



De La Salle College Waterford

Mobile Phone and Digital Device Policy

2024-2025



Mobile Phone & Digital Device Policy

The following policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and the rights of all the members of the school community are preserved in line with our ethos and mission statement.

De La Salle College is an all boys Catholic school. It is a learning community where all students are valued and educated in preparation for a meaningful life.

As a Le Chéile school in the De La Salle tradition, De La Salle College seeks to promote the key values of a Le Chéile school as espoused by the life of St. Jean Baptiste De La Salle.

Rationale

The wellbeing of our students is a key priority of our school. The use of devices is now an integral part of the lives of young people, and we acknowledge the benefits that technology brings to learning, teaching and our broader lives. Digital technologies can play a positive role in supporting high quality learning, teaching and assessment. They can promote student engagement and enhance the student learning experience.

However, there are concerns associated with the misuse, abuse and possible overuse of these devices. Their misuse has a disruptive effect on learning and teaching. This policy aims to encourage the responsible use of mobile phones.

Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to

- Facilitate learning and teaching in a safe environment without interruption
- Ensure that courtesy, respect and consideration to others is paramount at all times
- Protect students and staff from potential harassment or bullying
- Clarify the responsibilities of students, parents/guardians and staff with regard to mobile phones
- Combat the adverse effects of mobile phone/digital device/ smart watch use, among young people. (A digital device is any device that allows for internet access and has the capacity to record/capture sound or visuals)
- Positively encourage social interaction and communication among our students

This policy works in conjunction with the following:-

- Code for Positive Behaviour
- Suspension and Expulsion policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- School trip policy
- Wellbeing Plan

Policy Arrangements

If a student brings a mobile phone/digital device to school, it must remain in the student's school bag, switched off, at all times while on the school grounds unless directed otherwise by a teacher.

Any student with a diagnosed medical condition requiring access to a mobile phone may apply, through their parent / guardian for an exemption, for use of their mobile phone in relation to their medical condition only, by contacting the College.

During non-classroom based activities (school tours or trips, workshops etc.), mobile phones and digital devices/ smart watches and other wearable technology **must** remain switched off and stored out of sight unless directed otherwise by a teacher/supervisor/facilitator.

Note: For overnight school trips, phones/devices may be collected by the teacher/supervisor at a designated time in the evening.

(This is a Child Protection measure which serves to ensure students' safety and wellbeing).

These will be returned the following day and can be used only as directed by the teacher/supervisor.

Mobile phones/digital devices are not allowed in exam centres.

Sanctions

A student who is found by a staff member to be using a mobile phone/digital device on the school premises, will turn off the phone and hand it over to the staff member who will record the confiscation to include the following:- **(Appendix 1)**

- Student name and class.
- Date and time of confiscation.
- Name of staff member who confiscated the mobile phone/digital device.

The number of confiscations will also be recorded.

A text message will be sent out from the school office, informing a parent/guardian of the confiscation and advising that the phone/digital device must be collected by a Parent/Guardian from the school office at the end of the school day, or at an agreed future time and date.

On collection and return of the device the following information will be recorded:-

- Date and time the mobile phone/digital device was returned to parent / guardian
- Name and signature of parent / guardian who collected the mobile phone/digital device
- Name of staff member who returned the mobile phone/digital device

If a student refuses to submit the device on request, management will be informed. If the student submits the device to a member of management, he will receive a detention for non-compliance and the device must be collected by his parent/guardian.

If the student fails to submit the phone to a member of the Senior Management Team, a 1 day suspension may be imposed for non-compliance.

Repeated violations (>3 confiscations) or abusive, threatening or intimidating behaviour towards a staff member in relation to confiscation of a device may result in a suspension.

(De La Salle College accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged phones/digital devices).

Each student is responsible for all communication from his phone/digital device and any image/recording stored on the phone/digital device. It is a criminal offence to use a device to menace or harass a person and as such, the school may consider it appropriate to contact the Gardaí.

The taking of photographs or the use of any recording equipment, either audio or visual, on the school premises is strictly prohibited. A breach of this rule may result in suspension and/or expulsion.

(See: Code of Positive Behaviour / Suspension & Expulsion Policy / Anti-bullying Policy).

The following are strictly prohibited:-

- Sending/posting offensive messages to staff/students.
- Making offensive phone calls to staff/students.

Such incidents will be subject to investigation which may result in suspension and/or expulsion.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

In order to assist the school in implementing this policy, Parents/Guardians are asked not to contact students by mobile phone during the school day. In case of **emergency**, the College office is the appropriate point of contact.

(051-875294)

In an **emergency**, any student who needs to contact Parents/Guardians during the school day will be facilitated in doing so at the School Office.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff: Monitor the implementation of this policy and enforce sanctions when necessary.

Recognise the value of leading by example and limit their use of a device for any reason other than for learning and teaching.

Parents/Guardians: Support the implementation of the policy and remind their son to switch off their phone while on school grounds. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to discuss with their sons the dangers of inappropriate mobile phone use.


Students: Comply with the procedures as outlined in the policy.

This policy was distributed, where relevant, to Staff, Parents / Parents Association and Students / Student Council for their review and approval.

Amendments have been made, where relevant, after consultation with these stakeholders.

Adopted:

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on **29th January 2025**

Signed: 
Clare Ryan
Chairperson, Board of Management