, e.g. sports activities, school outings/tours etc.
- Devices must be switched off before children enter the school grounds in the morning. They must remain switched off for the duration of the school day and may only be switched on again once the children have vacated the school grounds. Pupils should ensure that alarms/reminders are turned off to avoid activation during school hours.
- If your child wears a smartwatch to school, you must disable all functions except the wristwatch during school hours. This is called the "school mode" setting and it allows parents/guardians to control what functions are allowed on the smartwatch.
- A smart device may not be used to menace, harass or offend another person. In such circumstances and measures taken by the school are deemed ineffective, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardai or Tusla.
- Pupils using smart devices to bully others or send offensive messages, during school times, during after-school activities or during school activities outside of the regular school hours, will be subject to the procedures detailed in the school's Anti-Bullying Behaviour Policy.
- Photographing or recording images will be treated as serious misbehaviour. Uploading to a public domain of any material featuring other pupils, staff or the school premises is unacceptable.
- If a teacher has reason to suspect that a smart device may contain unsuitable or offensive material, the child will be required to hand over their device, the child's parents/guardians will be notified and the child will be required to allow the contents of the device to be inspected by the school authorities in the presence of a

parent/guardian. If there is reason to suspect that a smart device may contain evidence relating to a criminal offence the Gardai will be notified. This is in keeping with Child Protection Guidelines and the school's Child Protection Policy.

- If a device is found to be on, in use or activated on the school premises or grounds or at any school-related activity, the device will be given to the Principal and must be collected by the child's parents/guardians.
- Each child's smart device must be kept in their school bag during the school day.
- The school will not accept responsibility for smart devices that are lost, stolen or damaged. The safety and security of smart devices is a matter for pupils/parents/guardians.
- Smart devices which are found in the school are to be handed to a member of staff.
- It is strongly advised that pupils use a password/pin number to ensure that other children cannot make use of their device or in the case of the device being stolen. These should be kept confidential.
- Each child who has a smart device in school must supply a copy of this Policy signed by a parent/guardian and himself/herself.
- Any misbehaviour involving smart devices will be subject to sanctions as set out in the school's Code of Behaviour.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **A. Children**

- Adhere to the rules as laid out in this policy and sign a copy.

### **B. Parents/Guardians**

- Read the policy with your child and sign a copy.
- Explain to your child what will happen if he/she does follow the rules as outlined in this policy.
- Support the school in cases where the rules are not adhered to.

### **C. All Staff**

- Implement this policy and remind children of the policy at the beginning of each year.

## **Success Criteria**

- That the school holds a copy of this policy signed by each child who has a smart device in school and a parent of that child.
- That the teacher/principal does not have to remove a smart device from any child.

**Ratification by the Board of Management**

Ratified on 31/1/24 (Date)  
Chairperson [Signature] (D. Holland)