

Loreto College Swords

Mobile Phone Usage Policy

This policy was redrafted in 2010/2011 to respond to updated technology regarding mobile phones and personal devices.

Rationale:

Mobile phones have become an important and invaluable part of our modern lifestyle. The school understands that there are times when the possession of a mobile phone can provide a sense of safety and security while travelling to and from school. The following policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all the members of the school community are preserved.

Purpose:

The school aims to provide a happy, safe and stimulating learning environment for all students.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that mobile phone usage does not disrupt this learning environment
- Ensure that courtesy, respect and consideration to others are paramount at all times
- Clarify the responsibilities of students and staff with regard to mobile phones

Students may take mobile phones to school provided they observe the following conditions:

- a) The school can accept no responsibility for mobile phones. Mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
- b) The phone **must be switched off** and kept in the student's school bag during the school day. Restricted use of mobile phones is allowed before 9 a.m., at 'little break' (11.00 am to 11.15), lunch break (1.15 – 1.55) and when school ends (3.15 p.m. or 3.55 p.m). Mobile phone use is not permitted during or between classes. Parents/guardians may arrange to contact students through the office and are asked not to arrange to contact students by mobile phone at any time during the school day.
- c) A student, who wishes to go home for any reason during the school day, must arrange to do so through the Year Head and not independently by mobile phone. This ensures that correct procedures for leaving school before the ending of classes for that day are observed. Responsibility cannot be taken by the school authorities for students who arrange independently to go home without following proper procedure. Any such arrangement is a breach of the Code of Behaviour. Parents/Guardians may arrange to contact students through the office (01) 8407025. We ask parents/guardians to co-operate and support this policy by not contacting students by mobile phone during the school day.
- d) If a student is found to be using a mobile phone at times other than the approved times then
 - (i) the phone and sim card will be confiscated and placed in the General Office until the end of the school day when the student can reclaim it .
 - (ii) The student will be given a detention as sanction
 - (ii) a letter will be sent to parents informing them of the detention and that on a second

offence the phone and sim will be confiscated and **returned on the next school day** only when a parent/guardian comes to school to collect it.

- e) On arrival at the school we will expect the parent/guardian to:
 - 1) Sign an acknowledgment for receipt of the phone
 - 2) Sign an agreement that should there be a subsequent offence then the phone will be confiscated and held for 7 school days.
- f) Using a mobile phone or personal device for the unauthorised recording of images or sounds is in direct breach of Loreto College Swords Acceptable Usage Policy and /or Anti-Bullying Policy. Using phones in such a way can seriously infringe on people's rights and appropriate sanctions may be imposed.
- g) In accordance with legislation* in this area, it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, any party involved may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardai in such incidents.
- h) School tours: it will be at the discretion of the tour organiser whether mobile phones/personal devices may be brought on tours. Parents/Guardians will be informed in advance.

I-Pods

- a) If a student is found to be using a I-Pod at times other than the approved times then (i) the I-Pod will be confiscated and placed in General Office until the end of the school day when the student can reclaim it .
 - (ii) The student will be given a detention as sanction
 - (ii) a letter will be sent to parents informing them that on a second offence the I-Pod will be confiscated and **returned on the next school day** only when a parent/guardian comes to school to collect it.

*Legislation

Legislation in relation to mobile usage

*Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
Interception Act 1993
The Data Protection Act 1988

Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
Video Recording Act 1989

Please Consult the School Website www.loretoswords.ie for other Policy Documents.