

CTI Clonmel

Raheen College Gaelcholáiste Chéitinn
Senior College



Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices Policy

Raheen College Policy on Personal Electronic

Devices/Mobile Phones

Mission Statement:

The Role of our school is to facilitate the students and people of Clonmel and its environs in the acquisition of general and specialised education.

We seek:

- *To encourage the development of the full person through imparting knowledge and skills and through inculcating values;*
- *To develop critical thinking faculties and to promote informed decision-making skills in students.*
- *To bring students to an awareness of their identity in a multi-denominational, multi-cultural context;*
- *To enable the transition to further education;*
- *To encourage the participation of parents in the education of their children;*
- *To respond to the educational needs of the local community.*

Rationale:

Raheen College recognises the important part that personal electronic devices play in the life of our students and their importance as a means of maintaining contact with Parents/Guardians.

Mobile phones have become a powerful source of communication and learning. While restrictions to their use must apply in a variety of circumstances – meetings, classrooms, etc. nonetheless, in our school we recognise that mobile phones can enhance learning, and can be used to powerful positive effect.

However, these personal electronic devices have also posed major problems for all schools in relation to:

- Disruption of teaching and learning
- Invasion of the right to privacy of staff and students
- Cyber Bullying
- Truancy
- Breaches of the Positive Code of Behaviour
- Recording objectionable material for display on the internet.

It is accepted that mobile phones are widely used by students and that they bring them to school. This is permissible as is the use of phones at break times, but it is mandatory that all students must use mobile phones in a responsible and mature manner.

The implementation of this policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all the school community are preserved.

Definition:

For the purposes of this policy “mobile phones” is the generic term Raheen College applies to mobile phones, smart phones, personal musical devices or any other personal electronic/digital device which can be used to do some or all of the following:

- record audio and/or video
- take photographs/images
- transmit/receive images or recordings or other media
- transmit/receive phone calls, text messages
- upload/download to or from the internet

Mobile Phone Usage:

In order to assist our school in implementing this policy, parents/guardians are asked **not** to contact students by mobile at any time during the school day. Contact with students in the school may be made through the office at 052/6121450 and students are directed to use the office telephone if needed: this is especially important where emergencies arise as it allows the school to provide appropriate support for a student who may become distressed or upset.

- Phones/Electronic Devices brought to school are entirely at the owner’s risk and Raheen College will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage. Likewise, the school does not take responsibility for investigating the loss or theft of these items.
- The safety and security of devices is wholly a matter for students/parents/guardians. It is advisable that phones and any other personal digital devices are locked in the student’s school locker for safety.
- It is strongly advised that students mark their personal electronic devices or mobile phones with their names and use passwords to ensure unauthorised use cannot be made of their devices. Students should never share their passwords with anyone else.
- The Department of Education and Skills does not recognize mobile phones as appropriate for use as calculators or clocks. The school embraces the Department policy and therefore, students using this as a pretext, should not produce mobile phones in class to carry out tasks requiring a calculator or to check the time.
- **No** photographs can be taken or recordings, videos or audio, made with personal electronic devices or mobile phones of any person on the school premises or grounds. Using devices in such a way can seriously infringe a person’s rights and appropriate sanctions will be imposed up to and including expulsion.

- It is the policy of the school that personal electronic devices and/or mobile devices must be powered off as soon as the student enters the classroom.
- Personal electronic devices and/or mobile devices may be used at the following break-times only:
 - o 10:45am – 11:00am
 - o 13.00pm – 13:40pm
- The charging of mobile phones on the school premises is forbidden.
- Use of mobile phones to download, store, record or transmit unacceptable images, video, sound, texts or other files is entirely unacceptable and will lead to the confiscation of the phone. The school reserves the right to request a student to submit his/her mobile phone for inspection if, in the opinion of the school, a student is suspected of inappropriate use.
- Any staff member/teacher has the right to confiscate a personal electronic device if a student is observed by the teacher/staff member using it without permission in the classroom or if a student is using it in situations which are in clear breach of the Code of Behaviour and this Policy. A refusal to hand over the device will result in the Code of Behaviour being applied.
- Mobile phones which are confiscated will be returned at the end of the school day at 3.40 Mondays and Tuesdays and 3.00pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. The other devices listed in our policy definition can only be collected by the parent/guardian at an earlier time if s/he calls to the school. Repeated breach of this rule means that the parent/guardian will be told that the student must leave his/her phone, ipod etc at home. This means that the student will not be allowed bring the device/mobile phone to school for the remainder of the term or school year. Use of camera phones is totally prohibited.
- Incidents where students use personal electronic devices or mobile phones to bully others or send offensive messages will be investigated under the Anti-Bullying policy. In the event that a personal electronic devices or mobile phone is used inappropriately (e.g. inappropriate photos/recordings/texts), Parents/Guardians will be asked to attend the school with their child for a meeting with the Principal to discuss the matter before the device is returned to the student. Suspension or a more serious sanction may be imposed. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a device or mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to report such incidents to the Gardai.

Mobile Phones & Learning:

Teachers may permit the appropriate use of mobile phones in pursuit of learning within classrooms and other learning settings within the school. However, use of mobile phones other than for specific learning purposes in such situations will be considered a breach of this policy.

Students may take images, audio and/or video recordings as part of their learning for personal study or project-work. However this may only be done with the express permission

of those involved (students, teachers, visitors to the school), nor can such images be loaded to the internet without the express permission of those involved.

From time to time students may be asked to download software applications (apps) to their mobile phones, in order to take part in specific learning activities. In such circumstances it is the responsibility of the students and/or their Parents/Guardians to ensure that the mobile phone has suitable and up-to-date anti-virus protection to prevent damage by digital viruses or malware.

Student and Parent/Guardian Cooperation:

The school authorities request the total co-operation of parents/guardians in this matter as the policy is in place to ensure the health and safety of all the school community and to provide the best possible environment in which teaching and learning can take place and where the personal dignity and rights of all the members of the community are preserved and respected. To this end students and their parents are expected to sign their agreement to abide by the terms of Raheen College's Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices Policy.

This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals.

Ratified by the BOM on _____ Chairperson _____

Secretary *John Mc Carthy*