

# Catholic University School

89 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2 D02 KC81

Telephone : 01 775 6800

Enquiries : [office@cus.ie](mailto:office@cus.ie)

Website : [www.cus.ie](http://www.cus.ie)



## MOBILE PHONE POLICY

(Ratified .....)

Catholic University School understands that the use of technology, including mobile phones, is increasingly part of modern daily life. During the recent pandemic lockdowns, phones and other electronic devices were an integral part of online teaching and for accessing resources on MS Teams and other educational media. While restrictions to their use must apply in a variety of circumstances, teachers may encourage **the appropriate** use of mobile phones in pursuit of learning in classrooms and other learning settings within the school.

However we are also mindful that excessive access to mobile phones can have a negative impact on student wellbeing and the potential damage they may contribute to developing normal social interaction. Excessive use of phones can undermine the learning environment in the school and can be a source of distraction when students are completing homework tasks or studying for test and exams.

The following usage policy for mobile phones has been drawn up in line with what is deemed best practise.

Personal Electronic Devices of whatever kind are brought to school entirely at the owner's Risk. The school does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage.

1. When students bring a mobile phone to school, it must be **switched off from 8.40am** until the end of classes each day. Phones may be used in the classroom only in exceptional circumstances: when the teacher taking the class has given specific permission, educational purposes i.e. MS Teams. In such circumstances, it is the student's responsibility to turn his phone off before he leaves the classroom.

Students who have an urgent need to use a phone may do so either in the presence of a member of staff or in the reception room beside the school office.

2. The camera and recording functions on phones must not be used while on the school premises or in the school's sports grounds without the school's permission. Using a phone in such a way can seriously infringe on a person's rights and privacy. Mobile phones must not be used to bully others by sending offensive messages or calls, or in any other inappropriate manner. Such usage will be investigated under the School's Anti-Bullying policy. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile device to menace, harass or offend another person (Section 10 of the non-fatal offences against the person Act 1997). Therefore, it may be necessary for the school to inform the Gardai and/or Tusla in certain circumstances.
3. Students should only use mobile phones during supervised study to access MS Teams or other legitimate educational material. Any student found using a mobile phone inappropriately will be asked to leave study and their parents will be contacted by the school. During supervised classes, student must ask the supervising teacher's permission to use their phones.

4. For student safety, we recognise that it is important that they can contact their parents on their way to and from school. For this reason, the following sanctions will apply for breach of the above rules:

If a student is using a phone without permission, for any reason, the phone may be confiscated and kept in the office where it can be reclaimed at the end of the day. For subsequent offences, the phone will be confiscated, and the student may be issued with an hour's detention. If there are further incidents of unauthorised phone use, the student may be asked to hand his phone into the school office for three consecutive school days although it will be returned at the end of each school day. This sanction may only be applied by the Year Head or school management in consultation with the students' parents.

**Ratification of this Mobile Phone Policy:**

This mobile phone policy will be ratified at the next Board of Management Meeting.

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Mr. Clive G. Martin  
Principal

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Dr. Maeve Martin  
Chairperson  
Board of Management