

Policy on use of Student Personal Electronic Devices

Adopted by Board of Management, 23rd June, 2015

Holy Family Community School recognises that student personal electronic devices can be used to enhance safety, communication and learning. However, restrictions on the use of these devices must apply in a variety of circumstances e.g. meetings, classrooms, examinations, etc.

This policy is necessary to ensure that student personal electronic devices:

- do not disrupt teaching and learning in class.
- are not the cause of students' lateness for classes.
- are not used to harass or bully other members of the school community.
- are not used to invade the privacy of other members of the school community.

Rules for the use of student personal electronic devices:

1. When on school grounds, student personal electronic devices must be powered off and out of sight from 8.50 am until 3.45 pm (8.50 am until 1.05 pm on Wednesdays); this ban includes break time and lunch time.
2. Students who bring personal electronic devices and accessories to school do so **at their own risk**. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged personal electronic devices. The safety and security of student personal electronic devices is wholly a matter for students and their parents/guardians.
3. Student personal electronic devices may not be used as a clock or calculator. However, in exceptional circumstances, students may be allowed to use their personal electronic devices for educational purposes with their teacher's permission and under their teacher's supervision.
4. Students may be asked to leave their personal electronic devices on the teacher's desk during class or when leaving the classroom during class time.
5. Students must not use personal electronic devices to contact their parents / guardians during school hours, including break times. A student may **only** contact his/her parent/guardian through the school office during school hours.
6. Parents/guardians may **only** contact their son/daughter during school hours through the school office and not by any student personal electronic device.
7. Students are forbidden to record or take images of any member of the school community or visitor using personal electronic devices on school grounds or during extracurricular activities without the express permission of a staff member. Breach of this policy is considered to be a serious invasion of personal privacy which may result in confiscation of the personal electronic device and suspension or expulsion. The incident may be reported to the Gardaí.

8. Misuse of personal electronic devices for bullying will result in immediate confiscation of the device and the student may be suspended or expelled.
9. Uploading, circulating, publishing or distributing (including on the Internet) any material associated with school activities or members of the school community is not allowed without permission from the Principal. Uploading, circulating, publishing or distributing (including on the Internet) any material which, humiliates or causes damage / offence to another person is considered to be a serious invasion of personal privacy and a serious breach of school discipline which may result in confiscation of the personal electronic device and suspension or expulsion. The incident may be reported to the Gardaí.
10. The school reserves the right to view the contents of any student personal electronic device, in the presence of the student, to ensure it contains no images or information which could compromise a member of the school community. Any such information or images will be deleted.
11. A student personal electronic device, including sim cards, data storage and accessories, may be confiscated by a Year Head, the Deputy Principal or Principal. Confiscated devices will be stored in a secure environment and will be returned to the student at the end of the school day or to parents/guardians by appointment. The school accepts no liability for the state of repair of the student electronic device or its working parts while confiscated. Where necessary, offensive or inappropriate material will be deleted in the presence of a parent/guardian after investigation.

Consequences:

A student who is found using his/her electronic device during school time may be subject to one or more of the following sanctions:

- Cleaning duties.
- Lunchtime detention.
- Wednesday afternoon detention.

Students who are persistently in breach of this policy or who are in breach of points 7, 8 or 9 of this policy may be subject to one or more of the following sanctions:

- Confiscation of the device until the end of the school day.
- Confiscation of the device until collected by parents/guardians.
- Suspension.
- Reported to Gardaí.
- Expulsion.