

# **School of the Divine Child Mobile Phone Policy**

## **Aim**

The purpose of this protocol is to inform employees of the expectations of mobile phone use during their working hours. It is intended to give staff some broad guidelines regarding the appropriate use of mobile phones in the workplace or while carrying out their duties. In School of the Divine Child Special School the welfare and well-being of our students is paramount. This policy on the use of mobile phones in school and whilst with children has been drawn up in the best interests of student safety and staff professionalism.

## **Rationale**

We accept that mobile phones can be intrusive and distracting in a class and school situation. In addition, they are a potential and real source of bullying and abuse through texting and the dissemination of unacceptable and inappropriate images. Accordingly, the following procedures have been put in place to ensure minimal and safe usage of mobile phones in our school. The use of mobile phones is not conducive to learning which is central to the mission statement and ethos of our school.

## **Staff Guidelines**

It is school policy that all mobile phones are not permitted and should be switched off or placed on silent mode during official working hours (9.00 – 3.10) with the exception of break times or if staff are on a social outing with a student due to the following reasons:

- It does not set a professional and positive example to students.
- It is disruptive and interrupts lessons.
- It is a nuisance and discourteous to colleagues. (e.g., during meetings). It is a misuse of the school/authority's time and has the potential to impact on student's learning.

Staff need to be mindful of their duties and responsibilities assigned to them in working with children, it is vital that staff are always engaged with children. The following also applies to staff while attending staff meetings or in service training within or outside the school –

Staff must have their phones on 'silent' or switched off during class time. · Staff are not permitted to make or receive calls during teaching hours on their own personal phones. If there are extreme circumstances (e.g., acutely sick relative) the member of staff will have made the principal and/or class teacher.

aware of this and can have their phone in the case of having to receive an emergency call.

· Phones must be kept out of sight (e.g., car or handbag) when staff are with students.

· Calls/texts must be made/received in private during non-contact time (Break – Time).

· Phones should never be used to take photographs of children, or the school environment, or staff, or to store their personal data.

· Staff members should always protect their phone numbers, and these should not be given to children or parents.

· Staff are not permitted to phone parents on their phones or try to contact them in any manner using their phone.

### **Inappropriate Use of Phones & Sanctions**

It is incumbent on each member of staff to ensure that all material on their phones is suitable to the life of the school.

Any person who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the principal.

Inappropriate use of mobile phones (e.g., continuous use of mobile phone, using text messages to bully, sharing inappropriate images, photographing, or recording staff or student etc.) will be considered a serious breach of professional conduct in work and sanctions such as verbal warning, written warning and further disciplinary actions will be considered.

### **School of the Divine Special School**

Mobile Phone Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of School of the Divine Child Special School at its meeting held on:

**Ratified by the Schools Board of Management on: \_\_\_\_\_ Date**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management**

***Next Review Period:***