**ST PATRICK’S PRIMARY SCHOOL, HILLTOWN**



**Mobile phone policy**

**APRIL 2021**

**Progress through partnership**

**St Patrick’s P.S. Hilltown**

**Mobile Phone Policy**

**Mission Statement**

St Patrick’s Primary School, Hilltown, will provide a well ordered and caring environment in which the children can work and play. As part of a believing community committed to a Catholic way of life, we believe that all are equal in the sight of God and that each child should have the opportunity to ‘walk tall’ within themselves, knowing that they are important, whatever their individual talents and abilities. We strive to work in conjunction with the home and parish so that children can reach their full potential as well as growing in their own self-esteem, confidence and self-discipline. Children will be helped to develop an attitude of caring for and sharing with others, as well as cultivating a healthy tolerance for everyone’s beliefs and respect for their property and environment. We encourage shared responsibility among our pupils and reinforce good behaviour by actively encouraging and promoting qualities like patience, gentleness and a sense of ‘fair play’. We recognise the need for pupils to progress through a well-defined programme for work in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils will have access to relevant teaching and learning through a variety of teaching approaches. We will provide pupils with stimulating, enjoyable, rewarding and demanding experiences. We will match the curriculum to individual needs, with provision being made for more able children and those with special needs. Pupils will be encouraged to produce their own personal best, dependent on individual ability and aptitude. Resources in the school will be of a high standard and renewed as appropriate. The teaching and non-teaching staff, along with the principal and pupils will work in harmony to maintain a high standard of work, personal achievement and good behaviour. Our school motto is ‘Progress through Partnership’.

Our school is a UNICEF Rights Respecting School and Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC) underlines our school’s vision:

‘Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.’ This Mobile Phone Policy forms part of the school’s overall Pastoral Care Policy and supports our Health and Safety, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection, Safeguarding and Internet/E-Safety policies. At St Patrick’s Primary School, the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. This policy on the use of mobile phones in school has been drawn up in the best interests of pupil safety and staff professionalism.

We are all aware that mobile phones and Smart phones are now an important feature of modern society and an increasing number of our pupils and staff own one. The increasing sophistication of mobile technology presents a number of difficult management and safety issues for school, including:

* The high value of many phones/smartphones
* The integration of cameras into phones leading to potential child protection and data protection issues
* The capacity to surf the internet without school filtering systems
* The potential to misuse the phone in other ways during the school day, for example, recording video or texting

**Use of Mobile Phones**

**Pupils:**

Pupils are instructed **NEVER** to bring mobile phones to school.

If a child accidentally brings their phone to school they should hand it into the Principal’s office as soon as they realise their mistake. It will be returned at home-time.

If a parent needs to contact their child during school time they may phone the office and a message will be given to the child, or, in exceptional circumstances, the child will be allowed to leave their classroom to speak to their parent on the phone in the office.

If a pupil needs to contact a parent during the school day they may use the office phone (under the direction of the secretary, teacher or principal).

In these arrangements common sense will prevail.

**Staff:**

* All staff must have their phones on ‘silent’ or switched ‘off’ during class time
* Phones must not be used for any purpose (for example, phoning, texting, surfing the internet, taking photos, checking the time) during class contact time
* If there are extreme circumstances, for example, a very sick relative, the Principal should be informed so that alternative arrangements can be agreed
* Use of phones must be limited to non-contact time/lunchtime, when no children are present
* Phones must be kept out of sight, for example, in a drawer or handbag when staff are with children

**Parents, visitors or volunteers in school:**

* Adults within school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their cameras or mobile phones to take pictures of pupils. At a public event such as Sports day they may only photograph their own children
* Adults, visitors and volunteers in school should only use their mobile phone within the confines of the staff room when there are no other adults using it
* Photographs may only be taken using a school iPad and only when an adult has been requested to do so by the Principal or a teacher. Mobile phones should never be used to take photographs of children.

We ask parents to talk to their children about the inappropriate use of text messages, as messages sent by children while under the care of their parents can sometimes be used to upset or annoy other children.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed as required, usually every two years.