ST. FRANCIS XAVIER SENIOR SCHOOL

ROSELAWN GLADE, CASTLEKNOCK, DUBLIN 15

ROLL NO: 19470S

MOBILE & SMART DEVICE POLICY

The original policy was ratified in January 2021

Revised: This policy was revised and amended in line with new Department of Education Guidelines "Keeping Childhood Smartphone Free", and developed in line with the school's Parent's Association "Smart Device Free Voluntary Agreement, in April 2025

Next Review Date: April 2027

Introduction and Rationale

The use of mobile phones and smart devices among students is now widespread, even at the primary school level. While these devices offer benefits, they also pose significant challenges in a school environment. Mobile phones and personal devices such as smartwatches, iPads, and gaming consoles can be distracting, contribute to disciplinary issues, and facilitate bullying. Additionally, their ability to capture and share images, videos, and audio recordings raises serious child protection and data privacy concerns. To address these challenges, St. Francis Xavier Senior School has implemented this policy in collaborations with the Parent's Association "**Smart Device Free Voluntary Agreement**" to regulate the use of mobile phones and personal devices.

Alignment with School Ethos

Our school is committed to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment. The use of mobile phones and other personal electronic devices contradicts this commitment by introducing potential disruptions and risks. This policy aligns with the school's mission to foster a focused, respectful, and protected educational setting for all students.

Policy Aim

To ensure a safer and more focused learning environment, the school prohibits students from using personal mobile phones and other electronic devices while on school grounds or participating in school-related activities, including trips, tours, and extracurricular events.

School Procedures

- Students are not permitted to use or carry mobile phones or personal electronic devices while under the care of school staff, whether on school premises, during school trips, or at extracurricular activities.
- Any mobile phone or personal device found in the school must be handed to the School Office.
- Should a student need to contact home during school hours, they may do so through the School Secretary using the school phone.
- In case of emergencies, parents should contact the School Office, which will ensure the message reaches the student promptly.

Exceptions

If a parent believes that their child must have a mobile phone at school, the following conditions apply:

- Parents must complete and submit a mobile phone agreement form. Only basic, non-smart mobile phones (e.g., Nokia 3210) are permitted.
- Mobile phones must remain powered off at all times while on school premises. The school is not responsible for any loss, theft, or damage.
- Certain exemptions apply for medical reasons, such as diabetes management.

Sanctions

- Any student found with a mobile phone at school without a signed agreement will have the device confiscated. Smartphones and smart devices will be confiscated immediately and will only be returned to a parent/guardian.
- Any unauthorized use of a mobile phone or personal device will result in confiscation, with the device returned only to a parent/guardian.
- The school is not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged mobile phones or other personal devices.
- This policy is integrated into the School's Code of Behaviour and Acceptable Use Policy. Any breaches will be addressed accordingly.
- The use of mobile phones or personal devices to take photographs, record videos, or share inappropriate messages will be treated as serious misconduct and subject to disciplinary action under the School's Code of Behaviour.
- Misuse of a mobile phone or personal device for harassment, bullying, or offensive behaviour may constitute a criminal offense. If internal disciplinary measures prove insufficient, the school reserves the right to involve law enforcement authorities.

School Trips and Outings

Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones or personal devices on school trips and tours. Teachers will have a designated contact number for emergency communication with parents/guardians if necessary.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of St. Francis Xavier Senior School drew up this policy on 6th January 2021. This policy was revised and amended in line with new Department of Education Guidelines "Keeping Childhood Smartphone Free", and developed in line with the school's Parent's Association "Smart Device Free Voluntary Agreement, in April 2025. These procedures will be reviewed by April 2027. The policy is to take effect from September 2025, following the rollout of the Voluntary Parents Smart Device Agreement.

The Mobile Device Policy is communicated to Staff vis the shared drive and Aladdin. It is shared with parents via Aladdin and the school website.

Signed:

Joe Mitchell

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 09/04/25

Sean McKeown

Principal

Date: 09/04/25